

Expanding the Boundaries of Work-Family Research

A Vision for the Future

Edited by Steven Poelmans,
Jeffrey Greenhaus and
Mireia Las Heras Maestro



Expanding the Boundaries of Work–Family Research

Also by Steven A. Y. Poelmans

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Foreword

Nuria Chinchilla

It is a great pleasure for me to write a foreword to this book. A book I foresaw years ago, when in 2005 we first set up the IESE International Conference for Work and Family. A book I wished for as I attended cutting edge presentations in 2007. A book that, together with Steven and Mireia and Jeff, we finally decided to push for in 2009.

This is a book that I as director of the IESE Center for Work and Family (ICWF) am very proud of and grateful for. It wraps up a great stage of the ICWF in which I closely worked with Steven as research director and marks the transition to the current research director, Mireia. This book would have never been the same without the participation of Jeff, one of the more prolific researchers in this field, who has contributed in so many ways to the IESE Academic Conference.

Steven helped in setting up the ICWF, back in 2001. It was a time to dream. And, as the saying goes, our dreams came true. We dreamed of a biennial International Academic Conference, and in 2005 it first happened. And people like Jeff Greenhaus, Gary Powell and Tammy Allen participated. We dreamed of an international Advisory Board for our Center, which people like Ellen Gallinsky, Ellen Kossek and Suzan Lewis agreed to be part of, and later Brad Harrington and Tim Hall also joined. We dreamed of a biennial practitioners' conference, and since 2004 we've had it. In our practitioners' conference we've had speakers such as Anne Weisberg of Deloitte, Ngozi Okono, the Finance Minister of Nigeria, and Rafael Montes, HR VP of Acciona. We've been also honoured with having key notes with people like Letizia Ortiz, the Princess of Spain.

The conference has always been a venue in which to present innovative, high quality research; many research collaborations have developed after the meetings, and great friendships have evolved over the years. The conference has also been a venue to practise what most of us truly believe: that work and life are not enemies, but should be allies. Researchers have been encouraged to bring their spouses and loved ones to Barcelona. Jeff, Tim and Brad came with their respective wives Adele, Marcie and Annie. Ellen K brought her daughters to celebrate one of their graduations. And, my own husband has proved to be the greatest of those allies, being a fantastic tour guide for most of the participants' companions, and a great host for dinners in our own home for some of the participants.

This book also marks a new stage for the Center. After all these dreams coming true, there is still much research to develop. Many mindsets to change. Plenty of companies and cultures to transform. During these years

we've come to realize that much more international research is needed, and that companies need to figure the real costs and benefits of work-life programmes and policies. With this goal in mind, in this new stage of the ICWF, we've developed a project with researchers from 20 countries, working both with companies and also with general samples. Some of the results have already been presented at the 2011 International Conference. We hope this will be a project that will help develop guidelines for practitioners, conclusions for academics and teaching materials for professors.

This book is a tribute to all of you who have enthusiastically participated in the International Conference, and I hope it is also an inspiration to all of you who do research in this field. Again, I want to very specially thank Jeff for his great work as editor, Steven as the main driver behind this project, and Mireia who has kept the energy up throughout the process.

Prof. Nuria Chinchilla
Director of IESE International Center for Work and Family

Foreword

Lotte Bailyn

It was 1969, a few years after Rhona and Robert Rapoport had outlined one of the earliest theoretical linkages between work and family. The link they identified centred on the developmental tasks involved in every role transition – both at work and in the family – and how accomplishing these tasks led to a mutually reinforcing system. They had not yet published their *Dual Careers* book but had mounted a survey of British women university graduates and some of their husbands. I was in London that year and worked on this couple's data, my first empirical foray into this domain. There had already been studies on husbands and how they felt about their wives working. But what intrigued me was that this attitude was considerably *less* predictive of marital satisfaction and of the professional development of their wives than of these men's attitudes and feelings towards their *own* work. What I didn't know then, and would have been amazed at, was what would happen in this area in the next 40 years.

For a field that only emerged, slowly, in the 1960s, it is impressive how far we have come. We have gone beyond childcare, beyond women, and now our research encompasses men and women, parents and non-parents, the USA and Europe, Asia and the developing world. Two foundations have been critical to the field's growth. The Ford Foundation was one; it helped establish the Families and Work Institute in 1989, a major research and advocacy institution. In the 1990s it also supported a number of different action research projects in major corporations geared to redesigning work for greater gender equity and better work–personal life integration. A second was the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, which created a series of work–family centres in the 1990s and, in the last decade, has championed a national initiative on flexibility. Our field's growth has also been helped by the emergence of a great number of consulting firms in the area. The first one – Work Family Directions – started in 1983 by providing childcare referral services to IBM and has morphed into WFD Consulting, which provides services for its clients, not only in childcare but also in eldercare, women's advancement, diversity management, workload management and more. Our field's first journal, *Community, Work & Family*, started publishing in 1998 and has held biennial conferences to discuss work and family issues. The current book is based on three editions of another conference set, the International Conference of Work and Family. Finally, an international network of work–family researchers (WFRN) was recently formed, and held its first conference in June 2012. An impressive development in a short period of time.

So, what have we learned from all this activity? We have learned that the individual is embedded in multiple contexts: the workgroup, the organization, the society and nation, as well as the family and the community. And as we learn more about these issues in very different kinds of societies we are made aware of the dangers of presuming that Western results are universal, and we come to understand that spreading Western institutions via globalization may not only hurt the receiving countries but may also prevent the individualistic Western world from learning from other models. We have also learned that multiple disciplines and multiple methods can inform these issues. All of this is evident from the chapters in this book, which also provide useful suggestions for future development. I want to join that effort by suggesting some ways of possibly integrating work from some additional perspectives.

First, as has been noted in this volume, we know there has been a gap between the adoption of work–family policies and how they actually affect employees’ ability to integrate their work with their personal lives. And though there are sociologists who study this problem, their research has not received much attention from work–family scholars. For example, law and society theorists such as Forrest Briscoe, Emilio Castilla, Frank Dobbin, Alexandra Kalev and Erin Kelly have identified a host of employer practices that decrease the gap between work–family policies on the books and work–family policies in action.

Second, we see in this volume that work–family researchers are beginning to consider how gender and sex interact to shape people’s identities and interpretations. I think that this work could be furthered by greater incorporation of the perspective of gender theorists such as Joan Acker, Joan Williams and Joyce Fletcher. Their analyses point to the gendered nature of organizational structures and practices that inadvertently make it so difficult for both women and men – though in different ways – to integrate employment with other parts of their lives.

Finally, we have detailed interview and ethnographic studies of a variety of occupational groups. They range from Carol Chetkovich’s study of firefighters to Leslie Perlow’s engineers, Ann Bookman’s biotech employees, Louise Roth’s Wall Street workers, Kate Kellogg’s surgical residents and many others, including several in this volume. What can we learn from considering the whole corpus of these studies, perhaps through a qualitative meta-analysis? What kinds of work arrangements, skills and employment relationships make it easier or more difficult for different kinds of people in different kinds of family circumstances to both be productive at work and live satisfying lives?

So, we have certainly come a long way – as this book shows. And I know that we will continue to bring perspectives together and advance our understanding further. In the end, I hope we can ensure that organizations and

societies will see the personal lives of all people as a fully legitimate part of workplace arrangements and national policies.

Lotte Bailyn
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Preface and Acknowledgements

In July 2005 Shonali Sud travelled over 6600 kilometres, changing airplanes three times, from Shimla, India, to Barcelona, Spain, to attend the founding conference of the International Center of Work and Family. We personally welcomed many international visitors like her travelling from the five continents of the world: colleagues and researchers, professors and PhD students, diversity and human resource practitioners coming from the USA, Australia, Hong Kong, Israel, Colombia, the Netherlands, UK, Singapore, Mexico, South Africa and Brazil, to name just a few. As such, we realized our purpose to create a forum for the international community of work–family scholars and students; gender researchers, social, organizational, cultural, and health psychologists, sociologists, political scientists and management experts gathering to share thoughts and visions, research and friendship.

What you have in front of you is a “white book” for international work–family research, offering a bold look at the future, giving an overview of promising, emerging topics in this multi-disciplinary field and providing guidelines for future research. It is based on three assemblies of the International Conference of Work and Family (ICWF), a unique academic conference designed to gather some of the finest scholars from around the globe to create a think tank focusing on applied, international work–family research.

In 2004 Nuria Chinchilla and Steven Poelmans created the International Center of Work and Family as a research centre of IESE Business School in Barcelona, Spain. The mission was to help organizations around the globe to create a family-responsible environment, essential for the well-being of societies, organizations and individuals alike. The objective of the ICWF was to address real concerns of managers and policymakers related to managing work–family conflicts through sound academic research, in a close dialogue with the international business community and their stakeholders. At that time the vast majority of studies published in the domain of work and family were conducted and published in Anglo-Saxon countries and journals. It was clear, however, that the experience of work and family could vary considerably across cultures, as the ways that work and family lives evolve strongly depend on the cultural values of the person. In addition, there is a wide variety of state-sponsored support for leave arrangements and child-care. From the onset we decided to follow the so-called “Dual Agenda” (Rapoport et al., 2002), which means that we strive for several objectives simultaneously. On the one hand we want to improve the bottom line and competitiveness of firms by reinforcing the well-being and commitment of

employees to their organizations. On the other hand we strive to improve the working circumstances and career tracks of people in organizations, who in our philosophy are worthy of balanced and high quality professional and family lives. Our purpose is to generate information on the basis of sound research regarding the establishment of a family-responsible work context, and as a consequence a higher quality of time both at work and in the family. This information is to be made available to inform policymakers in the government, organizations and other institutions.

While Nuria Chinchilla, director of ICWF, mustered support among politicians and companies, Steven Poelmans, academic director of ICWF, started developing the international research activities of ICWF, networking with what was at that time still a small community, and participating in two large-scale collaborative international studies: the Collaborative International Study of Managerial Stress (CISM), led by Paul Spector (University of South Florida) and Cary Cooper (Lancaster University), and Project 3535, led by Zeynep Aycan (Koç University). In parallel Poelmans engaged in the organization of a special track on work and family research in the first conferences of the European Academy of Management. These early efforts to encourage research and practice in the work–family domain resulted in the edition of a special issue of the *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management* (Poelmans, 2003), and several books: *Work and Family: An International Research Perspective* (Poelmans, 2005) and *Harmonizing Work, Family, and Personal Life: From Policy to Practice* (Poelmans & Caligiuri, 2008).

After assessing the success and interest of the international research community in gathering for exchanging research, Steven Poelmans took the initiative to organize a biennial, academic, international conference for the work–family field in Barcelona, Spain; a small-scale, highly interactive encounter of international work–family scholars. Both experienced researchers and doctoral students were encouraged to participate, adapting the lodging and fees to ensure that young, incoming researchers could attend the conference and interact with senior scholars. The conference was created to offer a forum for creating vision and building theory for the field, with special attention for the cross-cultural dimension and the application of theory in an organizational context. The book you have in front of you is the result of the first three ICWF conferences, in 2005, 2007 and 2009.

Starting with the first conference in 2005, the ICWF conference contemplated specific tracks in the general spirit of promoting innovative, applied work–family research, producing both conceptual papers and empirical studies, focusing both on the individual level and the managerial/organizational level:

- *Research of (international) family-responsible programs, policies, and practices (POLICIES)*. The first conference theme looked at the meso- and macro-level, and more specifically at human resource policies directed at

alleviating work–family conflict, changing management efforts to make the company culture more responsive to caring responsibilities, and looking at the impact of macro-level factors (legislation, culture, social policy, labour market) on organizational behaviour in terms of the adoption, design, implementation and allowance of work–family policies. Ellen Kossek of Michigan State University, Susan Lewis, then at Manchester Metropolitan University, and Ellen Galinsky of the Families and Work Institute served as captains of this track.

- *International and cross-cultural research of work and family (CROSS)*. The second conference track focused on differences in work–family experiences in men and women as a function of their country context and cultural setting. Participants in collaborative international research projects were invited to reflect on methodological issues. Zeynep Aycan of Koç University and Karen Korabiç of Guelph University led this track.
- *Research on decision making and coping in a work–family context (DMCOPING)*. The third conference theme focused on cognition in work–family research, and more specifically decision-making and cognitive coping processes in managers in their attempt to resolve work–family conflict in colleagues or their own personal life. Scholars studying the processes conducive to or impeding managers' decisions to allow work–family benefits to their subordinates were also encouraged to participate. This track was led by Jeffrey Greenhaus of Drexel University.
- *The study of expatriates and their families (EXPAT)*. Finally, we took a look at a specific collective that is especially vulnerable to work–family conflicts, that is, expatriates and employees who due to their work responsibilities have to travel frequently. An underestimated factor in their success is undoubtedly the well-being and adaptation of their families, travelling with them or left behind. On the other hand, if the work–family interface is well managed, we can expect instances of work–family enhancement as well. The scholars who led this track were Mina Westman of Tel Aviv University and Margaret Shaffer, at that point in time at the Hong Kong Baptist University.

In later meetings of the ICWF conference (in 2007 and 2009) other tracks were added:

- *Coping and strategies for creating work–family enrichment*. In this track we invited scholars to look at conscious strategies that individuals and company representatives use to cope with conflict or enhance positive spillover between the two essential life domains: work and family. This track focused on individual strategies and was led by Eva Demerouti, then at Utrecht University.

- *Career management/diversity and talent management.* In this track we wanted to address the time dimension in the experience of work–family conflict, as this phenomenon changes over time in different stages of life through individuals’ personal and professional development. We were also interested in how companies were addressing this issue through diversity, and talent management policies and programmes. This track was led by Tim Hall of Boston University.

Content of the book

This book is but a sample of the great intellectual and collaborative work done during the first three ICWF conferences. What makes this book distinctive is that in addition to specific, innovative research papers, it offers a series of chapters that provide a high level integration of the literature and a road map for future research, written by many of the above-mentioned track leaders and thought leaders in the field, all of whom have had a considerable impact on the field through their publications. At the same time it is focused on topics that are of high relevance to practitioners because they actually address what organizational leaders *can do* to create diverse, flexible and family-friendly workplaces, such as human resource management policies, culture development, decision making, coping, career and talent management, supervisor support and facilitating expatriates’ families’ adaptation to their new life.

This book is not just a statement of the “established” scholars in the field. Several selected conference papers are based on groundbreaking research conducted by young scholars doing their doctoral research, who were especially encouraged to participate in the conference to challenge recognized scholars in the field with daring, new approaches. In addition, like the conference, the book has a clear international outlook, with contributions from 30 authors representing 15 countries, addressing challenges for work–life researchers and practitioners in a globalizing world.

The book is structured according to the different conference tracks of the ICWF conference. Each part consists of (1) a “vision chapter”, written by a thought leader in the field, and (2) a carefully selected “conference paper” that was presented at one of the three conferences. Each “vision chapter” provides a short overview of the literature in the aforementioned domains, summarizes all conference papers submitted to the corresponding track, and reflects the debates in the workgroups who focused on theory development, methodological issues and recommendations for future research. In addition the book offers a “special section” of papers that fell outside the boundaries of the tracks.

The preceding forewords were written by a founding scholar, Lotte Bailyn (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and the director of the International Center of Work and Family (Nuria Chinchilla, IESE Business School). The

chapters in parts I to VII correspond to the different conference tracks. Finally, Tammy Allen (University of South Florida) presents the concluding vision chapter.

Audience of the book

This book is aimed at academics and practitioners engaged or interested in the growing, multi-disciplinary field of work–family or work–life research, and more specifically work–family experts working in the applied organizational sciences, including industrial and organizational psychology, organizational behaviour, management, human resource management, occupational health psychology, diversity and gender studies. Given the fact that the book has a clear emphasis on applied research, and is future oriented, the book is also of interest to practitioners interested in work–family research, such as human resource managers and consultants, policymakers, diversity managers and gender experts. Given its international cast of authors, the book is global in outlook.

Purpose of the book

The purpose of this book is to serve the need of an international community of work–family academics around the globe for an ambitious research agenda and guidelines. Both seasoned researchers and incoming PhD students can find inspiration to further advance their research in directions set by thought leaders. The very backbone of the book consists of a series of vision chapters that go beyond the actual state of the art, focusing on what can and should be done, in addition to what has been done. To conclude, we hope that this book, because of its preparation through three international academic conferences and the specific briefing to be bold and forward looking, will serve the field of work–life research for many years to come. We are grateful for the undivided support of some of the leading scholars in the field, and for the work of our “captains”, who helped the editorial team with the careful selection of innovative papers. Thanks to these efforts we have been able to realize the very purpose of the book to provide a view of future work–family research in a global perspective.

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Part I

Work–Life Policies and Flexible Work Arrangements in Organizations

1

Work–Life Policies: Linking National Contexts, Organizational Practice and People for Multi-level Change

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Introduction

A growing area of societal concern across the globe pertains to family-responsive employment policies and practices that are designed to improve individuals' ability to effectively carry out work and family demands over the career span (Kammerman, 2005a). Work–family policies and practices are adopted by employers and governments to help employees jointly manage work and non-work roles; enable successful participation in labour market activity, family and personal life; and enhance quality of life (Kossek, 2005, 2006). They are ostensibly designed to reduce work–family conflicts, and foster positive engagement in work, family and personal life over a career. These policies facilitate employees' involvement in care-giving for children, elders, or other family members; and many non-work pursuits such as education, volunteering, leisure and self-care (health, exercise) (Ollier-Malaterre, 2009;

Ryan & Kossek, 2008). Common policies include flexible work arrangements providing: control over the time, timing, continuity and amount of work; direct dependent care supports, such as child and elder care services and employee assistance plans; and information and social support for managing work-family stress and health, such as network groups and seminars (Kossek & Friede, 2006).

Despite the growth in work-family policies, more theoretical and empirical development is needed to enable improved in-depth research on their adoption and effectiveness across cultures. Most research today is generally descriptive, comparing the availability of policies (and to a lesser extent use) across nations. Sometimes, it is not clear if the same policies are designed similarly when being compared, as different cultures and stakeholder groups within cultures frame their intent differently.

To address this gap, the goal of our chapter is to help develop a future research agenda on work-family policies. Our chapter is motivated by a series of international work-family conferences held at IESE business school in Spain starting after the turn of the new millennium. The conference highlighted that many different conceptualizations of work-family policies exist across societies. Our objectives are to identify the wide variation in prevailing social constructions that continue to vary within and across cultural contexts, and discuss the measurement and theoretical implications of these conceptualizations for future research. We argue that scholars and policymakers should first identify work-family policy design elements and goals, and link these views to systematic measurement and theory. We see the need for improved theoretical applications of strategic intent, as policies are often conceived to address several goals simultaneously. This could be achieved through improved construct measurement, and multi-level analysis examining nested contextual relationships. Research should identify and measure not only formal objectives but also unexpected developments from policy availability and use, such as discrimination backlash, gender role rigidity, labour market barriers and successes.

Our chapter begins with (1) a brief discussion on the movement to study work-family policies under the work-life umbrella with examples of the breadth of issues across contexts and (2) delineation of some of the research challenges in cross-cultural policy work. Then we focus the bulk of our discussion on four main frameworks that have been used to understand the goals and design of work-family policies and future research implications. We conclude the chapter with examples of illustrative multi-level frameworks that would allow more cross-national measurement of issues and variables to be studied. We see multi-level work as critical for better assessment of the contextualization of the environment and nested relationships shaping work-family policies within and across nations.

From work–family to work–life across cultures

In the past few decades, the field has broadened to use the term work–life policies often interchangeably with work–family policies as a way to include all employees, even those without children or families in the work–family agenda (Kossek et al., 2011a). For example, Ollier-Malaterre (2009: 160) defines organizational work–life initiatives as

formal policies and informal arrangements allowing employees to manage their roles, responsibilities, and interests in their life as whole persons, engaged in work and non-work domains. Non-work notably encompasses the family, the community, friendships, personal development and life-long training projects, political, associative, spiritual and sports activities, and leisure.

(Thévenet, 2001)

This conceptual expansion in the field from work–family to work–life policies has occurred partly to reduce political backlash and views of inequities from employees and members of society who did not necessarily have immediate needs for public or private support to reconcile work and family involvement (Kossek et al., 2011a). The movement to refer to work–life policies started in US multinationals as a way to mainstream work–family policies as a benefit. This trend began to transfer to overseas locations as the global economy heated up in the 1990s. Overall, societies and employers are evolving to increasingly recognize the importance of adapting employment settings to support not only women with salient work–family and domestic demands, but all employees’ personal lives outside work (Kossek et al., 2010; Lewis et al., 2007). The rising stress of 24–7 demands of the global economy is growing across many nations and workforces, popularized most recently by the suicides and negative publicity in China at Foxcom, an Apple iPad supplier (New York Times, 2012). Global interest in work–family policies broadens their conceptualization to include not only dependent care, but increasing work hours, intensification, workloads, and job and family strain.

While the type of issues defined as “work–family policies” is generally expanding, what is considered a “work–family” or “work–life” issue can vary greatly from country to country. For example, in India, a growing work–family policy is night transport for women from the workplace to home to ensure public safety (Rajan & Tomlinson, 2009). In Chile, some women prefer to work from or close to home as they do not want to be too far away from their children in case violence breaks out in their communities. Some Chilean mothers also are deterred from greater labour market participation because they choose not to use public-supported child care, as they don’t trust institutions such as the government to provide care of high quality (Lagos, 2009). In Scandinavia, work–family policies are more normalized as part of national cultural values, and therefore not considered as hot a topic as in other some developed countries such as the US. Since both men

and women are assumed to spend time working and caring for dependants, use of work–life policies is culturally mainstreamed into the organization of work and society as a whole (Linden, 2007). In Greece, immigration laws that make it easy for immigrant caregivers to cross borders have created a global caregiving chain. It is not uncommon for women from Georgia to immigrate to Greece to provide eldercare or women from the Philippines to provide childcare and house cleaning (Apospori, 2009). In the US, growing numbers of professionals telework around the clock from home and must learn how to re-socialize their families to recognize when it would be acceptable to interrupt them (Kossek & Lautsch, 2008). Their constant physical presence while working creates ongoing confusion over their psychological availability for family needs. Also in the US, work–family policies can relate to increasing schedule predictability for low income retail workers who are often single mothers moving from welfare to work, and have difficulty arranging childcare and commutes for last minute schedules (Henly & Lambert, 2009). These examples illustrate the wide range and uniqueness of work–family policy issues across cultures that are not being fully captured in current research.

Research challenges

Despite growing interest in work–family policies, many challenges remain that must be addressed to advance future study. Because this topic is so broad, this chapter is not meant to be an exhaustive review, but rather to identify some illustrative challenges and future research areas.

Work–family policy context and framing

The first challenge is that although the social construction of work–family policies and the context in which they are embedded matters for the measurement and understanding of work–family policies, context and framing are often overlooked in studies. A key challenge is that common conceptualizations, definitions and measures do not readily exist, making it difficult to assess the impact of policies within and across organizational and national contexts. We also lack comprehensive frameworks to allow for measurement of the relative influence of the state and employers in work–family policy-adoption and implementation. In some countries, such as the US, the government provides relatively little support and engages in minimal regulation of employers on work–family issues. Yet in Scandinavia and France, for example, the government offers far more policies than do employers, and it actively protects workers' rights to have paid time off from work for family needs. Few studies consider these contextual influences on employees' work–family experiences, and use of policies.

Need for better measures and theory

Unintended discriminatory consequences from using policies. Additional challenges are that rather than reducing work force discrimination,

increasing work force inclusion, and enhancing the reconciliation of work and personal life, work–family policies can sometimes have unintended and even negative consequences that often are not fully assessed. For example, work–family policies can foster work intensification and reinforce images of ideal workers who do not need to use work–family policies. In some countries, with developed economies and very generous work–family policies, women are the heaviest users. At the same time, few women have risen to be leaders and heads of corporations. Many leave the labour market for long periods and never catch up with wages, and some never return full time, if at all (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

Yet many scholars take a rational view, assuming that using policies necessarily leads to positive results pertaining to their stated purpose. This utilitarian approach of taking policies' goals at face value can be naïve. The societal level of discrimination emanating from policy use varies across nations. Further, different demographic user groups, depending on their status in the labour market and in organizational and economic hierarchies, may also experience varying levels of discrimination or ability to access policies. These are examples of the need for improved measures in assessing design intent and impact.

Theoretical conceptualization of work–family policies. We also lack conceptual frameworks to classify different types of supports being offered, which also exacerbates cross-national study of work–family policies and practices. Offering direct support, such as childcare, that increases the supply of quality childcare is a very different type of assistance from offering flexibility in work hours, yet few studies have considered the differential effects of different types of policies (Kossek, 2005, 2006). Researchers also still conceptually confound the mere availability of policies with their use in studies, which are clearly different (Kossek, 2005). Both use and availability are valuable antecedents of work–family well-being, but must be studied separately as they may lead to different outcomes. Who has access to work–family support in a society is a vastly different question from who can and is likely to use these types of support with positive outcomes?

Differentiating work–family policy, job design and cultural support. Research should also differentiate between formal policies such as a telework policy (access or use of formal policy permitting employees to work from home) to job design (the extent to which a job is designed with a lot of autonomy to control where, when and how one works) and culture (a supervisor or results-oriented organizational climate that informally allows an employee to work at home when they need to without asking permission). These are examples of research issues that are not being fully captured in studies, but could be if formal policy, job structures work–family practice and cultural support were simultaneously examined in cross-national studies. One avenue to address these issues is to examine the different conceptual frameworks underlying work–family policies' design and goals, and then consider their measurement implications for processes and outcomes.

Shifting conceptualizations in context: measurement linkages

Definitions, social constructions and objectives of organizational work–family policies have shifted in meaning over time and across cultural contexts. Scholars need to more carefully identify objectives for the adoption and use of work–family policies, and clarify how the contexts in which the studies are being conducted are defining work–family policies. Many meanings and objectives are prevalent and overlap across and within organizational and societal cultural contexts. In this section, we identify four prevailing conceptualizations of work–family policies and consider future research implications including measurement needs. These include: (1) Multi-level cultural and structural support for work, family and personal life; (2) Gender equality and diversity inclusion initiatives; (3) State social policy or business initiative; and (4) Organizational change initiatives to foster employee health, resiliency and engagement.

Multi-level cultural and structural support for work, family and personal life

Multi-level cultural and structural support. We build on the Kossek et al. (2010) definition and refer to work–family policies and practices as those designed to enhance organizational structural and cultural support for work, family and personal life. *Structural work–life support* refers to human resource policies and practices and job structures designed to increase employee job flexibility to control the location, place or amount of work, as well as to provide resources (e.g. information, services) to facilitate the joint enactment of the work with meaningful caregiving and non-work identities. *Cultural work–life support* is defined as informal workplace social and relational support, for example, from supervisors and co-workers together with organizational and societal cultural values regarding the degree to which employees who have joint involvement in work and family roles are fully valued, and feel they can use available work–life supports without jeopardy to their jobs.

Given that organizations reflect and are the synthesis of surrounding cultures, cultural support can cross many levels such as *national, occupational, ethnic* (Bardoel & de Cieri, 2006), the latter of which often covaries with class and workforce gender, age and racial demography. It is important to examine each of these cultural lenses separately before one can begin to understand how they interact across levels. For example, some national cultures (e.g. US) prefer little government and institutional regulation of work–family policies, while others value government regulation (e.g. France) (Ollier-Malaterre, 2009). Regarding occupational cultures, some, such as professional and managerial cultures, often have problems with overwork and having too much flexibility, where cell phones and laptop use can induce professionals to work electronically at any time, 24–7.

Other occupational cultures, such as blue collar and hourly workers, or employees with customer-facing jobs, may have the opposite cultural problem of having too much separation between work and family. Unlike many professionals, those working in these occupations cannot work at home. Teleworking is a practice that may support involvement in family caregiving, as one may be able to have an easier time coordinating childcare, as children are often cared for in neighbourhoods close to home or at home. Blue collar and direct service workers may assume that they are not able to make a phone call or receive a text or email from a family member unless on break.

Class and income cultural influences on work–family policy use and need are also important to include in cross-national studies. For example, low income employees in the US face the problem of under-work and what is referred to as “precarious employment” (Kalleberg, 2009). Such occupational cultures involve acceptance of scheduling practices, typically in key service sectors such as retail, food and hotels in the US economy, that use “just in time scheduling” and labour cost minimization of work hours (Henly & Lambert, 2009). Employer-driven flexibility is used in a way that hinders employees’ abilities to care for their families (Henly & Lambert, 2009). Low income occupational cultures exist where US workers (and employers) assume it is an acceptable *modus operandi* for workers to lack policies ensuring they get sufficient hours to be able to economically provide for themselves and their families. Workers are socialized to not expect to be able to take paid sick days. They know they can lose their job if they are absent when they or a child is ill.

An example of ethnic cultural influences refers to the powerful sway of religious institutions socializing members on how family life should be structured, and the role of men and women in society. Women such as those in some Muslim countries, for example, may not be encouraged to work outside of the home, or to go to school. Their main role is to be primary caregivers. All of these examples suggest different cultural influences at the state, occupational and ethnic levels of the nature of work–family policies needed and enacted around the globe. Yet these influences are rarely studied as part of “culture” in work–family studies except sometimes in comparative case studies (e.g. Ollier-Malaterre, 2009).

Even when societal “culture” is considered, the focus is on cultural values such as Hofstede’s (1980) measures of collectivism and individualism and femininity and those of the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness) project (House et al., 2004). Studies rarely consider the effects of national employment systems and labour markets, institutions, or the role of the state, unions, government or industry leaders. As Peters & den Dulk (2005: 14) explained in their paper at an early conference on cross-national cultural support of telework, citing Tregaskis (2000), “Since the focus is on national culture, other national characteristics, such

as the information society and the role of government, industrial relations and trade unions will not be discussed.”

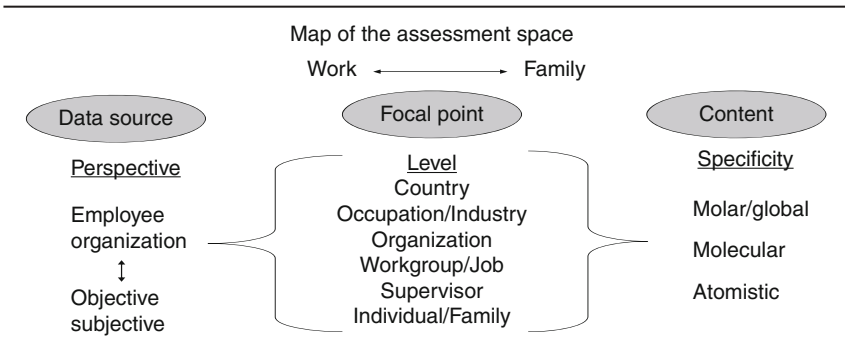
We now turn to examples of cultural support at the workplace level. These include social support of supervisors and co-workers for employees’ non-work demands, and values fostering positive group and organizational norms (see Hammer et al., 2009; Kossek et al., 2011). Within the firm, cultural support operates at two interactive levels: the work group level, where one receives relational support from managers or co-workers; and the organizational level, where resources and overarching cultural values and norms are engendered. The integration of these systems within an organization is critical in moving work–life supports into the mainstream of organizational functioning.

Cultural and relational support is proving to be a critical factor influencing whether or not workers make use of work–life policies (Allen, 2001). Informal supervisor support for family is a critical determinant in whether or not workers have access to formal work–life policies (Hammer et al., 2009; Kossek et al., 1999). Cultural supports also include culture change initiatives that support the legitimacy of “good employees” being seen as dually involved in caregiving and other non-work roles while sustaining employment and pursuing a career. Support can also include enabling one to slow down a career for non-work needs, such as reducing hours, taking a job leave, or allowing opportunities to re-enter the workforce without a career penalty.

Kossek and colleagues (2010) argued that work–family policies are likely to be most effective when structural and cultural supports are aligned and linked to organizational (and societal) social systems. When work–family policies and their cultural support are not well integrated, structural support is perceived as an entitlement and a privileged accommodation (Holt & Lewis, 2011). When their use is not seen as a normal way of doing business, work–family policies have the unintended consequences of promoting in- and out-group dynamics between those who value and need work–family supports and those who do not use the policies (Lautsch and Kossek, 2009).

Multiple levels of work–family policies. As shown in Table 1.1’s depiction of the work–family policy assessment spaces, cultural and structural support via work–family policies and practices operates up to six levels of analysis. The first level is that of the individual employee and his or her degree of need for work–family policy use. The second level is supervisor support, as supervisors are often the main gatekeepers to work–family policy access and use (Kossek et al., 2011c). Further, there is wide variation regarding the family supportive behaviours demonstrated by supervisors (Hammer et al., 2011). The third level is a combination of work group and type of job being carried out in the work group. Workgroup can refer to teams, departments or business units within the firm, as there is often a lot of variance in availability and use within firms of policies. For example, professional managers may be able to telework but employees working in the plant may not. Job type is not

Table 1.1 Map of the multi-level work–family policy assessment space



the only determinant of policy availability, as subcultures may exist between departments. For instance, one department may have a manager and/or co-workers who support virtual work but another may not. Workgroup can also reflect job demographic access to flexibility as in some groups access is widely available while in others access is constructed as an idiosyncratic deal (Kossek et al., 2011b). The fourth level is the organizational level, where leaders transmit organizational cultural values and norms and allocate resources toward policy adoption to support work and non-work relationships. At the fifth level is the industry and occupation. Industries also may vary widely in employment policy views and how human capital is viewed: for example, as a creative value added resource or as a labour cost to be minimized. Such cultural views may be linked to the formal availability and cultural support for work–family policies. Labour market demography may also be an influence in availability. For example, hospitals were early adopters of on-site child care centres as the large female labour pool normalized the industry institutional awareness of the need for and interest in adopting work–family policies (Kossek, 2006). In contrast, manufacturing has always been slower to provide direct on-site care or flexibility. The sixth level refers to society and institutional cultural support at the country level. This level captures the national cultural values regarding the importance of work–life balance, and how well-being is culturally shared and may vary as a societal value and a public policy investment issue (Ollier-Malaterre, 2011b).

Measurement and construct implications: Cultural and structural multi-level view. Studies should include measures of antecedents and/or outcomes, where relevant from at least two levels considering the influence of nested relationships. Examples of levels include: individual employee needs and values, the workgroup level (supervisor or co-worker views) reflecting the degree to which policies have been locally adopted, the organizational level, the industry and occupational level, and the societal level. Research should include measures of both structural support and cultural support of

work–family policies and the degree to which they are aligned. An example of alignment might be the degree to which a telework policy that exists as a formal policy is culturally supported by the organizational culture. Structural support at the national level might relate to measuring the degree to which broadband internet is available to low income neighbourhoods. Zoning that would allow the use of private space for enterprise would also be an example of structural societal support. A multi-level study might look at an individual worker's behaviour and attitudes regarding the use of teleworking, and the degree to which the organizational or national cultures and structures support working from home as a main economic activity for individuals who also have active daily involvement with caregiving. Constructs need to continue to be validated measuring cultural influences from the national level, occupational level, ethnic and class levels, and from workgroup or supervisors on formal policy and informal practice.

Work–family policies as gender equality and diversity inclusion initiatives

The term work–family policies emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in Anglo-Saxon nations to refer to employer or governmental support of childcare and flexible working time for employees with visible work–family conflicts (e.g. women with young children) (Kossek, 2006; Ollier-Malaterre, 2009). Such policies began appearing in many societies to foster improved integration of women into the labour force as part of equal employment opportunity measures (Kossek et al., 2010), to manage national fertility rates (Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004) and spur economic growth (European Commission, 2010), or as social welfare for low income mothers (Kossek, 2006).

Much of this early research focused on employer adoption and prevalence (but not necessarily effectiveness) of policies and was descriptive. Studies typically assessed the prevalence of formal policies such as flexitime or on-site childcare centres that were offered to help provide resources to support family care or flexibility in the timing of work to enable women's participation in both work and family roles. Many studies simply analysed how the availability of policies related to employee attitudes (Lambert, 2000). Scholars and employers argued that the prevalence of policies showed a symbolic caring role that provided added benefits to employees even if they didn't use them (Lambert, 2000). These historical roots are very important as many countries and companies today still include workforce inclusion as one of the goals and foci of work–family policies.

Measurement and construct implications: Gender equality and inclusion. To assess gender equality objectives, studies may want to include evaluation of the degree to which work–family policies are effective in enhancing gender equality between men and women in employing organizations and in society. Such studies should also look at how caregiving demands and the equality of men's involvement in domestic life and women's involvement in

public life may be influenced as a result of these policies. For example, what are the labour force participation rates of men and women in companies and society according to the prevalence and use of work–family policies? What are the gender differences between policy utilization and pay and career progression? Is there a significant motherhood or fatherhood penalty for time out of the labour market? How do women and men from different racial and socioeconomic classes have varying access to these policies and what are the consequences of using them in terms of equal employment outcomes?

Work–family policies defined as state social policy lever or business initiative

Employer innovation and work–family social policy prioritization. Although cross-national contexts vary widely in the degree to which work–family policies are defined as primarily social policy or business initiatives, relatively few comparative studies are published on work–family policies (Ollier-Malaterre, 2005). (See Gornick & Heron, 2006 for an exception). Certainly a critical issue in studying employer-work–family policies pertains to the national context in which they are situated (Kossek et al., 2010). Few work–family studies consider this influence on breadth and innovation. When work–family policies are defined as important to national social policy effectiveness, the state tends to be much more active in supporting public welfare policies – particularly paid leaves of absence.

Paid leaves of absence for maternity or paternity leave and childcare are where most government innovation has occurred. The state employment policy and level of activism in regulating employer and employee activity can have a tremendous influence on the length of the maternity leave, whether men or women or both parents can take leave, and length of pay. Across nations, leave policies differ markedly in length, levels of benefits, eligibility standards and take-up (Kammerman, 2005b). More research needs to be done on the causes and consequences of this variation. Some studies are beginning to link leave length and use to child well-being (Berger et al., 2005). And even within social policy lenses, it is important to identify which social policy agenda is being advanced in measurement. For example, Kamerman (2005b) points out that leaves vary in design depending on whether their goal is to promote women’s domestic involvement in child rearing and serve as an incentive to stay home and care for young children, to help reduce work–family conflicts and promote the well-being of children while parents work, or to enable more choices over when and how long to work or stay home when children are young. Each of these different goals and designs would suggest different outcome measures of policy effectiveness, and different factors may influence policy take up.

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 draw on United Nations data (United Nations Statistics Division, 2009) and show that the US government provides much

Maternity leave: Length in days



Maternity leave around the world: Length in weeks

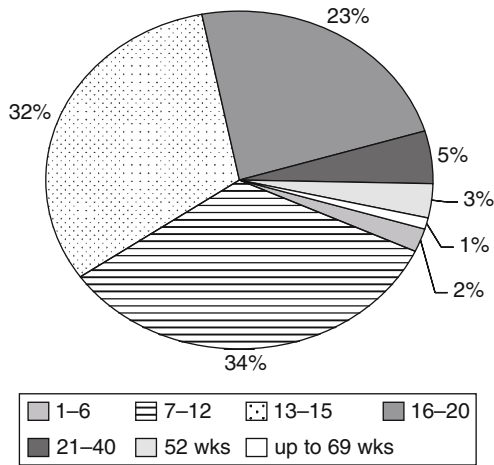


Figure 1.1 Maternity leave policies around the world: length in days and weeks
 Source: United Nations Statistics Division, Indicators on Women and Men, Maternity leave benefits, United Nations, New York, 2009.



Figure 1.2 Percentage of wages paid during maternity leave

Source: International Labour Organization report: "Maternity at Work: A Review of National Legislation, Second Edition"; United Nations statistics division, United Nations, New York, 2010.

less support for work and family leaves and paid time off after childbirth than most other nations (Canada, EU countries, Latin America). Public government supported childcare (often of good quality for all economic classes) is also more readily available for working parents in many other countries than in the US, which primarily focuses public care supports (e.g. Head Start) on low income mothers as a welfare to work strategy.

Despite lagging (and perhaps in reaction to) limited US social policy support of work and family issues, the US has been seen as a pioneer for employer private sector lead work–life issues (Ollier-Malaterre, 2007). It was one of the first nations to define work–family issues as a business prerogative. When work–family issues are not defined as social policy issues, some scholars argue that this conceptualization fosters far greater experimentation of employers in the breadth and strength of supports for work and family (Kossek et al., 2010). Conversely, when work and family are defined more as a social policy lever, and resources are available to encourage labour market participation of working caregivers, governments and the welfare state can take a much more activist role. This argument may be more universally relevant to developed economies. It is unclear in some developing economies whether lack of state support will foster employer innovation for local firms. International HRM – (Human Resource Management) research suggests

that for international human resource practices, when both national and corporate culture come into place for global practices, the parent company culture of the organization sometimes starts to trump national culture. For example, a US multinational parent company's practices may be followed in non-US subsidiaries due to convergence in international HR strategy overruling national culture (Briscoe et al., 2012).

Recently, there have been signs that some governments are beginning to frame work-family support issues as an economic issue as well, and are seeking to spur private sectors into action to fill the weakening social safety net as economic public resources become reduced. Greater activism is occurring in some nations on work-family issues that focus on the labour market participation of women and flexible work arrangements to increase national economic growth. Recently, The Netherlands' government held an international conference called "24 and More" as a way to develop policy to encourage women to work more than 24 hours a week. The Netherlands has the highest number of part-time workers, and the Dutch government sees growing female labour market participation as an economic lever. Similarly, the government of Singapore, which has the fastest growing economy in the world, started holding annual national work-family conferences. The government sees flexibility and work-family support measures as a way to add economic value to the economy and has started giving out annual best employer awards to companies that offer work-family support. Interest in work-family flexibility as a business issue or social policy is a relatively recent development. Legislation supporting a worker's right to request flexible arrangements has also been passed in the UK and Australia, among nations (Ollier-Malaterre, 2011a).

Unintended consequences of defining work-family as a business or an economic issue. Defining work-family issues as mainly the purview of business has several unintended consequences that are ripe for future research. First, there is greater unevenness in societies in the degree to which employees in different occupations and industries have access to support. There is no minimum floor or protection for worker's needs for work-family policies.

Second, when employers have free reign in whether and how they respond to work-family needs of the workforce, these firms can co-opt work-family policies and use them for public relations. Employers can posture that they have work-family policies as signs of being progressive and family-friendly, sometimes without having to actually change the way business is done. The early diffusion of organizational work-family policies in the USA is an example of this. Early on, work-family policies served a symbolic role reflecting growing awareness of the need for these policies in response to institutional isomorphic responses (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) such as adapting to Equal Employment Opportunity laws. Work-family policies emerged as bureaucratic structures showing initial recognition of work-family support as an important business issue. Organizations either copied other leading employers, mimicking the actions of best employers, or only responded to labour

market pressures when it was profitable to do so (Ingram & Simons, 1995; Kossek et al., 1994).

Konrad and Linnehan (1995) went so far as to critically argue that formalized HR policies such as work–family policies served as identity-conscious concealing structures to make it appear as if employing organizations had adapted to the growing gender diversity in the labour force, without really changing the embedded organizational structures reinforcing separation of work and family roles. Thus, when businesses have the ability to define what is work–family policy responsiveness, these policies in some firms served as “window dressing”. A company could appear to be family-friendly, but the cultural reality of organizational life might not support this. One article entitled “If you can use them” (Eaton, 2003) aptly discussed the issue of employees being frustrated with policies being on the books at the organizational level, and companies could even win awards as progressive employers, but employees within the firm did not experience their company as family-friendly, and could not readily access policies. Perhaps this gap is because the business press has often given more publicity to the adoption, but not necessarily the implementation, of work–family policies, which has resulted in work–family policies sometimes being viewed as an HR fad for “corporate progressivism” (Kanter, 1977). Adopting these policies in hopes of being nominated to *Working Mother* best employer lists is seen as employee branding and a recruitment strategy more than a way to support employees’ personal lives.

Global economic influences on framing work–family policies as either a social policy or business issue. The influence of the global economy has now resulted in the economies of nations being more interdependent. Furthermore, large (often US employers) are playing a role in the growing adoption and diffusion of the US voluntary employer approach to work–family policies worldwide. As leading multinationals began to globalize human resource systems in the 1980s and 1990s, these included diversity and work–family policies (Bardoel & de Cieri, 2006). Work–family concepts based on a US market minimalist approach to supporting workers did not fully travel well to other cultural contexts. Global employers developed international HR policies reflecting common corporate strategies of multinationals’ parent company cultures regarding work–life issues where, for professional and managerial workers, there was a surprisingly global convergence with less customization to local national contexts (Bardoel & de Cieri, 2006). The US firms’ focus on voluntary employer support of work–family roles made it easier for developing economies such as China, India, Brazil and Russia to make choices to place fewer resources into work and family supports and allowed them to promote other aspects of the economic engine. Now that the global economy is in the doldrums and the Euro in the EU is facing economic challenges, what could occur is both the state and business diverting significant resources away from, or even withdrawing from, strong support of work–family policies.

Yet cultures vary in the degree to which employers are trusted to be supportive of family lives, and not to use these policies to abuse employees, such as by giving flexibility during the day for no pay in split shifts (Ollier-Malaterre, 2005). Thus, even with the growing convergence of HR practices in global firms, studies show very low take up of work-life policies in countries where employees prefer the state and not employers to respond to work-life issues. Such countries might include those that sociologist Esping-Andersen (1990) labelled “socio-democrat” welfare state regimes, such as Scandinavian countries, as well as some “corporatist” welfare state regimes characterized by strong family policies at governmental level, such as France and more recently Germany, as well as some Eastern European countries such as Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovenia.

There is a risk, however, when countries define work-family policies as the purview of governments or businesses but not in partnership. In those cases, cracks in the national and global economies could result in a decline in the overall availability of these policies to workers in general. Overall, the economic demands of the global economy could result in a lack of availability of support for families from either the state or the business. For example, over the last decade, as the US economy has slowed, there has been a decrease in public and private sector direct support for the supply of quality infant care. In such cases only professionals whose extra income allows them to hire nannies (often from other lower wage immigrant countries) are able to do so to fill the overall decrease in care supply.

Other examples of the link between national work-family policy and economic context come from France. The 35-hour work week in France was implemented to reduce unemployment (share the work) and enable employers to organize production and work more flexibly. In exchange for reduced hours, employers gained more leeway in terms of how they schedule work hours within the week and the year. As a result, whole categories of employees saw their work-life balance actually decrease, because their work hours were scattered during the day and the week: employees in grocery stores, for instance, would work during peak hours for shopping, thus early in the morning, then during lunch time and then again late afternoon and in the evening. They would work less hours, but these hours were precisely the hours where those with family responsibilities would have needed time off. For professional workers, the 35-hour work week was negotiated so that professionals and managers still worked the long days that are typical of France but had one or two additional weeks of vacation. This resulted in an immediate intensification of work as workloads kept rising and few additional hires were made. In fact, the classic divide that is often observed within teams and workplaces, and also within countries, between an over-worked population on the one hand – in this case professionals and managers who continue working 50- or 60-hour work weeks – and an under-worked population on the other hand – in this case the numerous unemployed educated

professionals (Ollier-Malaterre, 2011b) – is still observed. As these examples suggest, researchers across countries need to develop better common definitions of policies and practices. There also needs to be more transparency in identifying their social intent across societal and organizational contexts.

Measurement and construct implications: Defining work–family policy as either Social Policy or a Business Imperative. Studies need to include some cross-national measure similar to the GLOBE studies of cross-cultural variation in leadership and management values regarding the degree to which work–family issues are seen as a business or social policy responsibility or both (House et al., 2004). This might allow studies to assess cultural variation in the degree to which leaders see organizations or the state as responsible for work–family policies. Such measures are likely correlated with House’s measures of Humane Orientation, the degree to which leaders value caring for others, as well as with measures of masculinity and femininity of culture. Measures might also be developed in the degree to which citizens prefer to see government, business, communities, or individuals as responsible for work–family policies. Such measures could then be used as moderators to examine the linkages between the availability of work–family policies use and positive employee outcomes.

Scholars also need to come up with indexes of total work–family demands and supports in a society. Such measures might examine the degree to which the state provides these policies and the extent to which employers in general consider work–life supports as a business prerogative. Outcome measures should be included, including both social policy and business measures. For example, to what extent are low birth weights minimized, what percent of children finish school, what measures are there of family, parent and couple well-being? Are elders being cared for and are their retirements a positive experience? Some work is emerging on this topic, for instance the work of Chen et al. (2011) on family role performance, that is indicators of performance in the family domain.

Business measures need to be developed that capture indirect linkages between work and family related influences on labor market participation that influence not only organizational profitability but indirectly increase state revenues from taxes and gross national product. For example, the hours employees are willing to work and the extent to which different workforce segments with various market caregiving demands participate in the labour force might be developed. Productivity measures related to worker quality, engagement, well-being and identification with work, and the role work–family policies play in how this variation relates to selectiveness in the hiring and qualifications of workers, could be created.

Behavioural measures related to productivity, such as turnover and absenteeism, and extra-role behaviours are often mentioned as key outcomes to include in studies. Yet research is rarely conducted in a rigorous, randomized,

longitudinal manner so that these effects can be attributed to the use and availability of work–family policies (Kossek & Ozeki, 1999).

Studies need to include employer measures not only of the availability of work–family policies on paper but also on employee measures of their positive experiences with policies and the ease of access across many types of citizen groups in society, to avoid the problems in lack of implementation of policies. We also recommend that researchers move away from the tendency to study policies either in isolation or in counts of offerings. We suggest that studies should ideally measure several aspects of policy availability and effectiveness to assess the cultural implications of these policies. For example, what percentage of the workforce truly wants and values these policies, and are they able to use them without jeopardy across gender, societies and borders? How are breadth and strength of employer policies linked to the breadth and strength of public policies? Researchers could also come up with assessments of a best nation for business effectiveness and social policy index, rather than measuring these issues separately, which is often done. One way to measure effectiveness would be to assess how the organization, employees or government has framed the objectives and construction of the policies and to then compare the design of policies.

Organizational change initiatives to foster employee health, resiliency and engagement

A movement has started in some developed economies (e.g. USA, Finland, UK and Sweden) to leverage work–family policies to actually change organizations. Since work–family policies broadened to work–life policies, employer interest in the structure of work has implications for the health and wellbeing of employees, and their overall resilience and engagement in work and life.

A new body of work has started (cf. Kelly et al., 2008; Kossek & Ruderman, 2012) to examine work–family initiatives as deliberate organizational changes – in policies, practices or the target culture – to reduce work–family conflict and/or support employees' health and resiliency on and off the job. Researchers are now beginning not only to study familiar work–life policies and benefits, but also to look at work redesign. Employees and managers are asked to question assumptions regarding the way in which work is managed, organized and performed to move to a results-oriented workplace and foster a dual agenda that jointly improves productivity on the job and off the job (e.g. Perlow, 1997; Rapoport et al., 2002).

The phrase “work–family interventions” is now in some studies being used to replace the term “work–family policies”. When this occurs, work–family policies are seen as conscious organizational changes designed to alter the workplace to improve resiliency on and off the job and improve worker and organizational health. The goal is to either improve the current structure of work to create a more healthy psychosocial work context or to shift the

power from managers to employees, to give workers increased support and control over how, when and where work is done. The intervention view broadens definitions of work–family policies to take an integrative look at the joint effects of (1) formal policies supporting the juggling of work and family/non-work roles; (2) informal cultural support and management practice regarding face time and the hegemony of personal and family life in relation to work; and (3) job design conditions and human resource policies that give workers control over where, when and how they do their work (Kossek, 2006; Kossek & Distelberg, 2009).

Measurement implications of organizational change conceptualization. Intervention perspectives promote improved research designs that are longitudinal, randomized or at least quasi-experimental, and have control and treatment groups. Some promising new research is coming out using randomized group samples and site-level random assignment of work–family change policies that allow scholars to isolate the effects of interventions (Hammer et al., 2011; Kelly & Moen, 2011).

The term “intervention” implies organizational change and development, and the creation of healthy positive workplaces that foster resiliency. Future research studies need to reframe conceptualizations of work–family policies as societal and/or organizational interventions designed to improve relationships between work and family roles (Kelly et al., 2008). In this way, their effectiveness in fostering and sustaining change, and the adaptation of employment settings to global and national social and labour market developments, can be evaluated over time. We also suggest that outcomes and effectiveness measures might be broadened to include multiple indicators of effectiveness reflecting divergence and convergence across cultures and stakeholder groups (e.g. children, families, workers, employers and nations). Such an approach might suggest that families can be included in the design and delivery of the change efforts and may provide different views on the effectiveness of interventions. Dual agenda outcome measures of healthy employees and organizational health, resilient and sustainable workplaces and families, would be included in such studies.

The need for multi-level research

Having discussed the many levels and frames used to conceptualize work–family policies, we close the chapter with further discussion of multi-level research implications. There is the tendency to study work–family policies in organizational or national contextual silos, with a lack of linkage between micro and macro views of policies, or between employer and employee views. We see a need for multi-level research bridging each perspective and using institutional, cross-cultural and systems theory to assess policies at different levels (country, civil society, employer, work group, supervisor, employee and family). Although there are numerous calls for multi-level research (Ollier-Malaterre, 2005), such research is scarce on work–family

policies, partly because of the conceptual and methodological difficulties noted in this chapter. The preceding review suggests that a multi-level research agenda is needed not only because the effects of work–family policies cascade across levels on the assessment space, as shown in Table 1.1, but also, more importantly, they are not just a private responsibility, a matter for public policy, or just an issue for business.

The need for multi-level linkages. Current work–life research tends to be Anglo-Saxon centric, single countries or cluster of countries centric (e.g. the USA and Canada) and quantitative centric. As Poelmans (2003) has pointed out, most studies have been conducted in Anglo-Saxon countries, or Asian countries. Therefore, data are missing for Eastern and Latin countries, even though work–life conflict may be high because of the salience of the family as an institution. More qualitative designs are needed to understand the interactions between the macro, meso and micro levels (Poelmans et al., 2005).

An important gap in work–family research is the lack of linkages between micro and macros views of policies, or between employer and employee views. For example, what are the pros and cons of the state or the private sector providing work–family policies? How do these entities interface in policy-delivery activities? What are the implications of these policies for employee, family and society well-being?

Macro level context does however strongly impact work–life phenomena. For instance, work–life balance emerged as a domain of interest for HR practitioners and a field of research in the late 1970s in the USA (Kammerman & Kahn, 1987), in the late 1980s in the UK (Brannen & Lewis, 2000) and in the late 2000s in France (Ollier-Malaterre, 2007). This delayed interest in France cannot be explained by lesser needs for work–life support. We expound on France here as an exemplar. Demographic trends in France and in the USA are quite similar, with women massively participating in the workforce, dual-career couples and a steady rise in single-parent families. French workers spend fewer days at work, but then the days are longer and more intensive, which makes sense if we recall that French productivity per day worked is quite high (Ollier-Malaterre, 2007). Rather, the reasons why French employers have been less responsive in terms of work–life support pertain to socio-institutional factors. Roughly put, French employers have been offering fewer work–life programmes and practices because French employees' expectations are geared towards government support more than employer support, for a host of reasons rooted in the 1789 revolution and some Marxist reminiscences. There are also considerable public provisions and services, such as parental leaves, childcare infrastructure and allowances, and free or affordable education for children and adults that societal members are socialized to expect from the government (Ollier-Malaterre, 2009).

Interestingly, the socio-institutional differences between France and the USA are reflected in the way that work–life research is structured in both

countries. Work–life research in France is more developed among sociologists, political scientists and demographers because public policy is the most developed area for work–life support in France. On the other hand, work–life research in North America is very developed among management, industrial-organizational psychologists and industrial relations scholars because HR policies and supervisor and co-worker support at the workplace are the primary vectors of work–life support.

Review of existing frameworks providing multi-level linkages. Multi- and cross-level models are particularly relevant in the work–life field where social policies at the macro level, corporate practices at the meso level and individual needs and expectations at the micro level are closely interlinked (Bardoel & de Cieri, 2006). From an epistemological standpoint, three main approaches to international comparisons can be distinguished (Maurice, 1989). The first is the functionalist, or universalistic view, which assumes a convergence between national societies and seeks to compare them over time (e.g. research from the Aston group, such as Pugh & Hinings, 1976). The second is the culturalistic, or particularistic view, which assumes that societies are culturally different from one another (e.g. Hofstede, 1980). The third approach for comparative work – the “societal” view (Maurice & Sellier, 1979) – puts the emphasis on the interactions between the macro, meso and micro levels of each society and considers them as a whole. The third stance is compatible with a contextualist approach of HRM that considers the embeddedness of HR practices in their societal context (Brewster, 1999). This in particular holds a great deal of promise for understanding the implementation of work–family policies within corporations.

We close the chapter examining two integrative cross-national frameworks discussed during the IESE conferences that open new avenues for research. The first one is the conceptual framework developed by Poelmans and Sahibzada (2004). This framework differentiates the macro, meso and micro levels of contexts. It points out how these levels interact and together contribute to the effectiveness of such policies and practices in reducing work–life conflict for individuals at the micro level. At the macro level, Poelmans and Sahibzada (2004) identify factors influencing organizations’ decisions to adopt or not to adopt work–life programmes. These include the legislative/cultural context that refers to the extent to which there are extensive family friendly government-supported policies and the prevalence of egalitarian gender-role ideology. The later may be assessed via cultural traits such as those outlined by Hofstede (2005) on low power distance, high individualism and low masculinity. Another set of factors relates to the labour market context. To what extent are there tight external labour markets, markets with high diffusion of work–family programmes, and internal labour markets with a high percentage of women in the internal labour markets? These factors at the macro level combine with the nature of the work at the meso level (e.g. scarce talent, knowledge work, customer

service) to create pressures to adopt work–life programmes. Macro factors can also interact with micro factors. For instance, extensive family-friendly government-supported policies nurture individuals’ sense of entitlement towards support (Lewis & Smithson, 2001) and tight external labour markets provide employees and unions with increased negotiation power.

While Poelmans and Sahibzada’s (2004) framework was one of the first of the kind in the work–life research field, and has the great merit of integrating the cultural and the socio-institutional paradigms, it lacks clarity because it fails to clearly distinguish cultural factors on the one hand (such as egalitarian gender-role ideology and Hofstede’s cultural traits) and institutional factors on the other hand (such as public policy). Ollier-Malaterre (2007) proposed another framework that extended Poelmans and Sahibzada’s (2004) work. This framework examined how factors at the macro levels influence the adoption of work–life practices at the meso level, and how, in turn, the diffusion of work–life programmes and practices at the organizational level in turn contribute to shape the national context.

Ollier-Malaterre (2007) proposed three sets of factors at the macro level: (1) the social context (which includes cultural factors), (2) the institutional context and (3) the economic context. Taken together, the social, institutional and economic contexts impact (1) the salience of work–life issues for policy-makers, employers, unions and employees, (2) the adoption of work–life policies by employers and (3) their effectiveness. Figure 1.3 illustrates this model. Each of these three sets is detailed into variables that can be used in future research and either captured based on socio-economic indicators at the country level, such as indicators provided by the World Economic Forum (see, for instance, den Dulk et al., 2012), or coded by teams of researchers based on extensive desk research, as was done, for instance, by den Dulk and

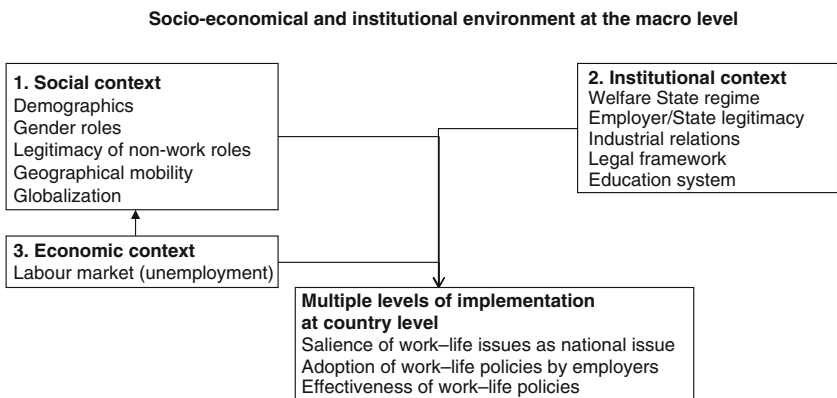


Figure 1.3 A multi-level model to investigate work–life programmes and practices

Groeneveld (2012) to document the variable “state support” representing public childcare provisions, parental leave arrangements and support for flexible work arrangements. We present the framework as a whole so as to offer a comprehensive theoretical perspective that can be applied in qualitative examinations of national contexts for work–family policies (see, for instance, Ollier-Malaterre, 2009). Future quantitative research using indicators at the national level as predictors either of work–family policy adoption or of employee response to work–family initiatives (such as awareness, access, use and outcomes) may need to select some of the variables within the framework.

The framework is built around three sets of factors. The first, social context, captures the degree to which society in a country (citizens, associations, lobbies, unions, political parties and so forth) considers that supporting work–life integration is legitimate and worthy of effort. Social context in this framework is comprised of five factors. The first is *demographics*: the extent to which family structures, the ageing of the population and women’s and older workers’ participation in the labour market create needs for work–life support and/or restrict the size of the workforce for employers such that they try hard to attract and retain employees. The second is *gender roles*: the extent to which gender roles shape the way women and men participate in the labour market (full-time, part-time, leaves, etc.) regarding family demands. The third factor measures *legitimacy of non-work roles*, that is, the salience of family, community and leisure compared to work, and the extent to which it is socially acceptable to not work full time or to take leaves of absence. The fourth is *geographical mobility*: the extent to which mobility cuts employees from their family and community support and thus increases expectations for support on the part of employers (Zedeck, 1992). Lastly, social context might be shaped by the degree of *globalization*, which may increase knowledge about work–life programmes abroad, and prompt interest for best practices in countries where these programmes are more widely spread.

The second set of factors in the framework illustrated in Figure 1.3 is the institutional context. It is comprised of five factors. These include the *welfare state regime*, which draws on Esping-Andersen’s (1990) analysis of the distribution of responsibilities between the state, employers and families. Ollier-Malaterre (2007) argues that employers are more likely to develop extensive work–life programmes and practices in a context of low or incomplete public provisions. This runs counter to Poelmans and Sahibzada’s (2004) hypothesis, yet is in line with recent work by den Dulk et al. (2010). The second factor relates to *employer versus state legitimacy* as a work–family provider. This pertains to the extent to which employees expect and welcome work–life support from their employer (as is the case in the USA, for instance) rather than from the government (as is the case in France). The third factor is the quality of *industrial relations*: the extent to which industrial

relations in a country are collaborative and to which unions consider work–life integration to be an important issue. One must also look at the legal context as well: the extent to which the *legal framework* in a country encourages the adoption of innovative HR policies and practices, or, as is the case in France, tends to overburden HR officers with compliance issues. Lastly, the *education system* may impact adoption of work–family programmes in a country, as education systems vary in the extent that they produce diversity in executive profiles (versus elitism) and thus encourage creativity and openness with regards to innovative HR.

Lastly, the *economic* context in the framework reflects labour market factors as identified by Poelmans and Sahibzada (2004). In particular, unemployment rate at the country level, and women’s unemployment rate may undermine companies’ adoption of work–life policies (Goodstein, 1994; Ingram & Simons, 1995).

Ollier-Malaterre (2007) tested her framework empirically to compare the adoption of work–life programmes and practices in the USA, the UK and France, and a set of five main factors was identified to explain the lesser adoption of work–life initiatives by employers in France. Three factors were at the macro level: (1) Employer’s versus state’s legitimacy in the non-work sphere of life, (2) industrial relations and unions’ stance towards work–life practices and (3) the complexity of the legal framework. The other two factors were at the meso level: (1) the awareness of work–life issues within HR departments and (2) the framing of work–life balance as a business or a social issue (Ollier-Malaterre, 2009).

Summary

Future studies need to systematically discuss (1) the organizational culture and cross-national context in which work–family policies are embedded, (2) the specific types of work–family policies and cultural practices examined and how they relate to underlying theories of their mechanisms of their processes and outcomes, (3) differentiation between access, use and extent of implementation over time, (4) the identification of variation in the types of occupations, industries, economies and institutions, and workforce characteristics of employees studied and (5) the use of multi-level analysis to link individuals to organizations across national cultures and social institutions.

In order to advance theory on work–family policies, we need to integrate theories from organizational behaviour with human resource policy to link to these different levels of analysis. Examples of theories might be EOR (employee–organizational relationship) theory, which examines whether the work–life relationship is a fair deal in the social exchange of time and labour from the employee and employer perspective (Kossek & Ruderman, 2012). Social construction theory (Berger & Luckman, 1967) would examine differences in how societies socially construct work–family issues and policies across organizations and cultures.

Boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000) might examine the growing blurring between work and family life across institutions, cultures and organizations. International and strategic HR research might examine the degree to which work–family policies vary in convergence and divergence across contexts and nations and labour markets. This chapter has identified multi-level analysis needs, and linking these measurement issues to such theoretical perspectives would improve the quality of research.

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2

Do Work–Family Policies Really “Work”? Evidence from Indian Call Centres

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Within western liberal market economies, organizations have increasingly begun to develop “work–life initiatives” to help workers integrate their work and family lives (Kossek and Lambert 2005). Employers can provide work–family policies for multiple reasons: to improve business efficiency (Rapoport et al. 2002); to attract, recruit and retain employees (Carless and Wintle 2007) and to promote gender equality in the workplace (Dreher 2003). There has been an increasing awareness, however, that work–life policies alone are insufficient without a concomitant change in organizational culture (Allen 2001; Lewis 1997; Thomas and Ganster 1995; Thompson et al. 1999). While this is a progressive step, examination of “culture” at only the organizational level can often subvert attention from national contexts, which may support or hinder organizational practices (Haas and Hwang 2007; Kossek et al. 2010). Further, globalization and increasing mobility of capital and labour have made the international context even more important.

A major limitation in current work–life research is the predominant focus on western countries, while relatively little is known about developing country contexts. Over 94% of work–family research originates from the west, (especially USA and the UK) with barely 6% of studies from other parts of the world (Casper et al. 2007). This suggests that most studies, directly or indirectly, accept the dominant western discourses on work–family life (see Lewis and Rajan-Rankin, this volume). While a small but burgeoning body of literature has begun to examine work–life issues in non-western contexts (Aryee et al. 2005; Choi 2008; Namasivayam and Zhao 2007; Yang 2005), few studies have explicitly examined cultural variables (Powell et al. 2009).

More useful frameworks have emerged from the “global/transnational” body of research, which focus on the analysis of global–local linkages and the construction of gender, selfhood, identity and work–family life (Basi 2009; Bergeron 2001; Freeman 2001; Mirchandani 2004; Perlow and Weeks 2002; Poster 2005). By considering “culture” from a multi-layered perspective (Hammer et al. 2007) located within specific socio-historical and institutional contexts (Bamberger 2008; Ozbilgin et al. 2011) a more fine-grained understanding of the work–life relationship can emerge.

This chapter examines the work–life experiences of call centre workers in a large global outsourced firm in India. Three questions are examined: (1) How are work–life policies adapted and implemented in Indian call centres? (2) Are there regional differences in the ways in which work–life conflict and policy availability are reported by employees? (3) Are there subgroup differences in the work–life experiences of Indian call workers? We structure our argument as follows: first, we examine global outsourcing and call centres in India. Second, we consider the socio-cultural discourses on work–family life in the Indian context and explore national level policy provisions. Thirdly, we briefly discuss our theoretical approach and method, and finally present our findings drawing on a cross-sectional survey and qualitative interviews.

Global outsourcing and the call centre industry in India

In recent years, the rapid growth in information communications technology (ICT) and service sector industries has led to new business models and strategies for human resource management (HRM) (Budhwar et al. 2009). Business process outsourcing (BPOs) and the IT-enabled services (ITeS) industry have mushroomed in India, due to the strong state support towards liberalization, modernization of technical infrastructure and a vast supply of highly educated English speaking workers (Upadhyay 2009). India has emerged as the leading destination for global outsourcing, with nearly 690,000 workers directly employed in IT services and 553,000 in the ITeS/BPO sector (National Association for Software and Services Companies [NASSCOM 2007]). While there have been numerous studies on the IT industry in India (Heeks 1998; Perlow and Weeks 2002; Upadhyay 2009), we focus on “call centres” at the lower end of the knowledge economy. Call centres refer to “specialist technology intensive offices that (...) deliver services to customers over the telephone, replacing or complementing face-to-face interactions with the public” (Belt et al. 2002:366). Work organization in call centres has often been depicted as rigidly structured and heavily monitored, leading to descriptions such as “bright satanic offices”, “electronic panopticons” and “assembly lines in the head” (Bain and Taylor 1998, 2000; Taylor and Bain 1999). Despite claims of shifting away from the “old economy” models characterized by bureaucratic controls and hierarchical

organizations, these so called “new workplaces” are a far cry from the flexible management practices they were originally envisioned to be (Thompson and Warhurst 1998). As Upadhyay (2009:7) observes, “top-down and direct techniques of management are often the norm in Indian software organizations”. By invoking the image of the “English butler” who must know his master’s every need, Upadhyay’s study indicates that the organizational control in the IT sector is based on a slavish acceptance that “the customer always comes first”. Given that call centres in India cater primarily to markets in the USA and Western Europe where there is a time lag of 12 to 14 hours, call agents mostly work evenings and nights. This arrangement could be viewed as the “colonization of time” (Mirchandani 2004:363), where global capitalism is replayed in the relationship between the Indian call agent and the western client.

An international division of labour is evident in call centres, where high-end knowledge work is often retained in western countries and low end tasks are outsourced to third world workers (Russell and Thite 2008). A major attraction for outsourcing customer service work to India is the availability of cheap labour – Indian call agents earn the lowest wages compared to other global competitors (Ng and Mitter 2005). This suggests that despite the “image building” efforts of the IT industry (Upadhyay 2009), in reality call centre work is poorly paid and highly informalized (Mitter et al. 2004). In the context of export-oriented sectors of employment, studies have found that the drive for cheap labour is contiguous with a preference for women workers (Ghosh 2001; Razvi and Pearson 2004). Call work has often been viewed as epitomizing feminine characteristics of “passivity, servicing and generous attention to customer needs” (McDowell and Court 1994:773). The image of call workers as “cybercoolies” (Ramesh 2004) has been challenged and there has been evidence of individual agency (D’Cruz and Noronho 2006; Mirchandani 2004) and collective resistance and the development of trade unions (Taylor et al. 2009). Despite this, there remains a dearth of research on employees’ experiences of work–life balance in Indian call centres; our study attempts to address this gap in the literature.

Conceptualizing work–family life in India

The terminology of “work–family balance” may be new to corporate culture in India (Gambles et al. 2006), but discussions about the ordering of work, family and life date back to ancient religious texts. *The Laws of Manu* and the *Dharmasastras* (legal edicts) provide instructions about gender-specific roles in relation to paid and caring roles (Saunders 2002). According to these texts, the concept of *dharma* provides an overarching doctrine on the “ways of living”. Work and family obligations are hence viewed as part of the threads of human living which are woven together to create a harmonious existence, with family often taking precedence (Sinha and Kanungo 1997). The

Indian child is socialized within gender-segregated normative frameworks where the “masculine” and the “feminine” are taken to represent the public and private domains (Kakar 1978). Both the Indian workplace and the family have undergone considerable change in recent years, especially with globalization and liberalization of the economy. The rise in dual-earner families has led to a shift in sex-role perceptions, allocation of household responsibilities and fathers’ involvement in childcare (Bharat 1995; Ramu 1987; Sekaran 1992). Despite this, male-breadwinner ideologies remain dominant, especially in relation to unpaid care and family responsibilities (Larson et al. 2001; Vera-Sanso 2002). This suggests that gendered norms about work–family life persist, even as workplaces have begun to adopt more gender-neutral language.

These cultural differences in the framing of the work–family interface in India filter through to the organizational level as well. Edwina Pio’s (2007) insightful account of Indian epistemologies highlights the ways in which HRM strategies are located within distinct socio-cultural contexts in Indian firms. For instance, religion, caste and class in the Indian context and the colonial legacy can influence work cultures such that power inequalities are replayed between Indian managers and workers (Dehejia and Dehejia 1993). These power inequalities are often couched within paternalistic and familialistic models of work practices, wherein the Indian workplace “often resembles ties in the extended Indian family in their qualities of hierarchy, loyalty, paternalism, patronage, and mutual dependency” (Larson et al. 2001:207). Indeed, Sahay and Walsham (1997:207) have noted that Indian managers often promote notions of caring and dependency among workers in an attempt to engender organizational loyalties. While workplace normative behaviours and practices are increasingly becoming westernized (Datta 2005), familial norms remain steeped in traditional normative frameworks. This clash between traditional and modern ideologies towards work and family life can explain in part, employee experiences of work–family conflict in the urban Indian context (see Saunders 2002).

Work–family policies and the IT sector in India: a systemic analysis

While India does not have formal work–life policies per se, there are in existence numerous statutory policies that regulate work and family life. The Indian Constitution adopted in 1950 is the cornerstone document for many of these provisions (Rajadhyaksha and Smita 2006:1674). At the national level, several noteworthy legislations emerged during the post-independent period including the Factories Act (1948), the Employee State Insurance Act (1948), Maternity Benefits Act (1961), the Equal Remunerations Act (1971) and anti-sexual discrimination policies under the Indian Penal Code (1869, 1997). Given the vast disparity between the rural poor and the urban rich in

India, there have been two distinct streams of work-life policies. While on the one hand, anti-poverty policies promoting family and child welfare have been aimed at the unorganized rural poor, gender equality policies within organizations have focused more on work-life integration for middle-class urban Indians.

India has a federal system, and for most part state level policies implement national policy mandates. The Shops and Commercial Establishments Act (1962) remains the main legislative measure at the state level that regulates working hours, sick leave, worker compensation and other employee welfare concerns. In addition, the National Association for Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) serves as a regulatory body which oversees companies within the IT sector. The relaxation of labour laws, such as the removal of the “night ban on women’s work” (Sankaran 2003) has enabled call centres to operate during evening/night-time hours and attract a female labour force, with significant consequences for their work and family life. As gradually, the term “work-family balance” is entering corporate culture in India, the impact of such policies on their health and well-being is being acknowledged by policy makers (Desai 2007).

Indian organizations also provide human resource policies to recruit and retain employees. Employers have introduced flexible working arrangements and part-time options to promote gender equality and reduce job-stress (Komaraju 1997). Organizations concerned with high attrition rates have introduced job incentives to reward employee loyalty, although the “bottom-line” still drives such policy initiatives. Another major thrust towards work-life policies comes from transnational parent company mandates. In a comparative study Poster and Prasad (2005) noted that parent multinational companies in the USA did provide a range of work-family benefits, but only a few were translated to the local subsidiaries in Indian firms. Thus, organizational policies for work-life balance may range from family-friendly policies and flexibility arrangements to “perks” and incentives to reduce attrition and reward loyalty.

Theoretical framework

Given the complexity of work-family discourses in India and the multiple layers by which policies and cultural contexts can be understood, we have drawn on multiple theoretical frameworks to inform our study. The “transnational” approach to work-life integration (Poster 2005) is particularly relevant. In this approach, organizational dynamics are viewed as a product of social and cultural institutional frameworks which inevitably include power that can take both local and transnational forms. The individualism-collectivism paradigm (Rosaldo 1974; Triandis 1980) also provides a useful lens for analysing work-life issues within a global context. The transference of global forms of work from individualistic societies into collectivist societies could shed light on specific cultural norms and values

concerning work–family life. This approach also enables a broader scope for challenging universality of effects (Stavrou and Kilaniotis 2010) and proposes alternate ways to conceptualize cultural effects at national and regional levels. Finally, we also draw on gendered organizational theories, in particular on the “ideal worker” and “ideal parent” models (Acker 1990, 1992; Williams 2000) that illustrate the gendered ways in which work–family roles are constructed within organizations. Having outlined the theoretical premise(s) of our study, we turn to our methodological approach.

Method

A mixed method design was used combining a cross-sectional survey of 881 customer service representatives (CSR) with 50 in-depth interviews¹. Survey data were collected in 2006 from a large Indian BPO company called Echo² with branches in Chandigarh (Northern India), Hyderabad (Southern India) and Pune (Western India). About 2825 survey questionnaires were distributed and 881 completed questionnaires were received (response rate of 31%). The sample consisted mainly of young (60% were aged 18–25 years), highly educated (62% were graduates), male (39% were female), single (25% were married) and childless employees (11% had children). This demographic is broadly consistent with the workforce profile of the Indian ITes industry (NASSCOM 2008a). The questionnaires included standardized measures such as the Work–Family Conflict Scale (Netemeyer et al. 1996), General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg 1980), Social Networks Questionnaire (Magliano et al. 2006) as well as self-report scales examining policy availability/take-up. Recognizing the need to delve into the subjective experiences of call workers, a follow-up qualitative study was conducted in 2010. In-depth interviews coupled with visual techniques were used to intensively explore concepts of culture, worker identity and work–life integration. By drawing on this rich range of data sources, quantitative data were triangulated with first person narrative accounts.

Findings

Three main themes are explored in our findings. First, we examine employer policies for work–life balance and how they have been culturally adapted and implemented in Indian call centres. Second, we explore regional differences in the ways in which call workers experience work–family conflict/balance and policy availability. Third, we consider sub-group differences in work–life conflict/balance and draw on the “ideal worker model” (Acker 1992) to shed light on these trends.

Work–life policies: paternalism or gender equality?

Company Echo is one of India’s top 20 BPO companies providing voice and non-voice customer services to clients in India and abroad. With a strong

corporate social responsibility rubric, Echo’s company policy is grounded in “family values” and the need to “be caring, show respect, compassion and humanity for our ... customers around the world”. As an equal opportunities employer, Echo actively recruits women workers. Work–life policies are hence overtly introduced to promote “gender equality”, while also addressing employee attrition. As Manohar, a male HR manager observed:

... it’s like...yeah...we are a different company every nine months. That is, every nine months you can be assured we have a completely new workforce. Attrition has been as high as 110% in this sector ... so ... um ... we have to do whatever we can to keep the employees happy.

“Keeping employees happy” is a recurrent theme driving HR policies at Echo. Workplace initiatives include a bundle of policies ranging from statutory provisions such as maternity, paternity leave and sick leave as well as workplace flexibility and part-time work options. Further, given the uniqueness of global outsourcing work, additional provisions are made, such as “pick-up-and-drop” services to ferry women workers to the office at night, subsidized lunch packages, *antakshari* (musical games), stress-reduction programmes and leisure activities. While not ostensibly “work–family policies” these initiatives help to keep employees motivated and reduce work-related stress.

Table 2.1 depicts self-report availability and take-up for a range of work–life policies. A provision–utilization gap is evident, with fewer “family-friendly” policies being utilized compared to other employee support policies. This can be explained in part by the *life-course effect*, as there are only a small proportion of employees who are parents. However, socio-cultural factors also inform the ways in which work–life policies are adapted and implemented.

In-depth interviews with HR managers revealed strongly held views about what constitutes “women’s work”. These values and assumptions are institutionalized through the organizational ways in which work–life policies are made available to the employees. Work–life initiatives are implemented through a “person-centred” approach, where each small team of CSR’s (customer service representative) has a dedicated “SPOC” (single point of contact); generally a HR manager, who would take their individual needs into consideration and arrange for workplace flexibility. Therefore work–life policies were implemented in many cases, solely on managerial discretion. As Raju, a senior HR manager shared with us:

Yes we certainly do take their family circumstances into account ... like ... um ... when a lady is having young children we try our level best not to put her in the night shift work and offer more day shifts ... we try to protect from negative effects

Table 2.1 Work-life policy availability and take-up in company echo ($n = 881$)

| Work-life policies | Availability | | Take-up | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| | No. of employees | % of employees | No. of employees | % of employees |
| Maternity leave | 441 | 50.06 | 35 | 7.94 |
| Paternity leave | 259 | 29.39 | 18 | 6.95 |
| Phased return after pregnancy | 109 | 12.37 | 4 | 3.67 |
| Career break | 77 | 8.74 | 11 | 14.29 |
| Flexible work | 48 | 5.45 | 4 | 8.33 |
| Part-time work | 540 | 61.29 | 249 | 46.11 |
| Home-based work | 119 | 13.51 | 5 | 4.20 |
| Telecommuting | 318 | 36.10 | 69 | 21.70 |
| Sick leave (ESI) | 58 | 26.90 | 10 | 17.24 |
| Health services | 296 | 33.59 | 54 | 18.24 |
| On-site gym | 152 | 17.25 | 28 | 18.42 |
| Recreational activities | 196 | 22.25 | 50 | 26.32 |
| Stress counselling | 107 | 12.15 | 17 | 17 |
| Travel services | 333 | 37.80 | 134 | 40.24 |
| Canteen | 483 | 54.82 | 179 | 37.06 |
| Pensions/Life Insurance | 305 | 34.62 | 50 | 16.93 |

Raju's narrative suggests that he conceptualizes being a "family-friendly employer" from a paternalistic lens. Gender equality is not constructed as the need to "redesign work" but to minimize disruption to the traditional family role. Work-life policies in company Echo can be viewed as status quo maintaining and aimed at reducing employee attrition while reinforcing traditional gender roles. By constructing itself as a "family entity", the organization draws on values of paternalism to secure organizational loyalty, while promoting work-family segmentation.

Regional differences in work-life conflict/balance

A second layer of "culture" through which work-family policies can be filtered and adapted in Indian call centres is the socio-cultural and historical context of the regional states within which they operate. Regionalism in India takes on many forms, evidenced by the myriad rural-urban landscapes, cultural customs, languages and caste/race identities across Indian states, reinforcing the view that "there is not one, but many India's". While several authors have attempted to examine "Indian culture" as a system of values and beliefs (see Kumar 2004; Sinha 2002), few studies have examined regionalism as a cultural variable in defining work-family life. In her important work, Prabhu (2001) helpfully categorized welfare systems within Indian states. States with strong women's movements and public provision were found to be more resistant to neo-liberal reforms, while states which

adopted aggressive liberalization policies experienced weaker public provision and labour insecurity. Neoliberalism and gender parity hence form two important variables in understanding policy provisions within export-oriented sectors of employment (see Ghosh 2001). We hypothesize that *regionality* is an important lens by which work–family and gender roles can be understood in the Indian context. To test this hypothesis, we first briefly examine the social indicators of three Indian states where Echo is located: firm A in Punjab, Northern India, firm B in Andhra Pradesh, Southern India and firm C in Maharashtra, Western India.

Punjab is one of India's smaller northern states with a population of 24.3 million and a low sex-ratio (number of women per 1000 men) of 874 compared to the country total of 933 (Government of India 2001). Literacy rates among females in Punjab is relatively high at 63.6%, however this has not translated into high rates of female employment. Women workers in Punjab constitute less than 38.6% of the total female population, and deeply rooted male-breadwinner ideologies remain dominant (Maskiell 1990). In the 1960s Punjab was a pioneer in the "green revolution" reforms and had a thriving agrarian economy, even though the growth of the IT sector has been sluggish up till recently, when the rural hinterlands were being converted into sites for global BPOs.

In comparison, Maharashtra is one of India's most economically developed western states with a population of 96.8 million and a relatively high sex-ratio of 922. Female literacy rates in Maharashtra are very high at 67% with a concomitantly high rate of female employment. Consequently, women's mobility, and social and political rights have historically been both more visible and more pronounced in this state (Kumar 1993). Women's movements in Maharashtra have ranged from the "light to the night" movements, state policies including the Employment Guarantee Scheme, social reform movements in relation to domestic violence and the promotion of gay and lesbian rights. With modernity having always been, if subliminal, a part of Maharashtra's urban middle-class reality (Datta 2005), introduction of neo-liberal reforms has not had as adverse an effect as expected, given its pre-reform marketized economy.

Andhra Pradesh (AP) is the fifth most populous state in India with over 76.21 million people, and a high sex-ratio of 978. Despite this, female literacy rates, at 50.4%, are far lower than the other two states and this is evidenced by a large gap in male and female work participation rates. With massive disparities in income between wealthy urban and the rest of rural AP, in recent years, this state has aggressively adopted neo-liberal reforms and trade liberalization programmes (STPI 2009). According to the NASSCOM-Kearney (NASSCOM 2008b) study, AP and Maharashtra are rated as "high" in commercial interest while cities in Punjab were viewed as "moderate/low".

From this brief review of the three Indian states, we can tentatively conclude that on neo-liberalism parameters, AP is neo-liberal, Maharashtra has

a liberal economy and Punjab is still playing “catch-up”. Social development indicators suggest that Maharashtra has the most pro-active state policies for welfare, Punjab follows a micro-solidarity model of familial/informal support and AP is a mixed picture of neo-liberal expansion and traditional family models. This is but a surface level critique of a far more complex regional picture, but provides a useful starting point to unpack social and economic policies at the state level. We now turn to our data on regional differences in work–family conflict/balance reported by employees in the three branches of company Echo.

A structural equation modelling technique³ (Byrne 2001; Kline 2005) called the multiple indicator and multiple causes (MIMIC) model is used to test the effect of regional differences (using firms as a proxy) on bi-directional work–family conflict (WFC) and work–life policy availability. MIMIC⁴ is a powerful technique that enables the testing of observed variables as antecedents or consequent effects on a latent variable or theoretical construct (Joreskog and Goldberger 1975). In this model, we examined the extent to which employees reported different levels of WFC and policy availability across different regional branches of the same company (see Table 2.2). An examination of the model fit suggests a statistically robust model all standardized co-efficients (Beta values) are significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Results suggest that employees located in firm A in Punjab and firm B in Andhra Pradesh reported higher WFC levels and substantially lower work–life policy availability, in comparison to firm C in Maharashtra (control variable). Far more detailed analysis is needed to substantially prove a “regional effect”, but the evidence tentatively suggests that the firm located in Maharashtra has stronger organizational and state support for work–life

Table 2.2 MIMIC model of regional differences in work–family conflict and policy availability

| | Bi-directional work–family conflict | Work–life balance policy availability |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Firm A (Punjab) | 0.204*** | –0.404*** |
| Firm B (AP) | 0.172*** | –0.345** |
| Firm C (Control) | | |
| Model fit summary | | |
| Number of cases | 846 | 846 |
| Chi-square | 2642*** | 2585 |
| Degrees of freedom | 1156 | 1170 |
| CFI | 0.943*** | 0.946*** |
| TLI | 0.939*** | 0.943*** |
| RMSEA | 0.039 | 0.038 |

(* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$).

balance compared to AP or Punjab; a finding which is consistent with Prabhu's (2001) categorization of welfare states. Numerous other explanations could also explain this occurrence, from firm-level and sample effects, to managerial styles and workload distributions in these firms. However, we may surmise at the least that there appear to be some regional differences in the ways employees report WFC and policy availability across firms located in different parts of India.

Sub-group differences in work–family conflict/balance

Given that we have found some regional level differences in employee experiences of WFC and policy availability we extend this analysis to consider other socio-demographic variables. Are there subgroup differences in terms of gender, age, job type, income, religion, caste, class, parental status and employee's WFC/balance? Table 2.3 provides results from a MIMIC model on select socio-demographic controls, WFC and policy availability.

The MIMIC model is statistically sound with robust model fit. A closer examination reveals that only three socio-demographic indicators yield significant results. First, younger employees were more likely to report more WFC compared to older employees, while simultaneously reporting less availability of work–life policies. This coupled with the non-significant results on gender, marital status and parental status, is telling. A reverse life-course effect appears to be in play, where young single workers unencumbered with family responsibilities report higher work-related strain. Second, an income effect is clearly evident, with employees in the lowest income bracket earning under Rs. 1 lakh (approximately £1481 per year) reporting the highest levels of WFC, and also strong work–life policy availability. Job stratification effects are evident with low income earners experiencing greater work–life strain, even as fear of reprisal from employers and career penalties in utilizing work–life benefits could explain low level of take-up. Narratives of servility and the need to view the organization as being “caring” and “a good employer” could also explain vulnerable workers reporting higher policy availability. Contradictions in perception and practice hence evidence the tensions between the “ideal worker” assumptions embedded within the organization. Third, technical support workers (non-voice) were found to experience lower WFC, compared to front-line CSRs. This supports the view that service sector workers engaging directly with clients (CSRs) are more likely to experience work-related strain than non-voice staff.

Some thought must also be given to the “non-significant” results in Table 2.3. First, we address the socio-cultural variables of education, caste and religion. There are potential multi-collinearity issues between education and class, just as there are with marital and parental status. While Echo proclaims to be an equal opportunities employer, with a commitment to

Table 2.3 MIMIC model of subgroup differences in work–family conflict and policy availability

| | Bi-directional work–family conflict | Work–life balance policy availability |
|--|--|--|
| Female (Male) | –0.08(ns) | 0.103(ns) |
| 18 to 25 years | 0.264* | –0.26* |
| 26 to 35 years (36–45 years) | 0.233* | –0.23* |
| Married (Single) | 0.002(ns) | 0.04(ns) |
| Have kids (No kids) | 0.050(ns) | 0.01(ns) |
| High school | 0.007(ns) | –0.13(ns) |
| Bachelors degree | 0.010(ns) | –0.10(ns) |
| Post-graduate degree (Diploma/Vocational) | 0.058(ns) | –0.14(ns) |
| Under Rs. 1 lakh | –0.102* | 0.21*** |
| Rs. 1 to 3 lakhs (Above Rs. 3 lakhs) | 0.041(ns) | 0.08*** |
| Technical support | –0.101* | 0.19*** |
| Supervisor/Manager (CSR) | 0.04(ns) | –0.015 |
| Hindu | –0.03(ns) | – |
| Muslim (Other religion) | 0.028(ns) | – |
| SC/ST/OBC | 0.016(ns) | –0.01(ns) |
| Kshatriya | 0.048(ns) | –0.03(ns) |
| Vaishya (Brahmin) | –0.042(ns) | 0.046(ns) |
| Model fit summary | | |
| Number of cases | 777 | 777 |
| Chi-square | 2864*** | 2721*** |
| Degrees of freedom | 1372 | 1318 |
| CFI | 0.939*** | 0.942*** |
| TLI | 0.935*** | 0.939*** |
| RMSEA | 0.037 | 0.037 |

(*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ns = not significant).

employ ethnic minority groups (particularly women and lower caste groups) given the political sensitivity surrounding caste, less than 30% of our sample reported their caste status.⁵ Religion in itself did not provide us with much data, as it is the complex amalgamation of religion, caste and class which denotes their social status in relation to socially stratified Indian society. While gender was found to be insignificant in our quantitative analysis, in-depth interviews unpacked deep-seated assumptions about the

“ideal worker” and “ideal mother”. As Nidha, a female HR manager, married to a colleague in the same firm, and mother to a three-year-old son bluntly observed:

If I was recruiting a CSR and she happened to be a woman married for two or three years I would think twice... at that stage of their life they will be thinking about having children. I would not want this life for a woman with a family

Recruitment of workers is hence based on gendered assumptions about potential life-course effects, and the screening out of candidates who may represent individuals at risk of work–life imbalance. The “ideal worker” in the Indian call centre is one who is young, single and unencumbered by family responsibilities, and who will remain so for a few years. The young single worker is far more “flexible” in adjoining their labour to a long working hours, graveyard shift culture than a parent, whose mobility and familial pressures could foreclose any option to pursue night shift work. Hence, a gendered impasse appears to be the reality in Indian call centres where, on the one hand, traditional gender roles and sexual moralities are being challenged by these “new” economy work practices even as “old school” managers and floor supervisors cling to paternalism and, in some cases, compassionate “peer-protection” in saving women workers from the plight they face themselves. This construction and reproduction of the “crises of gender roles” (Connell 1995) affects both women and men, young and old workers and thus presents an emerging and fascinating dialogue for the future of work and life in globally transported work in India.

Discussion

Our chapter extends the debates around work–life policies and culture by focusing on a global form of work within a developing country context. We conceptualize “culture” at three distinct levels: the global/national (by which we mean global forms of work and the national context); the organizational/regional (including the spatial organization of the regional branches of the company) and the sub-group level (diverse workforce representations of work–life policies). This multi-layering of contexts provides a rich and layered account for examining cultural discourses of work–life policies from *within* the Indian context. Through this conceptualization of “culture” we challenge some taken for granted assumptions about work–life discourse; that national context is secondary to organizational context, that regional variations are unimportant, or that global work is reproduced in a vacuum and outsourced workers are passive subjects who comply with hegemonic power and dominant managerial discourses. A more nuanced picture is developed.

Some critical themes emerging in our chapter, include the ways in which work–life policies in Indian call centres are framed and adapted around seemingly contradictory goals of “gender equality”/paternalism and recruiting unencumbered workers who by definition generate an attrition problem. Organizational practices involving the active recruitment of workers at a particular life-stage (“the ideal worker”) demonstrate short-termism in labour arrangements, which reinforces work–life conflict and leads to employee dropout. The “ideal worker” construct in call centre organizations hence precludes the possibility for these workers to have personal lives or form families. The “managerial discretion” model of delivering work–life policies hence reinforces traditional gender roles and provides work–life benefits as “favours” rather than rights or entitlements. Familialistic welfare ideologies within organizations create a pseudo-parental role among managers, who are required to recruit “flexible workers” for economic reasons, but then need to manage their concerns in a “humane way”, protecting them from adverse consequences. Legitimizing work–life policies in this sector, both at the institutional level as well as at individual organizational levels, could be challenging. Uncritical reproduction of western style work–life policies may be counterproductive given the diverse settings in which this industry operates.

Our study provides many avenues for further research. First, while we examined formal arrangements, more could be learnt about informal support from family and the community. Second, our analysis of regional differences hints at possible variations in work–life policies across different parts of India; more fine-grained analysis needs to be done to unpack the firm effect as opposed to the regional effect. Third, the traditional paternalism models of management could form the basis for contemporary theorizing around HRM in developing country contexts. The “ideal worker” concept takes on a very different meaning in Indian call centres, and the trade off between social and economic drivers for policy change in global forms of work could be a further area of investigation. Rich dialogue can ensue from examining work and life in non-western contexts, giving us new vocabularies to understand these two contested spheres of life.

Notes

1. The authors would like to acknowledge the Richard Benjamin Memorial Trust for Social and Occupational Psychology for funding the qualitative element of this mixed methods study (Grant Code: RBT110).
2. All organization, company, firm and individual names have been changed to protect the identity of participants.
3. Structural equation modelling is an advanced statistical approach which tests the relationship between theoretical constructs (or latent concepts) and scale measures (or observed variables) (Byrne 2001; Kline 2005). MIMIC models enable the testing of a reverse causal pathway between individual observed variables and

latent concepts. For details on our methodological approach please contact the authors.

4. Model fit in MIMIC models are examined through a wide range of goodness-of-fit indicators. The Comparative-Fit-Index (CFI), compares a hypothesized model to a base-line model and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) accounts for parsimony effects; values closer to 1 indicate a good fit. The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA) tests the hypothesized model to the normal population and values lower than 0.05 indicate a good model fit.
5. Missing values in MPlus are estimated for and corrected using maximum likelihood estimation; however, variables with too few cases could lead to a non-significant result.

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Part II

Work–Life Culture and Practices in Organizations

3

Deconstructing “Family Supportive Cultures”: A Vision for the Future

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Most research on work and family has been conducted in liberal market economies where the integration of paid work and personal roles is considered primarily a private matter. In these contexts work–life support is dependent on market forces, rather than being viewed as a public concern requiring government regulation (although in the UK this is tempered to some extent by European Union requirements). Consequently the focus has been on “family supportive organizations” to a greater extent than family supportive cultures and societies. Nevertheless the study of family supportive organizational cultures remains important for the field of work–life research more broadly, because even in more family supportive national contexts, public policies have to be implemented at the workplace level where culture and management support also matter and, increasingly, global forces intersect with national cultures.

Given the origins of research on support for work and family in western liberal market economies, dominated particularly by scholars from the USA, it is not surprising that this literature often advocated organizational work–life or family-friendly policies and, more recently, supportive organizational culture and practice, to minimize work–life conflict and stress. A significant shift occurred with the gradual recognition that work–life policies without organizational support were insufficient for organizational change. Concepts such as “family supportive organizational cultures” (Thompson et al., 1999) and “family supportive supervisors” (Allen, 2001) provided an important milestone in shifting away from individualized accounts of “successful policies” to the need to foster “supportive cultures”. As research on workplace support continued to evolve, the assumptions embedded in this literature

have also begun to be questioned. Four main assumptions inform the critical reflections set out in the rest of the chapter.

First, family supportive cultures are generally defined as being based on “shared values”. This is not always the case, as there can be more than one discourse on work–life integration within an organization (see Stepanova, this volume) and values are often ambiguous, although dominant discourses based on hegemonic power are often privileged over “voices in the margins” (Mescher et al., 2010). Second, the relative lack of cross-national research assumes universality of findings from limited contexts. National context is important for employees’ experiences of work and family (Lewis et al., 2009), although this is often undermined at the workplace level as employers demand more and more of their workers in the context of globalization and the spread of competitive capitalism (Gambles et al., 2006; Lewis et al., 2009). Hence the focus on organizational policies and practices to support the integration of work and personal life has remained central, often at the cost of examining wider contexts. This reinforces and privileges the western dominated discourses on work–life issues, and wider international, cross-cultural and non-western contexts remain sidelined (see Rajan-Rankin et al., this volume). Third, the concept of “family supportive” cultures tends to neglect diversity and complexity of families and implicitly assumes that the families that organizations are attempting to support are homogeneous (mostly white middle class, married with children). This privileges a heteronormative view of family life and does not take into account diversities in race, gender, ethnicities or sexualities and across life-course (Chatrakul Na Ayudhya & Lewis, 2010; Kamenou, 2008). Finally, the nature of “support” provided in the workplace needs to be unpacked and located within hierarchies of power within organizations. Work–life discourses in organizations are created by those in power, for privileged groups and less powerful members are expected to passively accept dominant discourses (Beauregard et al., 2009; Mescher et al., 2010), even as voices of collective resistance and individual agency may also emerge.

In the remainder of this chapter we first briefly overview some of the literature on family supportive organizational culture and then consider how the evolution of this field was reflected at the International Centre for Work and Family (ICWF) conferences between 2005 and 2009, before moving on to discuss the importance of critical approaches to work–life support in a wider range of social contexts and the issues/questions that this raises. We conclude with a critical vision for future research by problematising and unpacking taken for granted notions of “family”, “support”, “culture(s)” and societal and organizational priorities.

The evolution of research on “family supportive organizations”

Initial research on organizational culture assumed that work and family were separate spheres and focused entirely on workplace processes and

experiences (e.g., Schein, 1985). The notion that organizational cultures tend to be family unfriendly began with Rhona and Robert Rapoport's (1969) focus on dual career families in Britain and especially issues of gender equity which, they argued, would require changes at many societal levels. Rosabeth Moss Kanter's (1977) research on workers in American corporations who were expected to work "as if" they had no personal life beyond work further developed this view. In countries where support for work and family was left to unfettered market forces, the initial response to the identification of family unfriendly workplaces, and the burgeoning literature on work-life conflict in the 1980s and beyond, focused on the advocacy and development of workplace policies. However, research evaluating the impact of such initiatives showed that at best they resulted in "changes around the margins" but rarely deeper systemic change (Allen, 2001; Callan, 2007; Kossek et al., 2001; Lewis, 1997, 2001; Lewis & Taylor, 1996; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Thompson et al., 1999). It became clear that changes in organizational cultures and support were also necessary.

Evidence of the limited impact of formal policies in the absence of cultural changes crystallized the centrality of gendered organizational assumptions – a legacy of separate spheres thinking. Work-life policies came to be regarded as artefacts, underpinned and undermined by values and assumptions that conflate ideal workers with hegemonic masculinity (Bailyn, 1993; Lewis, 1991). Aspects of culture, such as the assumption that availability and visibility in the workplace are essential to demonstrate commitment and productivity, often coexisted with more surface manifestations of work-life support (Bailyn, 1993; Holt & Lewis, 2010; Lewis, 1997, 2001; Lewis & Humbert, 2010; Perlow, 1998; Rapoport et al., 2002). Those who take up formal work-life policies thus risk being stigmatized and they fear, often with good reason, that this would be career limiting. The socially constructed ideal worker conflicts with the social representation of the ideal mother in many contexts (Ladge, 2009; Lewis, 1991; Lewis & Humbert, 2010) and while it is more congruent with traditional models of fatherhood it can also make it more difficult for the growing number of men who wish to be active fathers (Brandth & Kvande, 2002; Ladge & Harrington, 2009). These ideological aspects of culture influence day-to-day workplace practices particularly through the supportive or unsupportive behaviours of managers (Kelly et al., 2008; Lewis, 1997; Perlow, 1995; Powell & Mainiero, 1999). Work-life supports and practices hence remain entrenched within static organizational discourses, thereby potentially perpetuating not only "separate spheres" but also "separate worlds" thinking.

The development of specific measures of work-life organizational culture further consolidated the importance of family supportive organizational cultures. Drawing on theories of organizational and social support, Thompson and her colleagues (Thompson et al., 1999) developed a measure of perceived organizational family support (POFS), assessing perceived instrumental, informational and emotional support for work-life needs and incorporating

perceived career penalties, time demands and management support. Another scale (Allen, 2001) examines global employee perceptions of the extent to which their organizations are supportive. Both measures are widely used and predict work-related outcomes in the expected directions, including enhanced organizational commitment, job satisfaction, women's intentions to return to work more quickly after childbirth, turnover intentions and work–life conflict (Allen, 2001; Lyness & Brumit-Kropf, 2005; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2006; Thompson et al., 1999) and have been found to mediate the relationship between flexible working arrangements (FWAs) and work-related behaviours and attitudes (Apospori, 2009; Logue & Ayman, 2009). There is some suggestion however that the impact of support may be gendered; more important for women than men (Batt & Valcour, 2003; Hill et al., 2004), reflecting ideal worker and ideal mother assumptions. Recent research extends understanding of the complexity of organizational cultural support for families, including relational support from managers (Hammer et al., 2007) and colleagues (Dikkers et al., 2007). Hammer et al. (2007), for instance, identified four types of family supportive supervisor behaviours (FSSB): emotional support, instrumental support, role model behaviours and recognition of the strategic importance of work–family issues, which emerge as significant when considering managerial/supervisor support for work–life integration at different levels of the organizational hierarchy.

There are however a number of critiques, which emerge from the implicit assumptions embedded within these research approaches. First, there are assumptions that organizational cultures are unitary, shared and static. Second, much of the research attempts to generalize the dimensions and impacts of family supportive organizational cultures over many workplaces. The implicit assumption here is that specific workplace contexts are not important. These assumptions make it more difficult to understand processes for achieving culture change. It is clear that organizational supportiveness cannot be characterized as a simple continuum between supportive and obstructive, but it is often perceived as uneven and contradictory (Dikkers et al., 2007; Lewis & Smithson, 2009). This may be due to subgroup cultures (see Stepanova, this volume), to differences among managers who may not share the same values (Hammer et al., 2007; Lewis et al., 2009) and to the coexistence of contradictory workplace discourses and practices (Dikkers et al., 2007; Holt & Lewis, 2010; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Lewis & Humbert, 2010). These contradictions are often accepted and taken for granted by employees.

Qualitative research, in particular, highlights the processes whereby employees – especially mothers, describe their organization and managers as highly supportive, while accepting that there will be a price to pay in terms of career advancement (Herman & Lewis, 2009; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Lewis & Humbert, 2010). The construction of policies as favours to

be reciprocated leaves the normative male model of work untouched and is often associated with a low sense of entitlement to be supported without making trade-offs (Herman & Lewis, 2009; Lewis & Smithson, 2001). The conflicting discourses that underpin coexisting contradictory practices are nicely illustrated in a textual analysis of company statements about their support for work–life balance on their websites (Mescher et al., 2010). On most of these websites, explicit messages about support for work–life balance being available to all workers coexist with implicit messages about ideal workers (and ideal mothers) and the gendered use of work–life arrangements, constructed as “favours”. Such fine grained understandings require a focus on specific workplaces. Thus while the bulk of research on family supportive cultures operates within a positivist paradigm, a more qualitative, contextualized approach is important for exploring situated experiences. An important direction of recent research has been to move beyond documenting the impact of supportive cultures to the development of context-specific culture change initiatives (Bailyn, 2011; see Kelly et al., 2010; Kossek et al., 2010; Lewis & Cooper, 2005).

We now turn to consider how the evolution of family supportive culture research been represented in the ICWF conference series.

Organizational culture stream at ICWF conferences

By 2005, when the first ICWF conference was held at *Instituto de Estudios Superiores de la Empresa* (IESE), Barcelona, Spain, it was already acknowledged that formal work–life policies and benefits were not enough to bring about systemic change, as evidenced by a shift from a policy to culture discourse in work–life research. Only two papers addressed this explicitly in the 2005 meeting, but both contributed new perspectives, arguing for a multi-layered and contextualized approach to understanding family supportive workplace culture (Thompson & Prottas, 2005) and a transformational approach to organizational change to support work–life integration (Lewis, 2005). Both were based on research carried out in contexts with minimal state regulative support (USA and UK) although they acknowledged the importance of specific national contexts. By the 2007 conference there was burgeoning interest in family supportive workplace culture. This was reflected in responses to this stream which comprised nine papers examining various aspects of family supportive organizational cultures. Papers took account of various layers of context from the micro level of organizational sub-cultures (Grotto & Lyness, 2007) to the macro level of impact of national context (Allen & CISMII, 2007). Papers also broadened the national contexts studied, including single country papers acknowledging the impact of national policy and legislative context in Spain (Chinchilla & Torres, 2007), the Netherlands (den Dulk & de Ruijter, 2007) and the USA (Dickson, 2007; Harrington, 2007), as well as a cross-national study explicitly comparing the

impact of welfare state support for gender equitable work-life integration (Allen & CISMII, 2007). These papers extended earlier research on the multi-dimensional nature of support and particularly the important role played by supportive managers (den Dulk & de Ruijter, 2007; Hammer et al., 2007). Research on family supportive organizational perceptions (FSOP) continued to proliferate and there were 11 papers in this stream at the 2009 conference. Papers built on and extended a number of trends in the family supportive workplace culture research including: the moderating role of cultural and relational support on individual and organizational outcomes (Apospori, 2009; Logue & Ayman, 2009); managerial beliefs and leadership styles (Dunn-Jensen & Lipjankic, 2009; Kossek et al., 2009a); occupational and professional subcultures (Kossek et al., 2009; Stepanova, 2009); the impact of gendered workplace assumptions on the experiences of motherhood and fatherhood (Ladge, 2009; Ladge & Harrington, 2009; Lewis, 2009); the reorganization of work (Kossek et al., 2009; Lewis, 2009) and consideration of the impact of contemporary context such as the global economic crisis (Casey, 2009; Kuschel, 2009). Papers also encompassed a range of methodological approaches, from multi-level modelling (Kossek et al., 2009a) to in-depth qualitative studies (Kossek et al., 2009b; Ladge, 2009; Ladge & Harrington, 2009; Lewis, 2009), providing rich and complementary datasets. Again a range of national contexts was considered, but not all of these studies explicitly took this into account, reflecting an ongoing gap within wider research. Family supportive culture is still viewed as a largely western concept, and discourses from other non-liberal economies and non-western countries are thinly represented in the literature (Rajan-Rankin & Tomlinson, 2009).

From this wide selection of papers, we were mindful that the “best paper” for the organization and cultures stream across the three conferences would need to demonstrate a dynamic view of organizational cultures from a multi-layered perspective, and our preference was to highlight research in an under-examined national context. We selected a paper by a PhD student, Elena Stepanova, who innovatively examined work-life integration approaches and subgroup cultures in a Spanish context. Her study challenges taken for granted assumptions of a unitary and static organizational culture and demonstrates some diverse ways in which work-life discourses are constructed across different subgroups. By focusing on a non-liberal western country context and examining “culture” at a micro level subgroup context, this paper begins to highlight the different ways in which organizational cultures can be constructed and analysed within familialistic welfare state regimes. Situating ourselves within the difficulties all researchers may face in contesting dominant discourses, we acknowledge the challenges that early career researchers may experience in doing this. Nonetheless, this study exemplifies a progressive, nuanced, multi-layered understanding of work-life experiences from a micro-layer perspective and, by doing so, privileges voices that may not be easily heard.

Drawing on our critique of the literature and the conference series, we now consider some examples of what can be learnt from challenging assumptions of “universality of effects” in relation to work–life support and acknowledging the importance of studying diverse people and wider contexts.

Work–family culture in non-liberal market economies

In previous sections, we have argued that family supportive cultures need to move beyond an examination of organizational cultures, and consider the national and institutional contexts within which work and family life are located. Given the predominance of western research we explore work–life culture in non-liberal market economies not only in developed countries, but also in transitional and developing countries. National culture, like organizational culture, is not unitary and must be viewed as dynamic and subject to change, both from *within* (for example, demographic transitions and population change) and also from *without* (globalization and labour dumping to reduce wage costs). In neo-liberal contexts a business case argument has been the main driver of developments in work–family policies, practices and supportive culture and later, in some cases, a dual agenda of gender equity and workplace effectiveness (Rapoport et al., 2002). Despite evidence to support the business case, however, many organizations remain family unsupportive (Thompson & Prottas, 2005). Initiatives thus became available to some workers employed in certain organizations and sectors but not to others, for example, employees in smaller organizations or on low wages, or where policies are available but at a cost in career terms and therefore tend to be used mainly by women. Moreover, in countries which rely on market welfare, all workers, but particularly the most vulnerable, are affected by changing contexts such as the current economic recession, which can deepen worker insecurity and reduce feelings of entitlement to work and family support.

Looking beyond liberal market economies, within Europe there are different welfare state systems and ideologies which emerge, reflecting a range of arguments for supporting work and family, from a business case to a moral/gender equality argument. The European Union mandates a certain level of support including equal treatment for part-time workers and entitlements to parental leaves, although there is considerable variation across Europe in how these are implemented, with France and particularly the Nordic countries the most progressive in terms of childcare support and work–life entitlements. For instance, Southern welfare models characterized by micro-solidarity models and familialistic welfare ideologies (see Ferrera, 1996; Stepanova, this volume) are less likely to provide public policy provisions for informal care which is absorbed by the family/community, despite overtly seeming to promote gender equity. This illustrates coexisting contradictory values mirroring those in organizations. Similarly, national level differences are also evidenced within the Nordic countries where, despite

high levels of social provision, entitlements to receive benefits are contingent on a citizen worker model, which is itself gendered, thus while social justice is explicitly the goal of such national policy endeavours, they can have unjust outcomes (see Rothstein, 1998). Whether social policies in different national contexts are effective in producing family supportive cultures is also influenced by the extent to which they achieve defamilialization and commodification of care (Hantrais & Morgan, 1994; Ungerson, 2004). Esping-Anderson (1999), for instance, re-typologized welfare states based on the extent to which family policy decommodifies unpaid care work performed in the home. Thus, the Scandinavian countries would be “defamilialized”, while Southern welfare models were “familialized” and liberal welfare states are “non-familialized”. Such characterizations, while operating within the “three worlds of welfare” ideology (a problematic assumption in itself), at least make strides in including family responsibilities and unpaid care within public policy provision at the national context.

It is important to examine how workplace support is understood in these diverse contexts and the impact of local and global forces. Employees may feel more entitled to workplace support in more regulated societies with a commitment to gender equality (Lewis & Smithson, 2001) and day-to-day support such as subsidized childcare make life easier for working parents, but the impacts of such societal supports are complex (Lewis et al., 2009; Nilsen et al., 2012). For example, while gendered organizational cultures and ideal worker ideology were initially identified in liberal market economies there is growing evidence that they also exist in some organizations elsewhere, especially (though not exclusively) multinational corporations or those operating in a competitive global market, including France (Fagnani & Letablier, 2004; Lewis & Humbert, 2010) and egalitarian Scandinavia (Brandth & Kvande, 2002; Haas & Hwang, 2007; Holt & Lewis, 2010). The spread of global neo-liberalism and competition can also undermine national policy initiatives (see Lewis et al., 2009). For example, intensive workload and tight workforces often mean that while employees are supported in taking up entitlement to flexible family leaves and reduced hours work, the full workload must still be accomplished by the flexible workers or by his or her colleagues, resulting in intensified workloads and often deterring people from using work-life initiatives (Lewis et al., 2009; Nilsen et al., 2012). Thus national context still matters, but global context and the interaction between local and global contexts is also important for understanding supportive workplace cultures.

Beyond non-liberal Western European countries, an examination of shifting work-family cultures and practices in transitional Eastern European economies is also revealing. In a qualitative eight country European study, Lewis et al. (2009) illustrate how both national and workplace contexts, and also time or phase in an organization’s trajectory, influence the impact of managers on workplace culture. Parents in this study talked about the

shifting role of managers and identified old and new type managers who varied in supportiveness. For example, in a Bulgarian finance institution at a time of transition to a capitalist market economy, new style managers regarded support for parents as incompatible with business needs while old style managers (schooled in socialism) tended to provide informal support to parents. In contrast, in a similar institution in the UK it was the new style managers steeped in high commitment management techniques who were most likely to offer informal support and flexibility for parents, with much resistance to this from older style managers. In the post-communist regimens of Eastern Europe, workers expect support from the government in terms of childcare and leave entitlements (Cernigoj Sadar, 2009; Kovacheva, 2009) but do not expect organizational or managerial support beyond complying with state regulation. This must be understood within socio-historical context that may change at some point in the future. In these contexts the concept of family supportive organizational culture may be irrelevant, at a certain point in time.

An examination of national contexts in non-liberal economies presents a more complex and nuanced picture where socio-cultural and historical trajectories of nation states are instrumental in shaping change within multiple work–life discourses. As Ozbilgin et al (2011). (forthcoming) observe, positivist work–life studies focusing primarily on the individual level of analysis often overlook research that is sensitive to context and history. Intersectionalities between social and organizational policies and individual experiences need to be rooted within systemic relations and structures of power. This becomes particularly relevant when considering the dearth of work–life research in developing country or non-western contexts. The hegemonic western model of work–life research (another taken for granted assumption) has overshadowed the complex and often divergent discourses around work–life policies which emerge in non-liberal non-western countries.

In recent years, a small but burgeoning body of cross-cultural research has focused on non-western work–life studies (Aryee et al., 1999; Choi, 2008; Coffey et al., 2009; Hill et al., 2004; Luk & Schaffer, 2005; Mortazavi et al., 2009; Namasivayam & Zhao, 2007; Spector et al., 2007). However, as Powell et al. (2009) observe, most of these studies do not explicitly examine “culture” as an analytical category, but focus more on the reproduction of western models and tools of measurement in non-western settings. A few qualitative studies have begun to explore culturally explicit research questions about the ways in which work–life policies and culture are adapted and reproduced. Poster (2005), for instance, drew on critical theory approaches and developed a transnational approach to work–life balance based on nodes of power between parent multinational firms in the USA and local subsidiary firms in India. Rajan-Rankin and Tomlinson (this volume) challenge the assumptions that global work is reproduced within a vacuum, and explore regional and subgroup differences in work–life experiences among workers

in Indian call centres. Gender equity and paternalism coexist as drivers, to on the one hand protect employees from undesirable effects of work strain, while simultaneously reinforcing traditional gender roles.

Examination of work–life discourses in transition economies and developing countries is particularly helpful, in shifting the focus away from western and especially liberal discourses, and highlighting the dynamic nature of organizational culture. However, when considering work–life policies in non-liberal economies, it is important to caution that the same rigidities in liberal market economies may apply, if one is not sensitive to context, history and societal factors. A major flaw of the existing literature is the assumption of universality of effects (Stavrou & Kilaniotis, 2010) and the oversimplification of national, regional and cultural differences. Just as individual work–life experiences are influenced by embodied values and assumptions about gender, work–family and parenting roles, organizations do not exist in a vacuum but operate within the fabric of socio-cultural realities and systems of power allocation. Any investigation into family supportive cultures in their broadest sense must hence accept the dynamic, shifting and ever-changing multitude of contexts within which work–life discourses and experiences are framed.

Concluding comments: a vision for the future

Our chapter critically reviews some of the key studies on family supportive organizational cultures, and, though not exhaustive, highlights some taken for granted assumptions which remain to be challenged. Family supportive organizational cultures both conceptually and empirically make an important contribution to work–life research, by (re)focusing on institutional and organizational contexts, rather than work–life policies as the way forward in integrating work and family life. We have argued, however, that the next step is to continue to move away from static thinking about organizational cultures, and consider a more systemic analysis of cultures from a multi-layered standpoint, spanning national, institutional, global and transnational contexts. Our vision for the future attempts to subvert conventional wisdom and proposes alternative approaches as set out below.

First, family supportive organizational cultures are important, both as a layer of context, but also as a space for progressive organizational change and as an intersection with global and national cultures. By viewing organizational cultures as dynamic and ever-changing, and as diverse and plural in their construction (there are not one but many organizational cultures) we challenge the hegemony of dominant discourses and provide fertile ground to consider voices of less powerful members within organizations. Work–life discourses and organizational cultural practices may not be shared by all employees, and opening up dialogue on differences, rather than similarities, may help to break the hegemony of power. Locating organizational

culture within implicit power relationships within organizations hence highlights resistance to dominant discourses, and, by doing so, can also shift such discourses and work-place practices towards more progressive dialogues. Discussions around which groups are being supported (for example, male managers) and which groups are being excluded or expected to adapt (for example, mothers and single workers) can reveal systemic inequalities through which male models of work are being reinforced, even as explicit messages of family-supportive organizational cultures are being maintained. Thus, organizations which perceive themselves to be “family supportive” are themselves powerful in creating, legitimizing and reinforcing which work–life discourses should be privileged (for example, long working hours; visibility culture) and which discourses should be silenced (for example, supporting active fatherhood).

Such changes may need to address more fundamental value shifts and barriers. Context-sensitive research is a way of exploring implicit assumptions and values underpinning workplace practices (Bamberger, 2008), but often the more taboo aspects of intersecting organizational and societal values remain taken for granted and unexamined. For example, few people would explicitly agree that profits are more important than people, but many aspects of workplace cultures and practices in both the developed and developing world are based on such implicit beliefs (Gambles et al., 2006), which can be exacerbated by global competitive capitalism. Some countries are more proactive than others in attempting to counterbalance these assumptions and balance economic and social needs. Societal and organizational priorities thus form an important backdrop to discussion of family supportive organizations.

Second, while “families” occupy the central focus of family supportive cultures literature, researchers rarely unpack and challenge the “type” of family which organizations are meant to support. “Family-friendly” policies, for instance, are typically targeted at working mothers with young children, and even though both terminology and discourse around work–life balance have expanded to include all workers, the social construction of what type of worker and what type of family is being supported is rarely challenged in research and even less so in practice. Implicit support for mothers and not fathers reproduces a particular family pattern. Heteronormative assumptions, foregrounding married workers with children, marginalize the different work–life experiences of single workers, lone parents, gay and lesbian workers and older workers, who may have different work–life demands. For instance, “non-traditional” families such as extended family networks in one culture may be traditional in another. Older workers may also have different work–life or work–life needs in diverse societies. Broadening the focus from “families” to diversity discourses and recognizing the intersectionality of families, gender and other forms of diversity may create more inclusive dialogues about how to support employees’ work and non-work

lives. However, caution is also needed in using a diversity approach. While it is important to recognize the limited nature of “family” addressed in the family supportive organizational literature, a diversity lens often focuses on needs and differences rather than the nature of work itself. Family unsupportive workplace cultures are based on particular models of work and working practices. It is by redesigning “work”, not redesigning workers or families, that organizations can become supportive to the non-work lives of their employees across time and place.

Third, implicit within much of work–life research are some false dichotomies in the ways in which central concepts are defined – that it is either work *or* life, the ideal worker *or* the ideal mother, the supportive organization *or* family unfriendly organization. In reality, organizational cultures and work–life roles that are played out within them are fluid, dynamic and changing and are, more often than not, characterized by contradictions and complexities rather than simplistic linear discourses.

Moreover, wider contexts are also fluid, and a context-sensitive approach enables research to take bold steps towards rethinking work–life issues both now and for the future. For example, while the global economic recession has threatened the sustainability of some western countries, the global South has shown remarkable resilience to these changes. The power shifts between the North and South may force us to question the dominant western models upon which most work–life research and organizational culture research are embedded. We may also need to change our assumptions about work–life relationships, given recent developments such as social networking sites, which change the ways in which people interact, form relationships and seek intimacy. Therefore, we need to change and adapt our models for examining work–life relationships in the face of current dynamic modalities and contexts. Many different ideologies may drive an organization, which can make it family supportive in one dimension (for example, flexible working and employee control over schedules) and unsupportive in other (implicit targeting of women workers to take on part-time work). The issues surrounding career penalties are particularly important, and need organizational resolution, before truly progressive allocation and take-up of work–life policies may even be possible. Wider organizational involvement through cultural change programmes, for instance, can lead to a democratically constructed understanding of work–life needs and policies to address them – an endeavour which comes closer to the notion of “shared values” which are not assumed, but are actively negotiated.

Finally, we revisit the debates about “context” and “culture” and suggest a broader focus than organizational culture, to include national, international, regional and institutional level contexts. By expanding the focus of research beyond western liberal market economies to include transition economies and developing country contexts, a more diverse vision of work–life balance may evolve. A focus on organizational contexts does not preclude an analysis

of national contexts – nor vice versa – they are not mutually exclusive. By maintaining that organizational cultures are part of the socio-cultural and historical fabric of the nation states within which they are embedded, the values and assumptions surrounding work and life become more explicit.

To conclude, our vision for the future is an inclusive progressive discourse on work–life integration where the focus is on family supportive societies as well as organizations, and on strengthening of public responsibility for the integration of work and family life, as well as organizational change. It involves recognizing the interconnectedness of these and other layers of context and the dynamic and complex nature of cultures and contexts. Finally it involves continuing to challenge taken for granted assumptions about families, supports and cultures as well as making visible the impact of fundamental but rarely explicit societal and organizational priorities that often coexist with and contradict expressions of organizational family supportiveness.

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4

Organizational Subcultures and Family Supportive Culture in a Spanish Organization

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The importance of context in work–family research is often overlooked (Powell et al., 2009). Work–family issues do not occur in a vacuum but rather within specific layers of context: national, organizational, work group and family. State provisions for work and family life can potentially offer both men and women a wider choice of options for combining employment and parenting. However, much of the research on work–family issues has been undertaken in the USA, where government support is minimal (Kossek et al., 2010). Therefore, it may not reflect the European situation characterized by a variety of state provisions and where policy availability and legal reinforcement can differ considerably even in neighbouring countries (Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004).

Statutory as well as voluntary work–family policies have to be implemented at the workplace where organizational culture may support or limit their impact (Haas et al., 2002; Rapoport et al., 2002). At the more micro level, differences are likely to exist within organizational culture, reflecting varying degrees of family supportiveness (Palthe & Kossek, 2002). Nevertheless, subcultures have received much less research attention than wider organizational culture. The research reported in this chapter seeks to address this gap in the literature by examining the role of workplace subcultures in work–family integration in one organization, within a specific European context (Spain). The goal is to adopt a multi-layered approach in an endeavour to understand how national context, organizational culture and subcultures influence employees' work and family lives. The Spanish national context is examined below followed by a discussion on organizational culture and subculture. Finally, the findings of the study are presented and analyzed.

National context: welfare policies in Spain

Spain is typologized as a conservative welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 2000) or the Southern welfare model, characterized by the strong role played by the family in the creation of welfare and the distribution of income and services (Ferrera, 1995; Moreno, 2004; Salido & Moreno, 2007). Compared to other welfare states, a lower level of social assistance exists (Ferrera, 1996), influenced by the underlying assumption that the family will support the dependent young and elderly, grounded in religious and familialistic ideologies (Flaquer, 2004). This ‘micro solidarity’ of the family allows its members to enjoy a relatively high level of well-being¹ as income resources are distributed and shared among family members, which leads to the informalization of care (Flaquer, 2004).

The so-called “superwomen”, the generation of women now aged between 40 and 64, could also have contributed to the low governmental support for work–family issues (Moreno, 2004). They entered full-time jobs without reducing their household workload, which allowed the government to direct its expenditure towards other welfare programmes beyond household and personal services (Salido & Moreno, 2007).²

In recent decades, the values system has begun to change (Moreno, 2004), moving away from family values towards the individualization of lifestyles and the prioritization of professional careers, though family networks still support their members. Unlike the “superwomen generation”, young women postpone their maternity for professional reasons, leading to birth rates among the lowest in Europe (Salido & Moreno, 2007). The transition from a male breadwinner model to dual-earner households contributed to the adoption of several laws which address work–family issues. Most recently, the law “For Equal Opportunities for Women and Men” (Law 3/2007)³ focused on a more balanced distribution of family obligations and equal employment prospects. Leave policies, childcare services and financial allowances are guaranteed by law, while the implementation of time and place flexibility are at the company’s discretion. Paid maternity leave is currently 16 weeks, up to 10 of which can be transferred to the father, who can also enjoy 28 days of paid paternity leave.

Despite legal provisions, work–family integration is challenged by several assumptions. At the family level these include traditional gender expectations that women are primarily responsible for the family and household duties (Cánovas et al., 2005) and the lack of services for the frail elderly to alleviate women’s caring responsibilities (Moreno, 2004). At the organizational level, barriers include long working hours (38.4 hours per week, which is two hours longer than the EU average [Eurostat, 2006]) and companies’ fear that work–life initiatives will undermine performance and competitiveness (European Working Conditions Observatory, 2009). Statutory support for work–family policies is thus important but not sufficient to eliminate

unequal distribution of family obligations (Haas et al., 2002; McDonald et al., 2007) or the perceptions that policies are mainly for women (Smithson et al., 2004). In addition to state and family contexts, organizational cultural context also needs to be borne in mind.

Workplace context: organizational culture

Work–family policies alone, whether statutory or voluntary, are not necessarily conducive to harmonizing employees' work and family lives (Kossek et al., 2010). In fact, considerable evidence points to an implementation gap between work–family policy and actual practice in a wide range of contexts (Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Brandth & Kvande, 2002; Lewis et al., 2007). A supportive work–family culture defined as the “shared assumptions, beliefs, and values regarding the extent to which an organization supports and values the integration of employees' work and family lives” (Thompson et al., 1999: 394) appears to be essential for effective work–family policy implementation (Allen, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999).

Assumptions regarding work and family are deeply embedded in organizations. Schein's (1997) conceptualization of organizational culture explores various levels of culture, including: artefacts – easily observable but difficult to interpret symbols of culture; values – norms of the groups and philosophies, and assumptions – guide the way people think, feel and behave. Lewis (1997) applied Schein's theory to the work–family context, specifically to policy utilization. She describes family-friendly policies as artefacts, representing companies' intentions on the surface level. They are based on more deeply rooted values such as the importance of long working hours and face time for promotion (Lewis, 2001). These values are supported by assumptions that can hinder policies' effectiveness, such as the assumption that more time spent at work is related to employees' commitment and productivity. Similarly Rapoport et al. (2002) pointed to the existence of various work practice norms that reflect deeper assumptions and influence employees' work–family balance: the way in which time is used, the image of top performers, beliefs regarding how work should be done and concerning hierarchy and control. These cultural manifestations strongly affect employees' perceptions of workplace attitudes towards work–family integration.

Other aspects of organizational context include managerial and co-worker support, and also exert an impact on work–family policy utilization (Allen, 2001; Dikkers et al., 2007; Kirby & Krone, 2002). If employees perceive that policy usage is not approved by the organization or the supervisor, they fear that availing of said policy will be career limiting (De Cieri et al., 2005; Thompson et al., 1999), but will be more likely to use policies if their use is more recurrent (Lambert, Marler & Gueutal, 2008). Therefore, both policies (structural support) and organizational culture, encompassing informal policies, and organizational, managerial and co-workers'

support (cultural support) are important for work–family integration (Kossek et al., 2010).

Specific contexts within the wider organization can bring an additional level of complexity to work–family integration. Context is defined as “situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behavior as well as functions relationship between variables” (Johns, 2006: 386). Should a variety of occupational contexts exist within organizations, work practices and underlying assumptions relating to work and family may vary. Therefore, the role of organizational subgroups and their potential subcultures as an immediate context for work–family integration is explored further below.

Subgroup contexts: organizational subcultures

Organizations consist of various communities and subcultures with their own beliefs and values (Martin, 2002) that emerge naturally in the evolution of an organization (Schein, 1997). The study of various subcultures contributing to the overall culture may afford a more in-depth understanding of the organization (Morgan & Ogbonna, 2008). Subculture is defined here in line with Van Maanen and Barley (1985), as the culture of groups that comprise organizational members involved in frequent interactions with one another that perceive themselves as distinct from other groups and share similar problems, and an understanding of how to broach said difficulties, that guide their actions. Subcultures differ from the global culture in that they are diverse yet similar cultures coexisting within one organization (Hatch, 1997). They can be aligned with the values of the organizational culture or oppose them (counter-cultures), thus undermining organizational initiatives (Trice & Morand, 1991). They also include idiosyncratic values, behaviour patterns, artefacts and practices that affect employees’ attitudes and behaviours (Lok et al., 2005).

Categories of subcultures identified conceptually or empirically include: professional, administrative and customer interface (Hofstede, 1998); bureaucratic and professional (Jones, 1983); and bureaucratic, innovative and supportive (Wallach, 1983). Evidence shows that subcultures affect commitment more significantly than organizational culture; that innovative and supportive subcultures are closely linked to commitment (Lok et al., 2005) and that employees identify with their immediate working environment more closely than with the organization (Prestholdt et al., 1987).

In the work–life field, although Allen (2001) suggested that organizational culture can vary at the group level, relatively few studies actually employ group level variables. However, Haas et al. (2002) found that workgroup culture and support has a greater effect on fathers’ work–family policy utilization in Sweden than overall organizational culture. Working groups and units can belong to a subculture characterized by specific job

and functional demands, based on certain values and assumptions that shape the organizational discourse and subsequently the perceptions of policy “usability” (Kirby & Krone, 2002). In addition, job characteristics (Grotto & Lyness, 2007), department (den Dulk & Ruijter, 2008) group characteristics (Poelmans & Beham, 2008), and levels of team member interdependence can shape these values and assumptions that affect work–family integration.

As organizational and subgroup cultures reflect deep-seated assumptions that may not be easily articulated (Rapoport et al., 2002), qualitative explorations of the role of subcultures seem particularly valuable for identifying obstacles to and support for work–family integration in the various layers of culture. Since organizational supportiveness may vary across industries and occupations (Andreassi & Thompson, 2008), this study will focus on occupational subcultures in one organization and explore how organizational culture and subculture affect employees’ work–family integration within a specific national context. In particular I am interested in: (1) how organizational assumptions translate in subgroup and possible subcultural contexts, and (2) how they affect the integration of work–family spheres in these contexts.

Method

A case study approach was used to explore work–family processes and individual experiences in different subcultures (Yin, 2003). An interpretivist approach was adopted, specifically the constructivist paradigm that assumes a relativist ontology (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

The data were collected in the headquarters and various branches of Mutua⁴, an insurance non-profit Spanish organization administrating contingencies of work-related accidents and illnesses (Table 4.1). It encompassed various professional groups that were the focus of the study: (1) health-care, (2) sales and (3) administrative employees. To derive subcultures empirically, the definition of subcultures was used (Van Maanen & Barley, 1985). Individuals were asked to report the group they identified themselves with, its norms, practices and values, which allowed exploration of the

Table 4.1 Company overview

| Company | Age 75 | Size 324 | Female/male ratio (%) | | Female 55 | Male 45 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Employees’ age distribution (%) | 20–29 years | 14 | Salary | € < 600 | 5 | 2 |
| | 30–45 years | 51 | distribution | € 600–900 | 15 | 3 |
| | > 46 years | 35 | (monthly) | € 901–1200 | 26 | 8 |
| | | | | € 1201–1800 | 38 | 34 |
| | | | | € 1801–2400 | 12 | 29 |
| | | | € > 2400 | 3 | 23 | |

existing assumptions. Following the recommendation of Yin (2003), multiple sources of data collection were used to compile evidence, including archival research, face-to-face interviews and observations. A focus group with the HR team and 30 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted in three different sized branches, comprising 20 women and 10 men of varying demographic characteristics. Following Strauss and Corbin's (1998) approach, the literature review informed the interview guide, which was subsequently extended and adapted during data collection. Archival data (internal documents and surveys) were analysed through content analysis. All interviews and the focus group, which lasted one hour on average, were taped and transcribed in Spanish with specific quotes translated into English and analysed using a grounded theory approach (*ibid*). The data were coded, using an open coding approach to identify the broadest range of emerging themes. They were continuously compared along different dimensions to reveal the final themes (*ibid*) and subsequently compared to the literature to allow further refinement and enhance reliability (Creswell, 1994). Several presentations were made for the HR team that allowed cross-checking of the findings and further insights to be gained. All impressions, ideas and reflections were captured in memos.

Findings

This section is organized into three parts. First, the company and its context are introduced and work–family polices and the implementation gap are discussed. Second, organizational assumptions and their manifestation in the identified subcultures are examined. Finally, the impacts of these assumptions on employees' work–family integration are analysed.

The company and the policy implementation gap

The discourse used by top management to describe Mutua included “family company”, a “fighter”, the smallest in the sector, but agile, placing emphasis on new technologies, aiming for transparent communication and innovation. At the same time, employees at all levels portray the company as “human” and with high “human quality”, where there is a personalized treatment of employees and concern for their well-being through the provision of various social benefits and initiatives, including the Equality Plan.

Mutua is the result of a merger of various mutual funds, two of which have different philosophies: a strong commercial philosophy, orientated towards attracting clients (e.g. companies) versus an approach focused on service provision to both clients and patients. These different philosophies were palpable. For instance, sales employees embraced this commercial emphasis, while healthcare and administrative employees focused more on patient service provision.

At the surface level of organizational culture, the company had multiple work–family policies in place, including flexible work options, family and personal leave, dependent care support, conventional provisions for job quality and compensation/benefits. However, according to an internal company survey, only 27.48% of the employees were aware of their availability as they were not explicitly communicated as work–family initiatives. Nevertheless, 52.67% perceived that the company supported the work–life balance of its employees. Various flexibility options were available, though time flexibility was designed only for employees working normal shifts. All time arrangements and statutory policies were subject to supervisors' consent. According to company documents, maternity leave and reduced working schedule were availed of, while there were only a few instances of paternity leave uptake, attributed to the small number of male employees who recently became fathers. Overall, the interviewees perceived the staff's work–family integration positively. However, they did not only refer to the organization's role. The support of grandparents for childcare was reported in particular, illustrating the family micro-solidarity, enabling the fulfilment of both professional and personal goals (Salido & Moreno, 2007).

Despite the company's apparent family-friendliness, employees' experiences of policy use revealed various implementation gaps and obstacles reflecting cultural assumptions. As employees from different branches identified with particular professional subcultures, this allowed further assumptions across the organization and subcultures to be investigated. Consequently, four organizational assumptions emerged: (1) assumption that supporting work and family needs can harm organizational effectiveness; (2) assumption concerning how work is done (dedication); (3) where work is done (availability); (4) for whom work is done (client-centredness). Differences are evident in the manifestation of the assumptions in the identified subcultures, influenced by the nature of the employees' work, namely, their task characteristics, the size of the branch and job interdependence played a role. Thus, the nature of work served as a "filter" or moderator for the expression of these assumptions. Their manifestation across the organizational culture and subcultures is discussed below.

Assumption that supporting work and family needs can harm organizational effectiveness

According to employees' accounts, a number of employees were denied the use of some flexibility options by their supervisor, who considered "they were not compatible with one's work", while others were granted permission in the same situation, indicating some concern about the adverse impact on company performance and competitiveness which has been reported in Spain (European Working Conditions Observatory, 2009).

This assumption appeared in different forms across subcultures. Employees throughout the subcultures mentioned the importance of acknowledging

company interests and not giving precedence to their individual interests. For instance, prior to availing of the reduced schedule, one sales employee stated: "It is important that you see you do not let anybody down [...]" (Salesperson, woman).

Another administrative employee voiced the hope that her schedule reduction for maternity reasons did not affect her department or colleagues: "I don't think I failed anybody by not being here in the afternoon..." (Office worker, woman).

Finally, some healthcare employees perceived a distinct separation between work–family matters, as being a healthcare professional meant providing the best possible service to clients and supporting colleagues. For instance, in the case of personal emergencies, such as collecting a sick child at school, a nurse said:

We don't do such things in our department! Of course, if it is a serious emergency, then you mention it to your colleagues, explaining that you have a serious problem, then yes. If it is necessary, I call my Dad, saying 'Please go to my place, the child got sick at school and he is going home.' I have always done it that way. I have never gone to pick him up from school.

(Nurse, woman)

An administrative employee, who identified with the health care subculture, offered further insights, conceptualizing the separation of work and life as a matter of personal choice, whose consequences she was eager to bear: "When I started working here, I had a babysitter coming to my place at 6.30 am. I cannot miss work for my daughter; I say it is black or white. If you want to work, then you work." (Administrator, woman).

When speaking of their work–family integration, employees also reflected on their career prospects. In some subcultures, career advancement was directly linked to time dedication and visibility in the workplace.

... if you want to be promoted or to build a career you cannot do it [use the policy] although the law allows for it⁵, because it is not that it is not well seen but it is considered that you devote yourself to your family and children and thus you cannot commit 100% to the company. This vision still exists in Spain; it is still believed that the person that is at work for many hours is the best worker, the one who performs best...

(Salesperson, woman)

Therefore, the assumption that supporting work and family needs can affect organizational effectiveness or one's career was implicitly present in different subcultures and defined individual strategies and discourses around work–family integration.

Dedication – how work is done

According to various interviewees (both in branches and headquarters) the company valued employees who were responsible, professional and dedicated, demonstrated in terms of results, perseverance and constant output.

The philosophy of the management team was

The most important thing is dedication to making an effort and yielding results; one cannot go without the other, results do not stand alone. The fact that one has made an effort and, what's more, visible effort is part of the organization's DNA. Results are not only important, but also the way in which they are reached.

(Senior manager, man)

Visibility of the effort was perceived as important, as was being humble about one's efforts, both of which were discussed within a discourse of choice. Managers talked of valuing an employee who: "knows the sector well, dedicates a great deal of time [hours] to work, but does not make it a source of pride... he [sic] works so much because it is his decision" (Senior manager, man).

This voluntary dedication to work implied, for example, working longer hours, coming to work earlier and reducing lunch breaks, and checking work email outside of working hours and on weekends. This assumption regarding dedication linked to individual agency recurred in all the subcultures but was played out in different ways.

In the sales subculture, employees were valued for being highly organized, solving problems, attracting new clients and pleasing existing ones. Reaching sales goals by closing a big deal without being seen to make continuous effort was not approved of by the top management, thus reinforcing the need for constant work input, and with ever-growing demands. It constituted a vicious circle for some, as even when one gave his/her best, more was expected of them. As one employee said:

What happens is that we are always being told that we have to do more and, what's more, now that we are in the midst of a crisis [economic crisis]. We are told that these are difficult times and we are not reaching the numbers. So naturally, you perceive that you are being asked not to give 100%, but 150%.

(Salesperson, woman)

This dedication was reflected in extra hours invested in the job, at times at home, possibly leading to spillover. Nevertheless, both management and employees perceived that each employee was the master of his/her time:

“It is strictly a personal matter, what one thinks that she/he has to do” (Senior manager, man).

In contrast, employees in the administrative subgroup perceived that dedication was valued in terms of consistent work, but that the amount of effort they put into work was neither differentiated nor acknowledged. As one employee asserted: “I came to the conclusion that we are all valued equally, whether we work more or less. You know exactly what you give or do not give when you work and yes, in general, we are made to understand that it is valued, but eventually everybody is treated equally...” (Administrator, woman).

As for healthcare employees, dedication was perceived through the level of treatment and service offered to the client: “A patient who had an accident...I think that you need to treat him from a human point of view. Sometimes, behind the broken arm there are other problems...” (Doctor, man).

Therefore, the importance of dedication existed both at the organizational and subcultural levels, but different aspects were accentuated. In the sales subculture, the emphasis was placed on making an effort and providing clients with good service. In the healthcare subculture, the focus was also placed on clients but while the company’s needs were considered, the client’s health was at heart. Finally, in the administrative subculture, dedication meant ensuring consistent work input, though it didn’t seem to be differentiated.

Availability – where work is done

While importance was attached to the work output, physical presence and availability seemed to be equally important. The work of sales employees could be tracked through special applications. In addition, the company recently relaunched the clock-in/out system, designed as a time-management tool, rather than to control presence. HR admitted that this system was the inheritance of the long-existing practice and was important from the organizational culture point of view. Designed as an online application, it allowed employees to check the number of hours worked, to select holidays and to enter notes justifying their absence from the workplace if necessary, thus emphasizing employees’ responsibility and choice regarding the actions taken. As the clock-in/out system had always existed in the company, it was not supposed to be an entirely new system, but as one employee from the headquarters pointed out: “Now there is a much stronger control of presence. Actually, it was kind of a revolution in the organization, because everybody is preoccupied with the control of presence.” The old system appeared to be a mere procedure, while the new programme made employees much more accountable for the hours worked. The supervisors

were expected to monitor employees who did not fulfil their schedule and the HR department sent requests to do so from time to time.

In all the subgroups, availability was not restricted to visibility at the office. In the sales subculture, constant availability to the manager and client was thought to be part of a good service. This availability traversed personal situations, time and space, given the possibility to be connected non-stop through the BlackBerry. As one female employee recounted, on one occasion while on holiday, she called a company to avoid losing a client. She also perceived it to be entirely natural to remain connected during her maternity leave and attend several meetings as it was part of her job: "Yes, it would have been perceived negatively [not having gone to the meetings], though nobody would have told me so openly..." (Salesperson, woman).

It seems that the underlying assumption was that though the company took employees' personal situations into account, it also expected them to be dedicated and available.

Presence in the workplace was particularly important especially for employees in the administrative subculture. As some of the employees opened the branches, punctuality was important and expected. Using the clock-in/out system was a routine, but an important one, as employees became irritated when the system was down, which made them clock in five minutes later. Nevertheless, the amount of time invested in work did not seem to be important and was the employees' responsibility, reinforcing the image of a humble employee who puts in a great deal of hours of their own accord to achieve good results.

"Yes, it is true, today I came in a little bit later, but there are many days when I leave much later than normal and nobody says anything about working overtime... When I work longer, nobody congratulates me" (Administrator, man).

There were no strong feelings about the clocking-in/out system among the healthcare workers as it was a long-standing practice. Like the administrative workers, employees had no flexibility in their starting time; they came in early and, depending on their shift, those with children either delegated morning childcare to their partners or parents. Close job interdependence allowed them not only to provide mutual emotional support, but also to cover for one another in the event of emergencies. Nevertheless, it also reinforced the importance of presence. "Theoretically, I have a 20-minute break for breakfast. It is relative because I do not have breakfast for 20 minutes if I have work, because I leave a colleague alone then..." (Nurse, woman).

Therefore, availability for this group implied full dedication and availability during working hours. Thus, the existing organizational assumptions regarding dedication and availability affected the subcultures differently.

Client-centredness

Mutua's work was characterized by client-centredness. As a service company, it had clients, companies that contracted its services, and patients who received medical attention. One of the assumptions underlying work was that providing a good service meant addressing client requests and solving existing problems. Interviewees spoke of "being on top of their work", which meant, being available to the client, rescheduling one's day according to client requests, finding information and solutions, and for some, checking one's email outside working time. This was part of the professional image they projected to the outside world: "We are working in the day-to-day and I think that we are perceived well. In the sector, we are selling reliability, in the sense that whatever the problem is, you are seen as being on top of it" (Sales employee, woman).

Though present across the organization, the effects of client-centredness on employees varied in different subcultures. In the sales subculture, employees not only had to provide good service to the clients but also to retain them. This meant dealing with unpleasant emotional situations affably to avoid losing the client, provoking emotional labour and strain (Hochschild, 1983). Moreover, client and patient encounters resulted in additional work, both in terms of time and intensity.

"It is important to be visible not only to the client, not only keeping up appearances, but also that one feels that she/he can count on you; this is the most important thing" (Sales, woman).

In the case of administrative and healthcare employees, client-centredness meant dealing with clients' disrespectful behaviour and outbursts, while preserving one's professional image. These outbursts were caused by patients' unawareness that they were obliged by the Social Security system to visit Mutua once on sick leave. Employees assumed these situations as part of their working context. It was perceived as part of the job, particularly among the medical staff, something which should not be taken seriously. In addition, despite receiving a threat of physical assault, employees who showed concern were criticized for doing so. As one doctor claimed: "Nobody likes to see someone's anger because he [sic] was taken off sick leave, because we have shown that they [sic] have recovered and could go back to work.... But we need to accept it; we try to be fair" (Doctor, man).

Nevertheless, at times it affected employees' well-being and provoked emotional spillover, which they mostly kept to themselves: "I don't cry in public, perhaps at home. I get more nervous [in these situations] and yes, I get a bit of tachycardia, but I take pills at home..." (Administrative employee, woman).

It also led to a cognitive spillover, such as thinking about the patients before the visit: "Now this person will come again, and *he* [sic] won't want

to go to work. Sometimes, I think about it even a couple of days beforehand ‘this person will come’... so yes, it affects me a little bit outside of work.” (Doctor, man).

Emotional strain was a constant component among the three subcultures but was moderated by the existing teamwork dynamics. For instance, colleagues provided a social net, offering emotional support and advice. Moreover, they also helped to defuse a tense situation at times. “There were times when the nurses saved me. In one particular case, the two nurses held back the patient” (Doctor, man).

Generally speaking, subsequent to an emotionally charged situation, the mere fact of sharing and talking over the experience served as a coping mechanism and a means of reducing the emotional spillover from work to other spheres of life throughout all the subcultures. Nevertheless, in groups that worked interdependently and in shared spaces, co-workers were attentive to other employees’ work input and presence in the office that could affect dedication to the client. Such is the case of a younger employee whose work–life strategies were not approved by peers: “For instance [you say] ‘tomorrow, I will come a little bit later, because I need to go to the doctor or I need to leave earlier’, and you notice that this situation is not perceived well” (Administrative employee, branch, man).

Across all subcultures, client-centredness resulted in the experience of emotional strain and labour. While sales employees not only had to solve clients’ problems, but also to ensure their retention, health care and administrative employees had to manage the display of negative emotions. Therefore, client-centredness was important at the company level and within the existing subculture, leading to different degrees of emotional strain and cognitive spillover, moderated by group dynamics.

Work–family integration within subcultures

The nature of work and subcultural assumptions affected employees’ work–family integration in various ways. Work penetrated employees’ private lives in terms of diminishing both their time and their emotional resources, affecting their mood and well-being. Instrumental support was generally available; however, among all the groups, it hinged upon the cultural support afforded by the supervisor and was influenced by the assumption regarding the salience of the company’s interests. The implicit expectation that work fulfilment was an individual’s responsibility led to overtime, cognitive spillover or availability across time and space. Nevertheless, within each group the effects of organizational assumptions varied.

The sales subculture was characterized by being commercial driven, which resulted in an integration of various aspects of life (long hours, BlackBerry), but also in cognitive spillover (solving problems while at home and sleeping difficulties). While the ingrained job flexibility allowed family needs or

events to be addressed, the assumption of availability resulted in blurred boundaries between various aspects of life. In the case of employees in the administrative and health care subcultures, conflicting time demands did not cause conflict, though a fixed entry time created occasional stress. Instead, emotional strain as a result of client interaction created potential spillover. Co-workers were a source of support but also restrained work–family integration preferences.

Discussion

This chapter contributes to research on work–family issues in the European context by exploring the role of a neglected layer of context, namely organizational subcultures in employees' work–family integration in a Spanish company, characterized by a variety of occupational contexts. Findings show that ideologies regarding the nature of work, work–life integration and the family “micro solidarity” at the national level were reflected within the organizational culture and subcultures. Particularly, the importance of presence, long working hours and the fear of work–family policies interfering with performance resonated at the organizational level, which was also found at the national level (European Working Conditions Observatory, 2009) and in other countries (Lewis & Smithson, 2001). This could be attributed to the neo-liberal influences extending beyond the private to the public sector, particularly in health care and academic institutions (Blanch & Stechner, 2010). Employees had few expectations of support for work–family integration from the state or the employer, beyond parental leaves, though emotional support from the direct supervisor was valued. Instead, they relied on themselves and their family network, thus illustrating the particularity of this welfare state, in other words “micro solidarity”. Therefore this chapter brings attention to the lack of adjustment of the macro national policies to the micro realities of organizations and subgroups and encourages further research in this direction.

Regarding my first research question concerning the manifestation of organizational assumptions in subcultures, wider organizational assumptions were reflected differently in subcultures depending on the strength of the prevailing commercial or service orientation within them. Those effects reflect the existence of multiple contexts within one organization (Martin, 2002) and the importance of the nature of work and underlying assumption in each of them. The existing paradox at the organizational level between a company's perceived family-friendliness and the importance of availability and dedication translated into longer working hours, construed as employees' individual choices. However, choices are contextually constrained in different groups (Lewis & Giullari, 2005). For instance, in the sales subculture, availability and dedication manifested itself in terms of “choice” to

advance work out of office hours. The importance of visibility in the workplace either in presence or through mail was closely linked to the dedication also found in other studies (Holt & Lewis, 2011; Perlow, 1999; Rapoport et al., 2002). This was not explicit. Instead, implicit assumptions underpinned working practices (Lewis, 2007). For instance, client-centredness was a central feature across the subcultures, resulting in emotional labour and strain (Hochschild, 1983).

Employees' "choices" were bound not only to the specific contexts and existing assumptions, but also to the decision of line managers (Kossek et al., 2010; Hammer et al., 2007; Hammer et al., 2009) and their perception of policy disruptiveness (den Dulk & Ruijter, 2008). In addition, in interdependent teams, co-workers' opinions and practices affected employees' choices, as has also been found earlier (Ducharme & Martin, 2000; Haas et al., 2002). Thus, specific contextual factors (Johns, 2006) such as the size of the branch and the possibility of job cover influenced managers' decisions to allow policies and co-workers' support to be availed of (Dijkers et al., 2007). To conclude, by taking a multi-layered perspective this study allows further exploration of various levels of context for work–family integration, and consequently brings attention to the understudied level of culture – subcultures – in this process. This chapter contributes to the literature by specifically emphasizing the importance of subcultures for work–family integration.

This study is not without its limitations. The case study approach does not aim for generalizability in the statistical sense but can contribute to theory development (Yin, 2003). This study illustrates some processes whereby national, organizational and subcultural levels intersect, with implications for work–family integration and which can inform future research and theory. It should also be mentioned that the distinction between subgroups and whether they form subcultures is an empirical question that is not always easy to answer. I intended to follow the definition and render values, assumptions and practices of specific groups, which can be identified as subculture. Nevertheless, the distinction between subgroup and subculture may be blurred at times. Future research could explore further the various levels of context and their influence on employees' work–family integration. The study could be replicated in another organization with similar policy provision allowing the role of subcultures in work–family integration to be further understood, and gender issues present in the assumptions to be explored (Bailyn, 1993; Lewis, 1997; Rapoport et al., 2002). Besides, additional exploration of macro and cultural contexts for work–family integration within various occupational and professional groups would permit theory enhancement. This could be achieved by the extension of the present study in different sectors/industries and national contexts. This would further enhance the understanding of how espoused values and practices and existing assumptions affect work–life integration at various levels.

The study has several practical implications. The effective implementation of work–life initiatives is influenced not only by multiple layers of state support and organizational cultural support, but also by subcultural context. Therefore, I suggest that designing policies that take into account specific contexts, whether occupational or otherwise, will facilitate more effective implementation and may contribute to improved organizational functioning and employees' well-being (Kelly et al., 2008). Moreover, training managers in family-friendly behaviours (Kossek & Hammer, 2008) and the use of a collaborative approach acknowledging the links between work–family balance and workplace effectiveness and the importance of considering the subcultural contexts, may enable managers to design more effective solutions, benefiting all parties (Lewis & Cooper, 2005; Rapoport et al., 2002).

To conclude, underlying assumptions regarding the nature of work and work–family integration at the national, organizational and subcultural levels affect individuals' attempts at integration, suggesting that cultural change is essential at many contextual levels for the effectiveness of structural support. Moreover, occupational context needs to be borne in mind in order to provide employees with suitable and creative solutions, conducive not only to work–family integration but also to enhancing work–life enrichment and personal well-being.

Notes

1. National statistics show that Spain has low poverty levels compared to other EU countries, as families support their members. Therefore, poor individuals account for 36% while poor households account for 5%.
2. Spain allocates smaller expenditure to family and infancy compared with other EU countries (2.7 of social expenditure compared with the 8.2 mean in 2000).
3. All companies with more than 250 workers have to develop an equality plan, while it is voluntary for smaller organizations.
4. Fictional name.
5. The law provides for the possibility to avail of a reduced working schedule for a period of eight years, extended for each consequent child.

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Part III

Personal and Professional Careers and Talent Management

5

Work–Family Research and Practice: What if the Whole Person Mattered?

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The task of reconciling the roles of work and family life has been like the Middle East of the field of management and organizational behaviour – the issues seem to be perennial and intractable. Although we do not claim to have the answer to work–life peace, we would like to examine a lens for viewing the terrain that we see as having some potential: looking at the issues in terms of the whole person. What if we took the whole person seriously?

Whereas the work–life field has generally focused on *the job* as representing the person’s work life, we see that the expansion of our vision to the person’s overall life, in its entirety, will provide for more freedom to find creative ways of improving the integration of work life and personal/family life.

Looking back: a 40-year review

The state of work–family discourse, then and now

The 1970s. Forty years ago, there was not a generally accepted “field” of work–life study or practice, but there was a nascent body of work on gender roles – including Friedan’s (1963) *The Feminine Mystique* and Gloria Steinem’s early writing (1969) – that latter blossomed into a work–life domain. Some of the earliest scholarship that we would now call work–life research were studies of dual career couples by Robert and Rhona Rapoport (e.g., Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971), Lotte Bailyn (Arthur, Bailyn, Levinson, & Shepard, 1984), and Douglas T. Hall and Associates (Hall, 1971; Hall & Gordon, 1973; Gordon & Hall, 1974).

Within the careers literature of this era, the focus was on time: couples’ conflicts over who does what home activities, how much time the person has available for work, etc. (Hall, 1976; Schein, 1978). In 1977, Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977) published her classic book, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, which looked at women’s roles in organizations primarily in terms of their numbers (very low) and their power strategies. In all of this work, the focus was on the behaviours of women and men and not on family as a domain.

The 1980s. As the discourse advanced, the field of interest expanded from a focus on couples and roles to a broader examination of work and family domains. More writings on the topic appeared in the management and organizational behaviour literature, and the role of the organization entered into the dialogue (Hall, 1986). A severe economic recession, related to increased global competition, led in North America to the introduction of the term “downsizing” and in Europe of the term “redundancies”. Perhaps related to the pressure that employers were experiencing, there was a strong awareness of the strain and conflict between work responsibilities and family needs (see, e.g., Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The 1990s. As the world moved into a period of prosperity, we began to hear about the global economy and “new careers”. Authors suggested that the old rules of the traditional psychological contract at work were being rewritten, and that a new era had dawned (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall & Associates, 1996). This more agentic view of careers meant a corresponding increase in the power of the employee in negotiating benefits that would contribute to a good work–life balance. Corporate work–life initiatives flourished, and research centres/institutes devoted to work–life practice were created (e.g., Center on Work & Family, originally at Boston University and then later moved to Boston College).

The 2000s. In this decade, as organizations were faced with a growing shortage of talent (i.e., the “war for talent”), the pendulum began to swing back, with employers showing more interest in helping employees find rewarding, fulfilling careers in their organizations. During this time, even if organizations did take family considerations into account, they looked primarily at talent and how to retain and develop it (Cheese et al., 2007).

In the work–life arena, the 2000s were a decade in which we became more aware that work and home roles can provide energy to each other, rather than only deplete each other (Rothbard, 2001): although we had known about role spillover for decades (Evans & Bartolome, 1980), the assumption had generally been made that this worked more often in a negative direction than in a positive one. This newer understanding of reciprocal influence moved us towards an understanding of richer interdependencies among life roles.

Contributions from the ICWF conferences (2005, 2007 and 2009). The theme of increasing focus on talent and greater understanding of the complex interactions between various work and life (or family) roles came through strongly in the first three conferences of the International Center on Work and Family (ICWF). For example, Friede and Ryan (2007) found that anticipated work–family conflict is associated with less certainty about parental and career plans. Also, not surprisingly, the authors found that people who anticipate greater conflict in fact do experience greater conflict.

On the more positive side of that equation, Lyness and Judiesch (2007) reported that managers who experienced higher levels of work–life balance

were less likely to experience career derailment. In this rigorous quantitative study, the authors found that, using supervisor ratings and self ratings, as well as Project GLOBE assessments of country culture characteristics as moderators, the relationship between work–life balance and risk of derailment was weaker in countries with high gender egalitarian cultures. This suggests that in countries where gender roles are more equal in regard to performing home or family tasks, these activities are less likely to conflict with the performance of job and career tasks.

Further to the point about the impact of experiences in one sphere on those in another, Hall et al. (2007), in a longitudinal study that examined well-being in the family, personal and career spheres, found that a high level of family and personal well-being predicts a high level of career success over time. However, the opposite does not hold: a high level of career success does not predict family and personal well-being. This suggests that the effects of positive experiences in one's personal and family life tend to be long lasting and to spill over into career attitudes, while the effects of career success tend to be more fleeting.

In the context of the economic uncertainty during the recessions of the early and later 2000s, this raises the issue of how decreases in levels of objective career success (through, for example, lay-offs and underemployment) might be related to subjective measures of success. One detailed study of gaps in earnings due to lay-offs showed that the effects are powerful. Schneer et al. (2009) found that, for people who earned their MBA degrees between 1990 and 1995 and were surveyed in 2000 and 2007, those who had employment gaps due to lay-offs were earning 32% less in 2007 and had a lower level of authority than people of similar qualifications who had no employment gaps. There were also comparable losses in measures of subjective success, such as career and life satisfaction. As the authors point out, if success decrements of this magnitude occurred for the relatively short, geographically limited recession of the dot.com bust, what will be the effects of the worldwide economic crisis (often called The Great Recession) of 2008?

Schneer et al. (2009) also found that the earnings of women MBAs were less than those of comparable men, a finding that is unfortunately not new (Kirchmeyer, 2002). This issue was also explored in depth by Yang (2007), who reported data from a cross-cultural study of workers in Europe, the USA and Japan. She reported that despite advances of women into higher management ranks and into senior professional roles, these gender-based pay gaps persist across national borders.

In view of the powerful effects that career setbacks can have on a person's objective and subjective career success, this raises the question of what employing organizations can do to ameliorate these effects. There continues to be a lack of empirical studies of organizational programmes in this area. Beham (2007) presented a conceptual model for research on employee decisions to take advantage of employer work–life benefit programmes, and

this provides a good road map for future research. Lazarova (2009) examined the participation of employees in such programmes, and found that there were no direct relationships between participation in the programmes and employee retention. However, there was evidence for the positive effects of career satisfaction upon retention. Work–life enhancement, to a lesser extent, was also related to retention. This study raises interesting questions about just what forms of support employees might find most useful.

The 2010s. So where are we headed in the 2010s? As we saw at the 2009 ICWF conference, it appears that we are beginning a decade where the bargaining power of the individual is increasing, as the world economy improves and as demographics shift, with baby boomers capable of retiring and leaving key talent holes, and with “millennials” being much choosier about where they work (Sweet, 2009). More than ever before, employees at both end of the age spectrum will be in effect paid *volunteers*, and employers will have to treat them as such. Personal goal setting and self-efficacy will be major factors in a person’s psychological well-being at work (Masuda, 2007). The big task for employers, then, will be facilitating *employee engagement*, so that the employees are motivated to invest their full selves in their work and to perform at their best (Hall & Las Heras, 2009). In this way, then, we will see more *individuation* of jobs and careers (O’Toole & Lawler, 2006) (such as very personal choices for timing of childbirth (Lirio, 2007; Valcour, 2007)).

What this more employee-centric career success focus means, mirroring one of the themes of the careers and talent management track in the 2009 ICWF conference, is that the organization will have to be mindful of the *whole person* in its work–life practices. It will have to take into account what a person’s career aspirations are, what the person’s family and personal commitments are, and it will have to be sensitive to how many demands it can make on the employee’s personal time. And, finally, in its career development activities it will have to attend to the growth of the whole person. Indeed, recent cross-cultural research on careers has shown that this focus on the whole person will be necessary around the world, not just in western or developed geographies (Briscoe et al., 2011).

Bringing in the whole person

As we explained in the previous section, work–life programmes have historically focused primarily on individuals’ job-related concerns. In contrast to this narrow perspective, which takes into consideration only a “slice” of each employee, we argue that organizations should take a broader, “whole person” view of employees. In this section, we explore the “whole person” perspective. Then, in the subsequent section, we suggest how organizations might design work–life programmes that target the whole employee. Finally, we discuss why a whole person approach is better not only for employees but also for the organization itself.

What is the whole person perspective?

The whole person perspective revolves around the idea of integration, a word that is often invoked but rarely defined precisely. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *to integrate* means “to form, coordinate, or blend into a functioning or unified whole” (“Integrate”, 2008). And indeed, the whole person view is grounded in the idea that although individuals consist of many different “parts”, each part cannot be considered on its own. Instead, in order to understand the individual as she really is, she must be viewed in her entirety, as the sum of her parts. This stance is more complex and therefore more difficult to adopt as a researcher or a practitioner. However, if engaged properly, taking a whole person approach should lead to findings that are more representative of individuals’ actual experiences as well as to more useful, effective practices.

The whole person perspective involves integration across three dimensions. First, in contrast to the bulk of the work–life literature, the whole person lens argues that the different settings (e.g., work, family, community, self) of an individual’s life are not separate (Las Heras & Hall, 2008). We term this type of integration *domain integration*. Second, the whole person stance emphasizes that although individuals possess multiple sub-identities (e.g., employee, sibling, woman, volunteer), in order to function as adults, they must make sense of these different sub-identities as a cohesive collection. We refer to this as *identity integration*. Finally, the whole person mindset adopts a longitudinal perspective. This type of integration, which we call *temporal integration*, means thinking about each individual not as a snapshot at a single point in time, but rather as a dynamic, changing entity that evolves over time. In particular, it requires consideration of an individual’s life stage, developmental phase and aspirations. We explore these three dimensions of integration – which are all rooted in adult development theory, especially as proposed by Erikson (1968), Levinson and colleagues (1978) and Kegan (1982, 1994) – below.

The first type of integration, *domain integration*, posits that although individuals move in and out of different life domains, these domains are not separate realms but are rather integrated into a single, complete whole. In other words, although each person’s life has many pieces, those pieces all fit together into one puzzle. More specifically, although scholars tend to separate work and life domains – often pitting one against the other through constructs such as *conflict* or *strain* (e.g., Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; Coverman, 1989; Ernst Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Frone & Rice, 1987; Frone et al., 1992; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) – we suggest that *domain integration* is in fact a more accurate representation of how individuals experience their lives. For instance, a man who simultaneously holds a job as a high-level executive, is a father to three young children, and serves on the board of a community food shelter does not encounter these role domains as disconnected; instead, he moves through them in a connected fashion, linking them by virtue of

his participation in each one. Our emphasis on *domain integration* is consistent with Weiss and Rupp's point that we still know very little about "how work is integrated into people's life stories" (2011: 93).

By arguing for a *domain integration* perspective, we do not mean to suggest that all individuals view themselves as flowing seamlessly from one domain to another. Indeed, we acknowledge that some people prefer strong rather than permeable boundaries between their domains, and that a segmentation approach may bestow certain benefits on the individual that an integration approach does not (Ashforth et al., 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996a, 1996b). In this way, we differentiate between a whole person notion of *domain integration* and a personal preference for integration versus segmentation.

Finally, we believe that a *domain integration* perspective is increasingly accurate given the reality of today's workplaces and households, particularly among knowledge workers. New technologies such as smart phones have led to heightened expectations on the part of employers, colleagues and clients that individuals will be "constantly connected, available, and responsive" (Mazmanian et al., 2005: 340). These expectations, coupled with the rise in work hours that has been documented among professionals and managers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000; Jacobs & Gerson, 2004), mean that individuals' lives more and more resemble braids, wherein domains are intertwined and parallel rather than separate and sequential.

The second type of integration, *identity integration*, underscores that an individual's sub-identities are not siloed self-schema that "just happen" to reside within the same individual. Here we invoke identity in the Erikson (1968) sense, that is, *ego identity*, or the conscious sense of self that people develop through social interaction. Erikson (1968) argued that identity develops through a series of sequential phases. During each phase, the individual faces a specific developmental task, or conflict, that she must solve (Erikson, 1968). More recently, but building on Erikson's concept, Hall (2002) conceptualized identity as comprising various sub-identities related to both the life and career domains. Thus the idea of identity captures the fact that although individuals view themselves differently depending on the setting, these different views, or sub-identities, are integrated because they coexist within a single individual who must make sense of their sum.

For example, although a woman may think of herself as a female executive when she is at work among mostly male colleagues and as a parent representing her children at the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meeting, at some level she understands how her female executive sub-identity and her parent sub-identity fit together (along with additional sub-identities) to form her whole person identity. Or, as Las Heras and Hall (2008: 190) explain:

As the self becomes more differentiated and complex, it is also necessary for it to be able to integrate all of these new facets, so that the individual feels whole. That is, even though one sees oneself engaging with the

world in very different and complicated ways, one also needs to have a sense of oneself as one person with one self, not multiple selves or multiple personalities. The psychologically healthy person is able to hold all of these different parts of the self, or “subidentities”, in one single clear identity.

The notion of integrating of sub-identities is an important one not only for adult development theorists but also for organizational scholars. As organizational researchers, although we study individuals in the workplace, we cannot ignore non-work sub-identities (e.g., community member, parent, sibling): even though individuals may not visibly enact non-work sub-identities at work, these other sub-identities influence experiences of work. For instance, if an older individual takes over the care of an elderly parent, his new sub-identity as a caregiver for someone who previously cared for him will shape his overall self-perception and therefore his experience at work, even though these new caregiving responsibilities are generally not addressed in that setting. Similarly, if a young adult becomes a mother, her new sub-identity as a parent will be integral to her integrated sense of self, even if her work sub-identity remains the same.

The third type of integration, *temporal integration*, emphasizes the importance of thinking of individuals not as unchanging photographs, but as dynamic entities that change continually over the lifespan. This perspective again has a definite adult development flavour: although adulthood was historically viewed by psychologists (e.g., Freud) as a static period during which earlier conflicts were re-enacted but no further development occurred (Levinson et al., 1978), adult development theorists re-conceptualized adulthood as a time of continued growth and change (Erikson, 1968; Gould, 1978; Levinson et al., 1978; Vaillant, 1977). The whole person perspective builds on this portrait of adulthood by highlighting the importance of an individual’s life stage (e.g., marital/partner status, parental status, eldercare responsibilities), cognitive-developmental phase and evolving aspirations for the future.

The last element of *temporal integration* is consideration of an individual’s aspirations for the future. Levinson and his colleagues referred to such future-oriented hopes as “the Dream”, or “an imagined possibility that generates excitement and vitality” in the current moment (1978: 91). Understanding what lends purpose and meaning to an individual’s life is crucial because it helps explain the individual’s actions in the present – which tend to be geared towards pursuing “the Dream” – and hints at that individual’s future trajectory.

Overall, *temporal integration* suggests that individuals make sense of the present not only in terms of where they are and who they are at the moment, but also in the context of where they have been in the past and where they plan to go in the future. This means that individuals are constantly rewriting the narratives that they tell to themselves and to others in order to maintain

a feeling of consistency in their lives. For example, Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010: 136) theorized that people use narratives during work role transitions to “instate a sense of continuity between who they have been and who they are becoming”.

In sum, we propose a whole person perspective that moves away from the compartmentalized, static view of individuals that dominates much of the prior work–life literature to embrace instead an integrated, whole person approach. This stance entails looking across domains rather than viewing them as separate (i.e., *domain integration*), considering sub-identities together rather than in silos (i.e., *identity integration*), and remembering that individuals are continually changing – in terms of life stage, mind order and Dreams – as they move through their lives (i.e., *temporal integration*). Examples of this whole person approach from the ICWF conferences would include Hall et al.’s (2007) examination of reciprocal relationships among career, personal and family experiences over time, as well as Lyness and Judiesch’s (2007) study of the negative relationship between perceptions of work–life balance and potential career derailment.

What is an organizational whole person perspective?

In the previous section, we painted what is a decidedly micro-level portrait of the whole person perspective. However, we believe that a whole person stance can also be adopted at the organizational level. Taking an organizational view of the whole person is necessarily more complicated than an individual level approach because it requires considering the recursive relationship between the whole person and the work environment. More specifically, as Apospori (2007) has pointed out, an organizational whole person perspective necessitates thinking across levels of analysis to examine the tensions between, on one hand, individual work–life needs and, on the other hand, organizational needs, in the form of meeting work goals. In other words, although at the individual level we might be content with enabling better personal outcomes (e.g., well-being, life satisfaction), at the organization level, we usually pay attention to performance outcomes such as productivity and turnover.

In Figure 5.1, we show how individual needs for integration – *domain*, *identity* and *temporal* – currently tend to “lose out” in the face of more dominant organizational needs. More specifically, we illustrate the difference between how work–life practices are currently implemented and how they could ideally be designed. First, while individuals need to think about their lives in terms of integration across multiple domains (e.g., work, family, community, self), organizations clearly need to focus on the work domain, where the individual performs tasks relevant to organization outcomes. Second, while individuals need to integrate their various sub-identities (e.g., woman, executive, mother, volunteer) to achieve functional, holistic self-perceptions (Hall, 2002), organizations tend to be interested in – and certainly to be

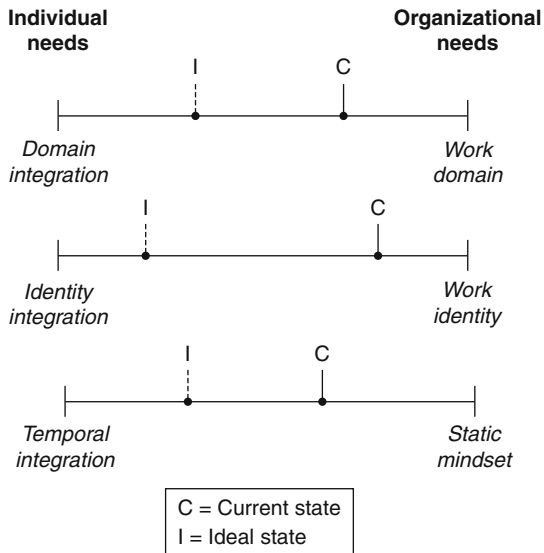


Figure 5.1 Balancing individual integration needs against organizational work needs

aware of – only the individual’s employee sub-identity. Third, although individuals are situated in a long-term trajectory of growth and development, organizations tend to focus on “here and now” results. These tensions must be considered when designing whole person approaches to work–life programmes. In the following section, we describe in greater detail what this might entail.

Designing and creating whole person work–life practices

What does it mean then to bring a whole person perspective into reality? Most importantly, as we have seen in the preceding sections, this means adopting a broader view of work–life practices. It means going beyond a view of work–life programmes as standardized, à la carte “menus” to a consideration of such programmes as dynamic, integrative and individualized.

We propose that the following elements should be part of whole person work–life programmes:

- *Tailoring the programme to the needs of the individual, not the organization.* This may sound heretical. After all, why should an organization support a programme that does not give primary attention to its own needs? There is a paradoxical mechanism at work that operates in the following way: the more that people engage in a work–life programme that has the elements that we describe below, the more they will be able to remain

engaged in their jobs without suffering from burnout or seeking work outside the organization.

- *Participation of the individual: Personal choice and self-initiation.*

Since careers are now driven by the employee and not the organization (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall & Associates, 1996), and since today's employees need autonomy and self-direction, it is important that work-life-related decisions be under the control of the employee. Given that each person has a unique work-life situation, it should be up to the employee to determine what type of accommodations he needs in order to manage the responsibilities of all of his life domains.

- *External exploration.*

There are two kinds of exploration that each person must do (Zikic & Hall, 2009). One kind is internal, self-assessment. The other kind is external, an investigation into new options for family choices, personal pursuits, dual career possibilities and the like. This process generally involves informational interviews and research.

- *Guides (developmental networks, peers, authorities, etc.).*

There is also a large relational component to work-life arrangements (Hall & Associates, 1996). Mentors are certainly key to a person's development (Kram, 1985; Ragins & Kram, 2007). More recently, it has become clear that networks of developers (Higgins & Kram, 2001)—as well as peer coaches (Parket et al., 2008)—are supplementing one-to-one mentoring. In a formal organizational development programme, we would recommend that at least one of these possible forms of relational development be provided.

There are various ways that guides might be included in the process. One straightforward way is *reflection*, such as an exercise in which the person writes down the messages that he receives from particular role senders. One activity we have used is one where in people reflect on messages about work and life that they received from their families when they were very young. By putting these messages on paper and discussing them with peer coaches in a workshop setting, it is possible for the person to see them more objectively. Through this process, the person can in a way "negotiate" with these earliest socializing agents.

Recent research has identified different ways of identifying one's developmental networks (see, for example, Higgins (2000) and Shen (2010)). For instance, in a workshop format, people can analyze their own networks. This is especially important in dealing with work-life issues, as the issues are so unique to each person, and it is especially challenging to find new ways of coping and being a family member and an employee that are a good fit for a person's particular situation. It is easier to find creative solutions for family issues alone than it is to find novel and effective solutions for issues that involve *both* work and

family issues. By employing relational methods, and networks in particular, the person greatly improves his chances of finding better personal strategies.

- *Consideration of the reference group.*

In addition to relational inputs from developers, it is also important for the person to take into account the expectations and wishes of *reference groups*, or key people whose opinions mean a lot to the person and her self-evaluation. These could be parents, friends, teachers, colleagues, superiors, children and the like, and they could be outside of the developmental network in that they do not have direct influence on the person.

- *Creating guides and rewards for work–life conversations between managers and employees.*

Since the primary agent of work–life discussions in many contemporary organizations is the employee’s supervisor or manager (Lips-Wiersma & Hall, 2007), one of the most practical ways to make the above practices happen is for the organization to provide training guides or manuals to assist managers in having such conversations with their employees. Ideally, the organization would provide short (e.g., half-day) training workshops, with skill-based role playing. In addition, managers could be encouraged to ask their own managers to have such conversations. And, to “close the loop”, ideally the organization should build work–life conversations into the performance appraisal process and hold managers accountable for actually holding these conversations with their subordinates (i.e., make this part of the manager’s job description).

- *Creating a holding environment process for whole person work–life practices.*

A final critical element involves the *process* that is employed to assist the person in figuring out his work–life issues. *Holding environments* – in which the daily press of work is suspended or attenuated and the person’s primary expected task is working on growth – provide a transitional or liminal space in which the person is allowed to explore new aspects of the self, new behaviours and new understandings of the world. A holding environment contains both support and acceptance of the person, along with challenge and encouragement for the person to progress and grow. Or, as Kegan (1994: 43) says, the holding environment provides “welcoming acknowledgement to exactly who the person is right now as he or she is, and fosters the person’s psychological evolution.”

Good examples of whole person work–life processes can be found in the various 12-step programmes for helping people grow out of various personal challenges, such as addiction. All of the elements for which we have advocated here, and more, are found in these powerful personal change

programmes, and their success in helping people through such difficult situations can serve as models for ways of helping people navigate complex challenges involving work and family issues.

Benefits to the organization

Most organizations currently take a relatively narrow view of work–life balance, focusing mainly on restricted, predetermined benefits. We recommend that employers instead adopt a whole person perspective on work–life issues. We believe that such a strategy can benefit organizations in several major ways.

First, if organizations design their work–life programmes with the whole person in mind, they are likely to increase person–job fit (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996). By gaining a better sense of what each employee needs and wants from her work role and setting, organizations will be better equipped to match individuals to the right jobs and opportunities. Similarly, working with individuals to help them become more aware of their values should allow individuals to take a more targeted, active role in managing their career paths, thereby further strengthening person–job fit.

Improved person–job fit should, in turn, lead to more positive outcomes in terms of retention and satisfaction. For instance, a meta-analysis (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) found that person–job fit was strongly correlated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment and intent to quit. The same study established a modest correlation between person–job fit and overall performance.

Second, if employers invest more in developing the whole person, employees will be more likely to develop and articulate a vision for the organization (or their part of the organization). In today's complex world, organizations need all of their employees – not just their top executives – to think like leaders, but until employees have a personal vision, they are unlikely to be able to generate an organizational vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2008). Furthermore, helping employees develop a personalized “Dream” (Levinson et al., 1978) should lead to greater mental health (Carr, 1997; Drebing & Gooden, 1991; Minter & Samuels, 1998), which should benefit both the individual and the organization.

Finally, adopting a whole person approach means that employees may be able to achieve more complex mind orders (Kegan, 1982, 1994). By providing opportunities to reflect and sources of developmental support (i.e., mentoring), organizations can help their employees move beyond “simpler” orders of the mind to more complex orders that are more commensurate with the complicated reality of today's work world, which requires that employees be more self-authoring than in the past (Kegan, 1994).

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6

Effects of Gender and Family on Earnings and Career Paths: A Cross-Cultural Study of Europe, the USA and Japan

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Abstract

This study takes a cross-cultural approach to the examination of gender-based pay differentials and career paths, particularly comparing Europe, the USA and Japan. Results indicate that despite increased participation of women in the workforce and their substantial inroads into managerial and professional jobs, gender-based pay gaps persist across borders. However, patterns of the work–family relationship and the impact of gender on earnings differ considerably among industrial societies. Data show that the magnitude of gender-based pay differentials is unrelated to a country’s degree of economic development among the Western industrial societies. Factors that influence pay equity and career paths range from contextual and organizational variables such as cultural norms, types of welfare state regimes and corporate practices related to individual differences in gender, family, education and career choices. The “business case” argument for gender equity and family-friendly policies is linked to the national context. Cultural norms about gender roles and types of welfare state regimes pertaining to the role of the state in statutory provisions help explain trends and developments in gender-based pay adjustments and variations at the firm level. Gender pay gaps are likely to be larger – and to be narrowed more slowly – in masculinity-oriented societies than in femininity-oriented societies. In the face of economic downturns, women tend to take a major hit and retreat to larger pay gaps, more likely in the liberal/market-oriented regimes. Family and community are likely to be more actively involved in addressing gender equity and work–family arrangements in the conservative-corporatistic regimes. Based on recent national and regional

labour statistics and incorporating prior cross-cultural research, the study offers several propositions tied in a multivariate conceptual framework, and provides suggestions for future research and implications for the practical field.

Introduction

This study investigates effects of gender and family on pay differentials and career paths from a cross-cultural perspective, particularly comparing industrial European societies, the USA and Japan. For most men and women today, work and family are central life domains and the work–family relationship has become an important object for research and for policymaking in the practical field. Consequently work–family interfaces are increasingly recognized as significant organizational issues as well as career challenges to individual employees both within and across cultures (e.g., Blau & Kahn, 2003; Brookfield, 2010; Dowling & Welch, 2005; Eurofound, 2010; Frone, 2003; GMAC-GRS, 2005; Yang et al., 2000; Yang, 2007). This is largely because of increased participation of women, dual-career or dual-earner couples, and single parents in the workforce. Concurrent with the increasing gender and family diversity in the workforce are ongoing business expansions across borders that drive the need for cross-cultural learning and career adaptations for both employers and individual employees.

According to the US Department of Labour's Bureau of Labour Statistics (USDOL BLS, 2004, 2009), for example, only about 43% of women aged 16 and older were in the workforce in 1970, but by 2008 the rate of women's labour force participation had risen to nearly 60% and this share has been relatively stable over the past several years. Among all married-couple families, about 57.6% were dual-earners, up from 43.6% in 1967. At the same time, the proportion of working mothers with children under age of 18 rose from 47% in 1975 to 71% in 2004, where it has remained for the last few years. Along with their rising rate of participation at the workplace, women have also made substantial inroads into better-paying occupations. The proportion of women employed as managers, administrators, or executives has nearly doubled in the past two decades. The educational attainment of women aged 25 to 64 in the labour force also rose considerably, with 36% holding college degrees in 2008 compared with only 11% in 1970 (USDOL BLS, 2009). Young women (72%) are somewhat more likely than young men (66%) to be enrolled in college. However, the median weekly income for female full-time salaried workers aged 25 and over was 78.7% of the median for their male counterparts in 2009, although the earnings gap between men and women has narrowed for most age groups (USDOL BLS, 2010). The female-to-male earnings ratio for women with a bachelor's degree and higher was 73.1% in 2009, a gender earnings gap even 5.6% larger than the overall median (USDOL BLS, 2010). Working wives' earnings remain

largely as a secondary income to the household, about one-third (36%) of the median total household income in the USA (USDOL BLS, 2009). Similarly, there has been increased participation of women at the workplace throughout European industrial societies, but the gender-based pay gaps persist in all wage distributions (European Commission, 2011; European Foundation (Eurofound), 2002a; Carley, 2009; Kraemer, 2010). There are also more women (59.5%) than men (40.5%) who are higher education graduates (European Commission, 2011), but the gender earnings gaps have typically widened toward the top of the wage distribution for the female group with college/tertiary education, indicating the persisting “glass ceiling” effect (Arulampalam et al., 2007; De la Rica et al., 2005). In Japan, more women than men have entered the workforce over the past two decades, and 70% of female employees are married (Jameson, 2001). There are also more women entering traditional male-dominated occupations, which can be attributed to the general trend of the labour market shortage stemming from the low birth rate, and the EEOA (Equal Employment Opportunity Act) related legislation enacted since 1985. Women made up 40.4% of the workforce in Japan in 2002 (Jiji Press English News Service, 2002), compared to 35% in 1985, yet the average scheduled cash earnings per month for the female employees were far below their male counterparts, by about 66.8% (Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour & Welfare (JMHLW), 2004; OECD, 2008). A major cause of the large gender wage gap is occupational segregation, where large numbers of women are employed in traditional female-dominated jobs on relatively low wages and are placed on different career tracks even when male and female employees are working on the same job (Hori, 2009; Shuto, 2009). Such occupational segregation is, however, not exclusively featured in Japan, but is also an observable fact in the labour markets of Europe and the USA. The questions concerning why gender-based pay differentials persist but vary considerably among the industrial societies, and what factors influence the earnings and career paths of employed men and women – similarly or in different ways across borders – are important in light of globalization, regional economic integration and growing workforce diversity.

Economic and business globalization has made gender equity and work-family adjustment pivotal to organizational competitiveness across borders. There has been growing empirical evidence that family adaptability is an important predictor for expatriate performance among surveyed multinationals headquartered in Europe, the USA and Japan (e.g., Brewster, 1988; Brookfield, 2010; Hamill, 1989; Marx, 1996; Tung, 1981; Yang, 2007). With increased female participation in the domestic workforce, and as the international experience becomes increasingly important for career progression, there will be more female expatriate managers in international and multinational organizations (Dowling & Welch, 2005).

Effective management of workforce diversity and pay equity pertaining to both visible (e.g., gender, family situations, full-time or part-time

employment status) and invisible variables (e.g., cultural norms about gender roles and work–family relationship) is significantly related to organizational outcomes such as productivity, job satisfaction, career satisfaction, workplace morale and public image (den Dulk, 2001; Frone, 2003; Reitman & Schneer, 2005; Yang, 2005). Clearly, organizations and global managers need to be aware of gender, family and cultural influences on their operations, human resource management practices and organizational policies both within and across borders. It is also important to note that gender equity and work–family reconciliation are far beyond the “business case” and also concern quality of life, social justice, public expectations, statutory measures and policy implications.

It is under these circumstances that the present study takes a comparative approach to examining potential factors that influence gender equity and career paths among the industrial societies with special attention to pay differentials and the work–family relationship. Variables analysed include cultural values, types of welfare state regimes, education and skills, family situations, employment status and organizational characteristics. Based on the recent national and regional labour statistics, the study offers a cross-cultural analysis on gender equity and pay differentials. It provides a multivariate conceptual framework to raise several propositions for future research. It also provides firm-specific examples to illustrate policy implications and suggestions for the practical field.

Gender equity, career paths and work–family relationship

Gender equity and pay differentials

Gender equity in this study concerns both equal employment opportunity and pay equity between men and women at the workplace. Gender income disparity, also referred to as gender-based pay differentials or gender pay gaps, is usually measured in ratios of female-to-male median earnings among full-time year round employees. However, it has been argued that the female-to-male wage gap at the mean provides a very inadequate picture and that comparing an “average” woman and an “average” man can produce a misleadingly simple depiction of how men’s and women’s wages differ (Arulampalam et al., 2007; Blau & Kahn, 2003). A number of national and regional studies found that even after controlling a rich set of human capital factors (e.g., education, industry, occupation, tenure, labour market supply, economic sectors, part-time status) and individual characteristics (e.g., age, marital status, childcare responsibilities) there are still unexplained proportions in pay disparity, which are presumably due to discrimination (e.g., Arulampalam et al., 2007; Eurofound, 2002b, 2007; Reitman & Schneer, 2005; Wood et al., 1993). It is likely that the labour market institutions, such as culture and state statutory provisions, are responsible for an important portion of international differences in the gender pay gap and inequality.

The transformation in the nature of work and the surge of women into the workforce suggest the need for new theory and knowledge that take into account ongoing socioeconomic changes, contemporary lives for men and women, and more integrative ways to address the complexity in gender equity, earnings gaps, challenges toward non-traditional career paths and policy implications.

Previous research indicates that gender and family characteristics stand as significant variables that affect career patterns and pay differentials at the workplace (e.g., Arulampalam et al., 2007; Blau & Kahn, 1992, 2003; Dowling & Welch, 2005; den Dulk, 2001; Hori, 2009; Reitman & Schneer, 2005; Zellner, 2003). Recent national and international statistics show that gender-based differentials in wages and wage growth persist in all industrial societies, but the magnitude of these differentials varies considerably both across borders and between public and private sectors (e.g., European Commission 2011; Eurostat, 2010; JMHLW, 2004; OECD, 2008; US Census Bureau, 2008; USDOL BLS, 2009). A variety of factors directly or indirectly affect gender-based pay differentials. While women on average are paid significantly less than their male counterparts regardless of the nation, gender-based pay gaps appear smaller for single women as compared to those with family responsibilities (Blau & Kahn, 1992; Wood et al., 1993), indicating that marital status is an important influence on the economic well-being of female employees. Taking time from work in order to care for children reduces wages significantly. Women face high opportunity costs of career interruptions for family responsibility. However, the impact of family responsibility on pay and career patterns should not be limited to a mere gender issue. A US-based study found that among married men with MBA degrees, those with house-making wives tend to have more frequent promotions and better pay increases than do their counterparts with working wives (Schneer & Reitman, 1993). More recent longitudinal studies found that more than half of the surveyed managers experienced employment gaps in their early career, where managers with a career gap earned significantly less than those continuously employed regardless of gender (Reitman & Schneer, 2005). Career interruptions due to personal concerns, schooling, career shifts, or workplace lay-offs may be short, but are detrimental to one's income and one's career satisfaction for a long time.

The increase of women and dual-career families in the workforce suggest that the traditional career model for many men is likely to alter. As more women enter traditional male-oriented occupations, as economies of the Western industrial world become more service-oriented, and as more organizations seek comparative advantages overseas, those ongoing socioeconomic changes have and will continue to put pressure on the wages and transitions in career patterns for many traditional male employees, which may serve to narrow the gender earnings gap. Moreover, in the face of recent economic downturns and in the context of daunting business closures, corporate

downsizing and outsourcing, employment gaps are likely to become more common and longer for many men and women in the Western industrial societies. Involuntary career interruptions are also more likely. Unfortunately the forces driving the dynamics of women's and men's experiences in non-traditional career paths and their policy implications have not received much attention from the government or the academics. Thus there are a lot of unanswered questions.

Traditional and emerging career models

The traditional view of a successful career involves a continuous work history where violating this path will bring financial penalties (Hall, 1987). The traditional career model can be described as a hierarchical path through a series of levels of promotions along with their corresponding pay increases. Key elements of the traditional career model include continuous service and regular upward occupational mobility. Recent career literature takes a different view of career paths. The idea of work–life balance and boundaryless careers suggests that employment changes are to be expected, as the labour market becomes more flexible, as a continuous organizational career becomes more difficult to maintain, and as individual responsibility for managing careers becomes more pervasive. Career paths span over the course of a person's life, in which both personal and family concerns are also intrinsically valued by the individual. Protean and boundaryless careers are dictated by the needs and values of the person rather than by the organization (Arthur, 1994; Hall & Moss, 1998). Thus they are also called post-organizational career patterns (Mayrhofer et al., 2005). The concept of protean and boundaryless careers reflects a more accurate model of emerging non-traditional career paths where gaps are seen as opportunities for career change and for quality of life improvement, at least in theory, but there has been little evidence of the marked changes in labour market mechanisms. A Eurofound study on gender and career development (2007) confirmed that the labour markets by and large still favour the traditional career model, with many women facing difficulties in fitting their work–life patterns into the typical male model, and therefore have been disadvantaged. An exception is Denmark where an emphasis on “flexicurity” has made the transition to greater job mobility more secure.

Ideally, the new career model can help men and women in non-traditional career paths to gain a work–life balance, accumulate human capital as they prepare for a new start and thus eliminate the financial penalties at the mid- or later career stage. Non-traditional career paths may take different forms such as career breaks, horizontal mobility, different professions, chronic flexibility and adaptability. The challenge for the individuals is that there are no norms and few rules to guide them in these new circumstances. Although moving to a new employer may increase one's salary

to current market-level wages, empirical research supports the traditional view on the negative financial impact of an interrupted career rather than the positive view of protean and boundaryless careers. Career gap penalties persist regardless of the reason for the interruption. Those who take time off from their career tend to encounter significant problems when trying to re-enter the workforce even if the reason for the employment gap is to upgrade one's skills and knowledge. For example, a survey report from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business found that about 50% of the participants (mostly women, and men, who met the criteria of having prior executive or other managerial positions and also holding an advanced professional degree such as in business, law, medicine or education) after a career gap described their attempt to re-enter the workforce as challenging and frustrating (McGrath et al., 2005). Among key findings of the same survey, women first felt positive at the time of stepping out in order to improve their quality of lives, but found the post-step-out experience negative and depressing when they attempted to return, despite the majority of those women (81%) having an MBA. Women who returned to the workforce tended to join smaller firms, shift to different industries, or change to different functional roles.

Temporary labour market withdrawals, disproportionately taken by women for family or parental leave even when it is also available to men, might raise the gender earnings gap for the affected group. Women, and men, not subject to parental leave provisions might lose their jobs on having a child and might re-enter subsequently at lower-level jobs providing shorter hours and lower pay (Blau & Kahn, 2003). In terms of pay equity, the labour market continues to disadvantage women to the extent that even those with uninterrupted career paths earned about 22% less than comparable to men (Reitman & Schneer, 2005). Likewise, a regional study exploring the gender pay gap in 11 European countries for the years 1995–2001 (Arulampalam et al., 2007) found that the earnings gap exists in all wage distributions even after controlling for a set of human capital variables (e.g., education, job tenure, part-time status, private sector firm size, industry, occupation, region, year, etc.) and individual characteristics (e.g., age, marital status, health, experience of unemployment, etc.). Those empirical findings suggest that human capital factors, family situations and personal career aspirations (e.g., career patterns and life goal priorities) stand as important predictors of earnings and career development but tend to have differential effects for female and male employees.

Apparently women's and men's career patterns differ and their corresponding economic returns do not parallel due to a variety of factors. Even as more women enter full-time jobs outside their home settings, they continue to play a major role in parental care and house-making tasks, which significantly influence their career patterns and work–family decisions. This

helps to explain why working-age women often have career gaps or work part time, factors which are associated not only with lower wages but also with fewer opportunities for upward occupational mobility.

The challenge for a work–life balance makes it particularly difficult for women to adapt to the typical male model of the traditional career pattern, which has been increasingly questioned but remains predominant in the labour market. As recruiting, retention and promotion procedures at the workplace still favour the traditional career model, those in non-traditional career paths will continue to be disadvantaged by having fewer promotions and lower earnings. This is currently the case even for the better-paying professional jobs.

Career models and work–family relationship in the cross-cultural context

Women and men differ both in terms of their jobs and in their responsibilities for children and housework, influencing their career patterns and earnings. Thus the relationship between family status and pay is different for men and women. In the era of globalization and regional economic integration, there has also been increased mobility of people working on international assignments or pursuing an international career. Thus career paths for many individuals have become more diverse and self-motivated to consist of different professions, multiple organizations, different locations in the world, and moving or transferring across organizational boundaries and across national boundaries in combination with a great variety of work–family decision-making and setting personal life goal priorities.

It has been consistently documented that career and family concerns are among top predictors of work–family decision-making processes, such as accepting or turning down an international assignment. Gender-, family- and career-related issues also top the predictors for expatriate selection and performance (e.g., Adler, 1984; Brewster, 1988; Brookfield, 2010; Hamill, 1989; Marx, 1996; ORC, 2003; GMAC, 2005; Tung, 1981). There are both organizational barriers and cultural concerns for selecting dual-career couples and female expatriates for international assignments (Adler, 1984; Dowling & Welch, 2005). Myths about gender and family for international assignments include such assumptions as: women are unwilling to travel, women are too soft to represent a competitive firm, foreigners' unwillingness to accept female managers dooms women expatriates to failures, dual-career couples are less accountable than are men with nuclear families, etc. Assumptions like those add to what has been referred to as "the glass border" that supports "the glass ceiling". However, recent international surveys (Brookfield, 2010) indicate that although typical expatriates remain predominantly male (over 83%), today's expatriates by and large have family responsibilities (about 70%). The proportion of female expatriates has increased from just 3% about two decades ago (Adler, 1984) to about 18%

in the new millennium, peaking at 23% in 2005, but retreating to 17% most recently (GMAC-GRS, 2002, 2005; Brookfield, 2010). Among married couples, 52% have children accompanying them while taking international assignments, and about 50% are dual-career couples but only 9% were able to maintain the dual-career status during or after the assignment. The top reasons for assignment refusal or premature returns are family concerns, followed by spouse/partner's career, employee career aspirations and compensation (Brookfield, 2010). Results of those global surveys suggest more complexity and difficulties for both men and women in managing work-life relationships across borders. The cost can be high in both tangible and intangible terms to the organization (e.g., performance, relocation and replacement costs, subsidiary productivity, revenue and profits, etc.) and to the individual expatriate and family (e.g., career interruptions, financial impacts, family relationship, assignment satisfaction, etc.).

Major theory and empirical work concerning gender equity and trends in career paths suggest the following propositions.

Proposition 1: gender equity and transition in career paths

- 1a.** Despite some encouraging theoretical arguments about the positive transformation of work and boundaryless careers that reflect contemporary lives of women and men, the labour market still favours the traditional male-centred career model to the extent that those in non-traditional career paths tend to be disadvantaged both in pay and in upward occupational mobility, regardless of gender and reasons.
- 1b.** With more men and women taking non-traditional career paths, it will become more common and acceptable for people to have career gaps, but the traditional financial penalties toward career interruptions are likely to persist to the extent that the protean and boundaryless career model will serve to erode the traditional career model rather than transform the labour market structure.
- 1c.** As many countries have enacted statutory provisions governing equal employment opportunity and minimum wages, most women at the bottom of the wage distributions will experience much smaller pay gaps while gender-based pay differentials remain more likely to expand toward the top of the wage distributions.
- 1d.** To effectively tackle gender disparity in pay and to bring a real progress toward the protean and boundaryless career path with more mobility security, it is vital for the states, governments, business organizations and trade unions to take into account the objective of equality between men and women when formulating laws, regulations, administrative provisions, policies and activities pertaining to equal employment opportunity, recruiting and promotion procedures, vocational training and family-supportive and career development programmes.

Developments in workforce diversity, trends in the labour market supply, and increasingly documented women's career success both within and across borders challenge the traditional career model and its underlining assumptions. After decades of efforts to address gender disparity in wages and wage growth, the remaining pay gaps associated with gender and family situations are of increasing concern to policymakers and women themselves. Gender equity and transition in career models for both women and men are becoming increasingly complex when viewed in the cross-cultural context and in light of dynamic socioeconomic changes. The following sections will examine some emerging trends and major differences in addressing gender equity and pay differentials in Europe, the USA and Japan. Variables at the national, organizational and individual levels will be explored using a multivariate conceptual framework.

Convergence and divergence in gender-based pay gaps

Increased participation of women in the workforce while maintaining their traditional roles at home is a global phenomenon, but patterns of the work-family relationship and the impact of gender and family on pay differentials differ across borders. As contrasted above, recent regional and national labour statistics (European Commission 2011; Eurostat, 2010; JMHLW, 2004; OECD, 2008; USDOL BLS, 2009; US Census Bureau, 2008) show that women on average are paid significantly less than their male counterparts across industrial societies, although the pay gaps have been considered as narrowing in most countries (Table 6.1). In addition, gender pay gaps appear larger for white-collar workers than for blue-collar workers (as highlighted in Belgium, France and Germany). Gender pay gaps in most countries tend to be smaller at the lower income levels, due to the legislated minimum wages and workplace initiatives to protect low-income workers (OECD, 2008). Compared to men, the majority of women tend to be employed in a few sectors and occupations where earnings are relatively low, or in the public sectors where gender pay gaps tend to be smaller but earnings are often lower than in the private sectors. Those labour statistics by nation illustrate some similarities and convergence in gender-based pay differentials and recent developments among the industrial societies.

Meanwhile, there are also marked between-culture differences in gender equity in terms of wages and wage growth. In comparison, gender-based pay gaps are on average smaller among the European industrial societies, about 17.5% in 2008 (European Commission, 2011), than in the USA in the same year, about 22.1% (US Census Bureau, 2009). Japan revealed the largest pay gap by gender, 35% in 2000 and slightly narrowed to 33.2% by 2006, which was still twice the OECD average (JMHLW, 2004; OECD, 2008). Among the European industrial societies, gender-based pay gaps also differ considerably, ranging from less than 10% to exceeding 25% in

Table 6.1 The raw gender wage gap based on the population of employees aged 16–64

| Country | Period | Women's median earnings as percentage of men's (%) | Union density (2008) (%) | Collective bargaining coverage (2007) (%) |
|-------------|-----------|--|--------------------------|---|
| Austria | 1996–2008 | 67 → 74.5 | 28.9 | 78 |
| Belgium | 2000–2008 | 83 → 91 | 51.9 | 90 |
| Denmark | 1999–2008 | 82 → 82.9 | 67.6 | 83 |
| Finland | 1999–2008 | 82 → 81 | 67.5 | 90 |
| France | 1998–2008 | 75.8 → 82.1 | 7.7 | 95 |
| Germany | 1996–2008 | 76 → 76.8 | 19.1 | 67 |
| Greece | 1996–2008 | 80 → 77.8 | 24 | 65 |
| Ireland | 1996–2008 | 78 → 82.9 | 32.2 | 66 |
| Italy | 1998–2008 | 81.7 → 95.1 | 33.4 | 90 |
| Luxembourg | 1995–2008 | 85 → 87.6 | 37.4 | 48 |
| Netherlands | 1998–2008 | 77 → 80.4 | 18.9 | 88 |
| Norway | 1997–2004 | 85 → 85.5 | 53.3 | 77 |
| Portugal | 1997–2008 | 77 → 90.8 | 20.4 | 87 |
| Spain | 2000–2008 | 76.9 → 83.9 | 14.3 | 68 |
| Sweden | 2000–2008 | 82 → 82.9 | 68.3 | 90 |
| UK | 1996–2008 | 74 → 78.6 | 27.1 | 36 |
| EU average | 2006–2008 | 80 → 82.5 | 25 | 66 |
| USA | 1996–2008 | 75 → 79.9 | 11.9 | 13.8 |
| Japan | 2000–2008 | 65 → 66.8 | 18.2 | 20 |

Notes: European figures refer to the unadjusted pay gap on the basis of the gross average hourly pay between men and women without regard to working hours, thus as agreed by member nations the modified calculation method includes wages of the vast number of women who usually work part-time rather than taking account solely of the monthly earnings of full-time employees. The USA and Japanese figures are based on the traditional calculation method that includes only full-time year around wage and salary earners defined as working at least 35 hours per week in the sole or principle job. Union density by nation refers to the union membership as a proportion of wage and salary earners in the workforce. Collective bargaining coverage figures represent percentage of the workforce directly covered by the collective bargaining agreement.

Source: Eurofound, 2004, 2007; European Commission, 2011; Eurostat, 2010; USDOL BLS, 2009; JMHLW, 2004; and OECD, 2008.

2008 (European Commission, 2011). Those labour statistics show significant divergence among the European industrial countries, the USA and Japan, as they address gender equity and pay differentials.

Data show that the magnitude of gender-based pay differentials and developments are not significantly related to a country's degree of economic strength, at least not demonstrated among those industrial societies. Notably, the USA, Germany and Japan top the world's largest economies yet with relatively large-to-largest pay gaps by gender in the industrial world. Nordic countries form a distinctive cluster: Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark consistently show much smaller gender-based pay gaps (all below 20% by mid-1990s and continuing to narrow).

Various factors may drive the trends of convergence and divergence in gender equity and pay differentials among the industrial societies. National culture regarding gender roles, and types of welfare state regimes pertaining to the role of the state in statutory measures and work–family arrangements are particularly relevant for the present cross-cultural analysis.

Effects of gender and family in the national context

Cultural values

Hofstede (1980) identified masculinity–femininity as a cultural dimension. Masculinity pertains to societies that prescribe distinct gender roles between men and women. Men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender and concerned with the family. Femininity pertains to societies in which gender roles overlap, where both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life. In terms of workplace values, masculinity is strongly associated with the importance attached to earnings and advancement, whereas femininity is the opposite, attaching more importance to relationship, cooperation, flexibility and time with the family.

With respect to earnings and career paths, cultural values such as masculinity versus femininity influence patterns of the work–family relationship and tend to create different situations for men and women at the workplace. A masculinity-oriented society expects men to be more competitive, to be more focused on achievement outside the home, and to take a predominant role as the breadwinner for the family, while women should be tender and be more focused on the role of mother and homemaker. In contrast, in a femininity-oriented society, gender roles are less distinct and men and women are more likely to be viewed as equals, where the norm is for men and women to assume shared work–family responsibilities. Thus in feminine societies “both men and women may or may not be ambitious and there should be no gender difference in the ranges of answers of both sexes about the need for a career” (Hofstede, 1997: 93).

It should be noted that the masculinity–femininity cultural orientation is not confined to the division of informal labour within the family, such as a caregiver versus a breadwinner. It also influences the subjects chosen by male versus female students at universities (e.g., majoring in education, law, engineering, natural sciences, social sciences or nursing) and tends to steer men and women into different occupations (e.g., lawyers, surgeons, engineers, librarians, nurses or social workers), at least statistically evidenced in the industrial societies. In developing countries, boys are often given priority in educational opportunities. In rich and masculinity-oriented cultures, men and women are more segregated at the universities than in rich and feminine ones (Hofstede, 1997). When we compare occupations and career patterns,

the masculinity–femininity cultural dimension makes sense in calling some occupations more masculine, usually filled by men, and others more feminine, usually performed by women. Although one might not expect the masculinity–femininity cultural orientation to correlate with the distribution of employment over men and women, particularly as many developed countries have enacted the EEOA-related legislations, continuing sectoral and occupational segregations by gender remain key factors that affect career choices and persisting earnings gaps between female and male employees (Eurofound, 2007).

In addressing the gender equity and pay differentials, both sector-specific and occupational segregations continue to be major obstacles to the equal treatment of women and men in employment. Of course “There is inequality in any society” (Hofstede 1997: 23). One of the aspects in which societies differ by culture is the way they handle inequality. For example, societies of a masculinity-oriented culture strive for performance, whereas femininity-oriented countries strive for a welfare society. For example, Finland and Norway, femininity-oriented countries, have higher levels of female representation among managerial and executive positions than many other countries, and also have the world’s most advanced welfare systems, which provide substantial assistance in the area of childbearing and childrearing. Japan, a masculinity-oriented culture, has a career norm for men to commit themselves fully to the firm, whereas female employees are generally expected to maintain their primary domestic roles as housewives. Lower wages for women enable higher wages for men. Labour unions also contribute to this traditional male breadwinner system and call for men’s wages to be large enough to support a wife and children. This male-centred employment system leads to a severe gender gap in occupational segregations, career patterns and wages scales.

Occupational segregation refers to both horizontal segregation, where women are segregated into gender-stereotyped jobs or functional roles providing relatively low wages, and vertical segregation, where women are rarely promoted to senior positions, even within the sectors predominantly occupied by female employees (e.g., education, healthcare, social services sectors). While such gender-based occupational segregation exists in both masculine and feminine societies, Japan, as a highly masculinity-oriented society, has far more distinct career models for male and female employees. More than 50% of all occupations in Japan are predominantly undertaken by one sex or the other (Shuto, 2009). Japan’s corporate culture consists of three pillars: lifetime employment, seniority-based pay systems and enterprise unionism (OECD, 1973). Stable employment enables employers to invest in their employees from a long-term perspective, such as training for broad skills beyond a particular job requirement, pension plus retirement benefits and accommodations. In return workers make a considerable commitment to the firm, best evidenced as extensive work hours often from morning

till late night, which is very difficult for women to fit in. This employment model is of course the norm only for men. Women employees in Japan are marked by short-term employment, fewer training opportunities, and fewer job skills. Even when male and female employees are working on the same job, there are generally different career tracks for men and women. One career path is typically for male employees, which usually involves a variety of jobs as part of their promotion track training programmes. Another career path offers very limited amount of training experiences, typically reserved for female employees (Shuto, 2009). Thus many male employees are usually promoted to upper-management positions while many female employees remain in their operative or functional jobs until retirement. Such occupational sex segregation is a combination of explicit job segregation and implicit career path segregation, which is uniquely Japanese and continues to be the norm today.

An important part of the Japanese work culture involves socializing with colleagues or clients after work, usually in male-oriented bars and small restaurants. Women with home and family responsibilities do not have adequate time for such informal activities and many feel too uncomfortable to participate. Although women account for over 40% of the workforce, they occupy only about 3% of managerial positions (Jameson, 2001). In most large Japanese organizations, women employees are primarily concentrated in lower level or part-time positions. The overall average wage for female part-timers was 65.7% of that of already lower-paid female full-time employees, and this proportion has been ranged between about 65% and 75% for over a decade (JMHLW, 2004).

Because gender is an involuntary characteristic and members of a society learn how to behave based on gender, age and position since early childhood, we are usually unaware of other possibilities. This helps to explain why it is difficult to change traditional gender roles, why men and women tend to be segregated into gender-stereotyped occupations, and why gender-based pay gaps vary considerably among the industrial societies. A longitudinal panel study by the Institute for Organization Studies and Organizational Behavior in Austria, a country which also scored high on the masculinity cultural orientation, revealed striking differences in the careers and the economic returns for male and female graduates with the same formal qualifications and personality profiles (Eurofound, 2007). The study followed the career paths of the Austrian male and female graduates from the same university and found that the overall earnings gap for a ten-year period after graduation amounted to €70,000 even for women without children and with starting salaries equal to those of their male counterparts. In those instances, the gap in women's and men's careers and wages was clearly unrelated to their skill or qualification differences, but because unequal treatment in regard of retention and promotion came into effect on the mere ground of gender. In contrast, in Sweden, a highly femininity-oriented culture,

participation of women in the workforce is almost as high as that of men and for those with family responsibilities, full-time employment of both partners is stimulated (den Dulk, 2001). In Finland, men are expected to spend time with their families, and therefore employed men and women tend to experience many similar aspects of work–family interfaces (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). Although occupational segregation and working time schemes differ between men and women regardless of the nation, gender role expectations and career aspirations appear less distinct among femininity-oriented Nordic countries, where the state also plays an important role in statutory provisions that have brought women closer to equality with men. Thus the effects of gender and family on earnings and career paths are culturally bonded. In line with this argument, we can expect that gender-based pay gaps tend to be larger in masculinity-oriented societies than in femininity-oriented societies, leading to the following propositions.

Proposition 2: cultural norms and gender equity

- 2a.** In a femininity-oriented society, gender roles are less distinct and men and women are more likely to be viewed as equals to the extent that they tend to have shared work–family responsibilities and experience smaller gender-based pay gaps than their counterparts in a masculinity-oriented society.
- 2b.** In a masculinity-oriented society, gender roles are more distinct and men are more likely to be viewed as the primary breadwinners to the extent that occupations and career paths tend to be more segregated by gender than in a femininity-oriented society.

Table 6.2 incorporates masculinity–femininity cultural values into the comparison of gender-based wage rates among the European industrial societies, the USA and Japan. The degree of gender pay equity, as evidenced by smaller pay differentials between male and female employees, tends to be higher in more femininity-oriented societies such as Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Sweden (ranging from 9% to 19.6%), and lower among more masculinity-oriented societies such as Japan, Austria, Germany, the UK and the USA (ranging from 20.1% to 33.2%). There are also exceptions among countries in which gender-based pay differentials do not appear immediately corresponding to their relatively high or low averaged national scores on the masculinity–femininity dimension, indicating that the masculinity–femininity cultural value alone is not adequate to fully explain gender-based pay gaps and developments. Other factors such as types of welfare state regimes pertaining to work–family arrangements and statutory provisions to promote gender equity at the workplace may jointly influence trends in wages and wage growth in different societies.

Table 6.2 Culture and gender-based pay gaps in Europe, the USA and Japan

| Score rank | Country | Masculinity scores | Gender pay gap as percentage of men's |
|------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Japan | 95 | 33.2 |
| 2 | Austria | 79 | 25.5 |
| 4/5 | Italy | 76 | 4.9 |
| 7/8 | Ireland | 68 | 17.1 |
| 9/10 | UK | 66 | 21.4 |
| 9/10 | Germany | 66 | 23.2 |
| 15 | USA | 62 | 20.1 |
| 18/19 | Greece | 57 | 22.2 |
| 22 | Belgium | 54 | 9.0 |
| 25/26 | Luxembourg | 50 | 12.4 |
| 35/36 | France | 43 | 17.9 |
| 37/38 | Spain | 42 | 16.1 |
| 45 | Portugal | 31 | 9.0 |
| 47 | Finland | 26 | 19.0 |
| 50 | Denmark | 16 | 17.1 |
| 51 | Netherlands | 14 | 19.6 |
| 51 | Norway | 8 | 14.5 |
| 53 | Sweden | 5 | 17.1 |

Note: All gender pay gap figures refer to 2008 data, except for Norway (2004). European calculations include part-time employees with minimum 15 hours per week. The USA and Japan calculations include only full-time wage and salary earners defined as working at least 35 hours per week in the sole or principle job.

Source: The masculinity–femininity score rank is based on Hofstede 1997, 2001; gender pay differentials data are integrated from European Foundation, 2010; Eurostat Yearbook, 2010; USDOL Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, JMHLW, 2004; OECD, 2008.

Types of welfare state regimes

Countries differ with regard to the government involvement in work–family arrangements and the role of employers in managing gender equity. Esping-Andersen (1990, 1999) distinguished three types of welfare state regimes: liberal, conservative-corporatistic and social-democratic. Central to this typology is the argument that the relation between the state, the market and the family varies among the industrial societies. In regard of the gender equity and from the labour market institutional perspective, we can expect considerable variation in statutory provisions and workplace initiatives that support the gender equality and work–family reconciliation among the industrial societies.

The social-democratic welfare state regime can be described as one that promotes equality among its citizens and is committed to full employment status for both men and women. Women's employment is supported by an elaborate system of public work–family arrangements, which makes the balance of work and family life less difficult. The state is the main provider

of welfare, and to a large extent plays an important role as the employer, especially in the service sector. Nordic countries such as Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark come nearest to this model. In Sweden, for example, work–family balance has become a public rather than a private issue (Näman, 1999). The Swedish government takes responsibility for a wide range of work–family arrangements, including public day care and advanced parental leaves. Within this context, there is not much scope for employers to develop facilities since this may lead to duplications. At the same time, the normative climate to support gender equity and to enhance quality of life may stimulate supplementary programmes.

In contrast, the conservative-corporatistic regime emphasizes the role of traditional families, not the equal participation at the workplace by all citizens. Men are seen as workers while women are seen primarily as wives and mothers. State or employer sponsored work–family arrangements such as childcare and parental leave facilities are underdeveloped and women’s participation in the labour market is relatively low. Family-related responsibilities are considered primarily matters for the private households. Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece and Japan resemble this model. In Italy, for example, family obligations and mutual help extend beyond the nuclear family, including grandparents, grandchildren, siblings and sometimes other relatives (Millar & Warman, 1996). Statutory provisions for work–family arrangements are limited. The state only intervenes when the family is unable to cope (Trifiletti, 1999). Thus there is a large role for the individual family and extended family in dealing with work–family matters but less so for the state in providing public policies and work–family arrangements as in the social-democratic regime, or for the market forces to determine family-friendly policies and programmes at the discretion of individual employers like in the liberal market-oriented regime.

In the liberal welfare state regime, there is a strong belief in the market forces and in their self-regulating capacity. Government interventions are limited and the employers have a greater degree of freedom in setting pay schedules and family-friendly policies. Because employers differ in the nature of their businesses, organizational size, financial capacity and workforce diversity (e.g., percentage of women and dual-earner couples), incentives and disincentives to develop workplace initiated work–family arrangements will vary. Britain and the USA come nearest to this model. The breadwinner model also has strongly influenced the policymaking in the USA and the UK, but instead of emphasizing the traditional role of the family, there is an emphasis on the competitive market as a regulative mechanism (Esping-Andersen, 1999), characterized by limited state involvement in work–family issues (Sainsbury, 1996). Development of work–family arrangements or family-friendly policies is framed as a “business case”, in which costs and benefits for the organization are central. Because of the near absence of public provisions, there is a lot of scope for employers to develop

work–family arrangements. In this context, family-friendly policies at the workplace serve as a competitive advantage over other employers in terms of productivity, retention, job satisfaction and public image. Thus the market forces and the organizational characteristics play a more important role in policymaking than does the state. Men and women are treated as equals with more women entering traditional male-oriented occupations, yet it is individual employees' responsibility to balance or prioritize work–life goals (Schein, 1984; Yang et al., 2000). In the economic tough times, such as in the recent economic recession, women in liberal welfare state regimes tend to take a major hit, statistically evidenced by retreating to a wider pay gap in the UK (Carley, 2009) and the USA (Blau & Kahn, 2007). The emphasis on market forces, competition, traditionally decentralized wage setting institutions and higher managerial discretion at the workplace all contribute to a larger gender earnings gap and pay systems of high differentials.

Those national differences in the role of the state, family and market institutions in addressing gender-equity and career development lead to the following propositions.

Proposition 3: types of welfare state regime and work–family relations

- 3a.** Increased female participation in the workforce is a global phenomenon, but patterns of work–family arrangements vary across the industrial societies to the extent that employed men and women in liberal welfare state regimes tend to be exposed to a higher degree of personal responsibility for work–life balance and career development than their counterparts in social-democratic or conservative-corporatistic welfare state regimes, regardless of gender.
- 3b.** Employed men and women in liberal welfare state regimes tend to be exposed to a higher degree of workplace competition to the extent that the market forces tend to have a greater impact on their wages and wage gaps than in social-democratic welfare state regimes.

Proposition 4: trends in gender equity and work–family arrangements

- 4a.** Government intervention and national culture interact to determine the value and the division of labour by gender to the extent that gender-based pay gaps will be narrowed down more effectively and the progress achieved will stay relatively more stable in social-democratic welfare state regimes than in liberal or conservative-corporatistic welfare state regimes.
- 4b.** Government intervention and national culture interact to determine the value and the division of labour by gender to the extent that work–family arrangements will be more equalized between employed men and women in social-democratic welfare state regimes than in liberal or conservative-corporatistic welfare state regimes.

Proposition 5: constituencies in work–family reconciliation

- 5a. The role of the state in addressing gender equity and work–family issues will be greatest in social-democratic welfare state regimes as compared to other industrial societies.
- 5b. The role of the family and community in addressing gender equity and work–family issues will be greatest in conservative-corporatistic welfare state regimes as compared to other industrial societies.
- 5c. The role of individual employers in addressing gender equity and work–family-issues will be greatest in liberal/market-oriented welfare state regimes as compared to other industrial societies.

In a nutshell, employers operate in different national contexts. Although globalization and workforce diversity are taking place everywhere, and treating men and women equally and equitably has become a social expectation in many societies, variations in choosing culturally appropriate ways to address gender equity and work–family-related challenges are likely to continue across borders. In line with the contrast made above between different types of welfare state regimes in the industrial world, we can expect larger differences in gender-based pay differentials and developments among liberal market-oriented and conservative-corporatistic welfare state regimes, yet relatively stable progress or convergence are likely in social-democratic welfare state regimes.

Gender-based division of labour and career patterns

Hofstede (1997: 16) posits that

Women are not considered suitable for jobs traditionally filled by men, not because they are technically unable to perform these jobs, but because women do not carry the symbols, do not correspond to the hero images, do not participate in the rituals or foster the values dominant in the men’s culture; and vice versa.

So in any society, it makes sense that jobs can be characterized as more masculine or more feminine in terms of the values and behaviours of those who conduct the jobs. Despite women’s increasing participation in the workforce and their substantial inroads into managerial and professional positions, gender-based pay gaps persist in the industrial societies, which can be partially attributed to the considerable gender difference in employment status (e.g., part-time versus full-time status), occupations (e.g., horizontal and vertical segregation) and career patterns (e.g., traditional versus non-traditional paths). The traditional gender roles at work and at home not only influence the division of paid and unpaid labour in a society, but also affect educational and occupational choices between men and women.

Although there is an increasing number of dual-earner or dual-career couples in the workforce, women continue to carry a predominant share of family responsibility. As a result, women tend to have late careers or more employment breaks due to marriage, childbirth, childrearing or other family responsibilities. As illustrated in Figure 6.1, consistent among the industrial societies, part-time employees are predominantly female (Eurostat, 2008; OECD, 2008; USDOL BLS, 2009). In the USA, for example, women working part time, defined as working less than 35 hours per week, represented 24.6% of all female wage and salary workers in 2008, whereas 11.1% of men fell into the same category. In Japan, over 40% of all employed women were part-timers (Jiji Press English News Service, 2002). Part-timers are often paid at the lower rate with no or limited security coverage, which reinforces women's economic dependence on the primary breadwinners.

In addition to full-time versus part-time employment status between men and women, gender-oriented occupations contribute to the persistent pay gaps. In the USA, for example, although women held half of all management, professional and related occupations – 50.8% in 2008 – their shares of specific occupations within this broad category varied by traditional gender-based orientations (Table 6.3). Only 13.5% of architects and engineers and 30.5% of physicians and surgeons were female. In contrast, 91.7% of registered nurses and 83.2% librarians were female. By tradition female-oriented occupations tend to be lower-paid than are the male-oriented occupations. Gender-based pay differentials typically widen toward the top of the wage distributions even in occupations filled predominantly by female employees. The female-to-male earnings ratio for all management, professional and related occupations was averaged at 72.1% in 2008, reflecting a 7.8% larger gender earnings gap than the national median of full-time wage and salary workers (USDOL BLS, 2009).

State legislations and corporate practices

Although there are both cultural norms and occupational traditions influencing gender equity and career paths, socioeconomic changes, state legislations and corporate policies since the 1960s have made numerous attempts to address equity and diversity issues at the workplace. In the USA, the Equal Pay Act (1963), Civil Rights Act (1964) and its amendment Title VII (1972), Civil Rights Act (1991) and other EEOA-related regulations prohibit employment discrimination on the bases of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, colour, age, disability, pregnancy, national origin and citizenship. There are also voluntary affirmative action programmes that attempt to correct past systematic discrimination against women and minorities. Similar efforts and progress have been made in Japan and the European industrial societies. Organizations, domestic or multinational, must be aware of state legislations governing EEOA-related issues and ensure compliance in managing the workforce diversity and organizational justice.

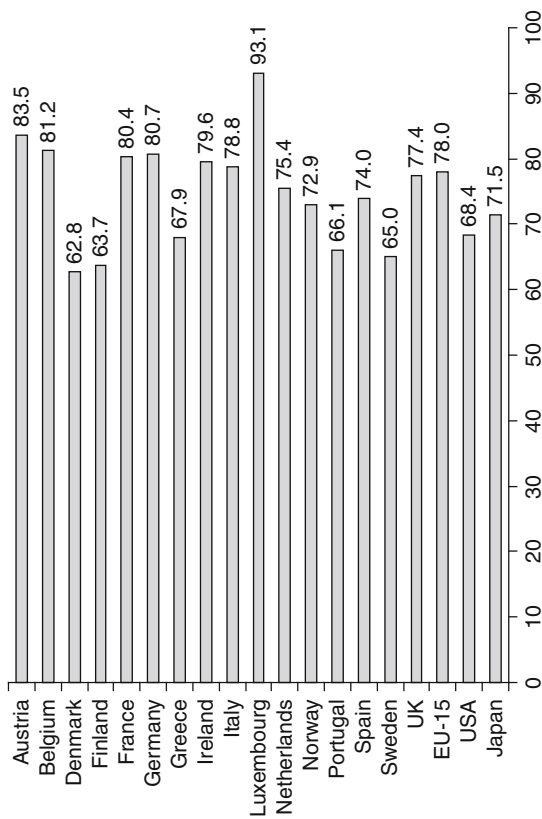


Figure 6.1 Women's share in part-time employment (2007)

Note: Part-time employment refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job. Data include only persons declaring usually hours.

Source: Data are integrated from OECD (2008); Eurostat EU Labor Force Survey (2008); USDOL BLS (2009).

Table 6.3 Gender-oriented occupations in the USA (aged 16 and older, 2009)

| Who does what | Percentage of positions held by women |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Management, professional and related occupations | 50.8 |
| Physicians and surgeons | 30.5 |
| Dentists | 27.2 |
| Dental hygienists | 97.7 |
| Registered nurses | 91.7 |
| Personal care and service occupations | 77.6 |
| Lawyers | 34.4 |
| Paralegals and legal assistants | 87.7 |
| Postsecondary teachers | 46.1 |
| Elementary and middle school Teachers | 81.2 |
| Preschool and kindergarten teachers | 97.6 |
| Librarians | 83.2 |
| Social workers | 79.4 |
| Architects and engineers | 13.5 |
| Clergy | 14.8 |
| Construction and extraction occupations | 7.7 |
| Firefighters | 2.5 |

Source: USDOL BLS (2010).

Industrial societies have a long-standing interest in balancing paid work and family life, but patterns of work–family arrangements differ across cultures. Gender-specific policies, such as equal pay for equal work, parental leave provisions and the availability of childcare, are likely to influence career patterns and wage gaps. In comparison, Finland has the highest duration for maternity/childcare leave, followed by Spain, France, Germany and Austria; whereas the lowest is in the UK and the USA. Generous family-friendly policies can be a double-edged sword. On one hand, they serve as incentives for women to adapt more effectively and improve quality of life. On the other hand, they may increase women’s time out of the workforce for childrearing, thus widening career gaps and pay gaps. In this regard, career enabling programmes at the workplace, such as flexitime, training, job sharing and part-time options, can help employees balance their career and personal life goals.

Barriers to gender equity and effects of the glass ceiling

At the organizational level, differences in career tracks and pay equity are affected by two major processes. One process includes some gender-specific factors in the treatment of equally qualified men and women for job assignments and career advancement. Another process regards equity

in wages and wage growth according to the values that the labour market and the organization place on various labour skills. Across cultures, centralized wage-setting institutions tend to reduce inter-firm and inter-industrial wage variations and are often associated with conscious policies to raise the relative pay of low-wages regardless of gender (Blau & Kahn, 2003). Such efforts may indirectly reduce the gender pay gaps. Centralized industrial relations and collective bargaining may also help address equity, social justice and work-life reconciliation. Compared with the European industrial societies, pay settings and industrial relations in the USA are far less centralized, a factor contributing to pay gaps. Despite some dramatic reduction since the introduction of EEOA-related legislation and voluntary affirmative action programmes by participating employers, gender-based pay gaps remain larger in the USA (21.1%) than the EU average (17.5%). While the overall gap has been decreased over time, the proportion of the earnings gap that is unexplained by human capital variables has been found to be increasing (Blau & Kahn, 2007).

Taking the Wal-Mart Stores Inc. as an example, men dominate the higher-paying store management jobs, while women perform more than 90% of the low-paying cashier jobs (Zellner, 2003). Women also earn less than men within each job category, despite the fact that women account for 65% of hourly workers in the company, tend to have longer seniority, and are generally ranked higher on performance ratings than their male counterparts. As shown in Table 6.4, as women move up into higher managerial positions, gender-based pay gaps rise continuously, from 5% less at the bottom to 33% less at the top. Those data demonstrate systematic inequity between equally qualified men and women throughout the organizational hierarchy, the “glass ceiling” in the workplace.

Table 6.4 Wal-Mart's gender-based pay differentials

| Job categories | Average annual earnings ^b 2001 | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------|
| | No. of employees ^a | Percentage of women | Male salaries (\$) | Female salaries (\$) | Gender gap |
| Regional VP | 39 | 10 | 419,400 | 279,800 | .67 |
| District MGR | 508 | 10 | 239,500 | 177,100 | .74 |
| Store MGR | 3,241 | 14 | 105,700 | 89,300 | .84 |
| Assistant MGR | 18,731 | 36 | 39,800 | 37,300 | .94 |
| MGMT Trainee | 1,203 | 41 | 23,200 | 22,400 | .97 |
| Dept head | 63,747 | 78 | 23,500 | 21,700 | .92 |
| Sales associate | 100,003 | 68 | 16,500 | 15,100 | .92 |
| Cashier | 50,987 | 93 | 14,500 | 13,800 | .95 |

Source: Based on Zellner (2003), in *Business Week*; pay gaps were calculated by the author of the present study; a. full-time; b. including bonuses. Earnings are in US dollars.

Multivariate factors for gender equity and career development

Integrating the concepts of gender equity, career patterns and work–family interfaces discussed above, Figure 6.2 illustrates a multivariate framework to link these propositions in the cross-cultural context. Major factors that influence gender equity and pay structures can be put in three categories: contextual, organizational and individual. Contextual variables include cultural norms (e.g., masculinity versus femininity), statutory provisions, types of welfare state regimes (e.g., social-democratic, conservative-corporatistic and liberal/market-oriented), and labour market institutions (e.g., gender-oriented occupations). Organizational characteristics include organizational culture, management discretion and human resource policies and practices. Individual variables include personal and human capital factors such as gender, marital status, parental responsibility, education and skills, job seniority and work–life goal priorities. Together, these factors portray a complex picture of the dynamic forces that drive women’s and men’s experiences in traditional versus non-traditional career paths and their policy implications for promoting gender equality and quality of lives.

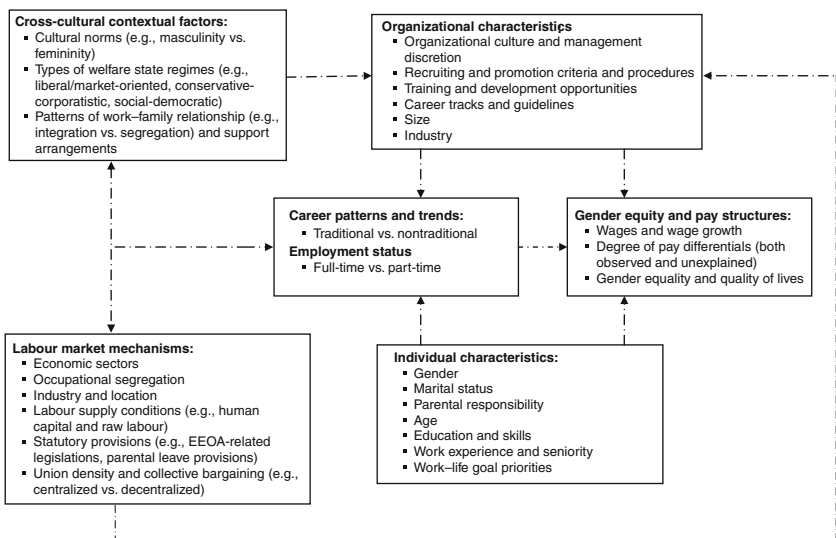


Figure 6.2 A multivariate framework of key factors influencing gender equity and career paths

Conclusion and discussion

This study has explored and compared significant cultural dimensions and socioeconomic conditions that mark differences in gender-based pay differentials and career patterns in different societies, with special attention to European industrial societies, the USA and Japan. Factor conceptualizations based on previous research and recent national and regional labour statistics shed light on theory building and hypotheses testing in gender equity and work–family-related issues, and thus contribute to a better understanding of cross-cultural differences in gender-based pay gaps, career paths and work–family-related provisions.

The study has also generated implications and suggestions for effective organizational adaptation and policymaking within the context of globalization and socioeconomic changes. Emerging issues addressed in the study include cross-cultural value differences regarding gender roles and transition in career paths, patterns of the work–family relationship, and types of welfare state regimes pertaining to the role of the state, family and employers in managing gender equity and work–family arrangements.

Through theory building and factor conceptualization, the study has developed a multivariate framework to explain how cultural values, state legislations, socioeconomic conditions, corporate practices and individual differences, such as gender and family, may independently or jointly influence pay gaps and career patterns for contemporary women and men in different societies. This framework of course calls for further refinement, and propositions originating from the framework await future research and empirical testing.

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Part IV

Decision Making in a Work–Life Context

7

The Present and Future of Work–Family Decision Making

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Introduction

The systematic empirical study of judgement and decision making began to emerge as a discipline in its own right only in the 1960s. This occurred together with a strong surge of interest in the larger, more general field of cognitive psychology, which also includes the study of memory, thinking, problem solving, mental imagery and language (Arkes & Hammond, 1986). Decision making has been defined as “the mental processes (cognitive process) resulting in the selection of a course of action among several alternatives” (“Decision-making”, 2011, para. 2). The seminal work of Herbert Simon and James March (March, 1994; March & Simon, 1958; Simon, 1947, 1976) has propelled decision making into a broadly studied concept in the organizational behaviour and general management literature and has given rise to a separate academic discipline (behavioural decision science) and specialized journals (e.g., *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*). Nevertheless, studies linking decision making with the work–family interface were a relatively new phenomenon in 2005, the year in which the first International Conference of Work and Family (ICWF) was held. The absence of a decision-making perspective in the work–family literature is surprising in light of Kahn et al.’s (1964) well-established definition of inter-role conflict as *a process* by which individuals *decide* whether to comply with the demands of a particular role at a given point in time.

In this chapter, we focus first on the meaning of work–family decision making, distinguishing two levels of consciousness and two levels of analysis. Next, we review the decision-making research presented at the ICWF conferences, integrating it with the broader literature where appropriate. We close the chapter with recommendations for future research that were informed by the conclusions of the ICWF work teams that focused on decision making.

The meaning of a work–family decision¹

We know very little about the decision process that determines whether work interferes with family or family interferes with work (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003). Ample research has been conducted to unpack the construct of work–family conflict, distinguishing different directions (work-to-family conflict [WFC] versus family-to-work conflict [FWC]) and types (time-based, strain-based and behaviour-based) of interference, but the direction of the conflict or interference is only apparent after an individual *decides* to participate in one or the other activity (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Several work–family scholars have introduced ideas and concepts that hint at or refer to decision making, but have not elaborated extensively on the idea (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Howard, 1992; Kossek et al., 1999; Lambert, 1990). In fact, with the exception of Peters and den Dulk (2003) and Poelmans et al. (2008), few scholars have proposed a systematic theory or conceptual framework to describe the logic behind allocation decisions or strategies.

Level of consciousness

Decision making is ever present when people transition domains and juggle the demands of their work and family responsibilities. However, the deliberateness and consciousness of the decisions are likely to vary with the nature of the specific decision situation that is confronted. Decisions vary from day-to-day *micro-decisions* (e.g., whether or not to address a family-related need during working hours) to more substantial, long-term *macro-decisions* that can change the course of a personal trajectory or a professional career, such as quitting working to raise children. One can expect that the resources that are mobilized to make a decision, the consequences of the decision for the individual, and the social impact of the decision will determine whether the decision-making process is relatively spontaneous and automatic or quite exhaustive and conscious.

March (1994) distinguished between two complementary perspectives for understanding the decision-making process, the logic of consequences and the logic of appropriateness. Decision makers following the logic of consequences select a course of action that is intended to achieve their preferred outcomes, although because of their bounded rationality they may select a course of action that is “good enough” (satisfice) rather than the “best possible” (maximize). Decision makers adopting the logic of appropriateness

follow rules or procedures that they see as appropriate to the situation and consistent with their socially constructed identity. Researchers should take into account both types of logic, and look into the circumstances under which individuals resort to conscious, rational or deliberate as opposed to more intuitive, heuristic approaches to decision making.

Level of analysis

A further distinction can be made to differentiate decisions based on the level of analysis or focus of the decision. A close inspection of the body of theory and research in work–family decision making shows this work can be categorized in three groups. A first group of scholars is interested in the micro-level of analysis or how individuals make decisions and deal with work–family dilemmas in their own lives (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Poelmans, 2005). A second group focuses on the meso-level of analysis and studies decision making in managers or organizational representatives who decide whether or not to allow employees to take up or use work–family policies and benefits (e.g., den Dulk & de Ruijter, 2009; Peters & den Dulk, 2003; Poelmans & Beham, 2008; Powell & Mainiero, 1999). A third group operates on the macro-level of analysis, studying organizations deciding whether or not to adopt work–life policies and how to design and implement these policies (e.g., Frone & Yardley, 1996; Goodstein, 1994; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Osterman, 1995; Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004). These are three different strands of research that look at different, yet possibly complementary, realities (individuals, managers and organizations) and are interested in general organizational behaviour (group 1), or the relevance for (strategic) human resource management (groups 2 and 3).

In this chapter we focus on the micro- and meso-levels because the macro-level will be addressed elsewhere in this volume. These two separate strands of research on decision making (micro or individual, and meso or managerial) in the work–family field have little theoretical or empirical overlap, with the exception of the decision process theory of work and family (Poelmans, 2005) that has been applied to both individual (Poelmans, 2005) and organizational (Poelmans et al., 2008) levels. In the remainder of this chapter we refer to these two strands as individual and managerial work–family decision making, respectively.

Literature review

Individual work–family decision making

Theory and research at the individual level of analysis are involved with the context, antecedents, processes and outcomes of *work–family decision making*, which can be defined as the mental or cognitive processes resulting in the selection of a course of action from several alternatives when the individual is confronted with a dilemma regarding how to dedicate or distribute

time, energy and resources to the domains of work, family or personal life. Interest in individual decision making was spearheaded by the research of Jeffrey Greenhaus and Gary Powell (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Powell & Greenhaus, 2006, 2010), who applied role theory (Kahn et al., 1964) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) to propose that decisions are basically a function of role pressures, role salience and role support.

In their ICWF conference paper, Greenhaus and Powell (2007) defined a work–family decision as “a choice regarding the nature or extent of one’s participation in a given role, work or family, that is influenced by considerations of one’s participation in the other role” (p. 5). Hence, the decision-making process is conceptualized in terms of individual-level decisions, acknowledging the active role that individuals play in their lives (Greenhaus & Powell, 2007).

Work–family decision making can follow the logic of consequences when individuals evaluate the potential implications of each course of action with regard to the well-being of their family. Alternatively, it can also follow the logic of appropriateness when individuals select a course of action that is thought to be consistent with how they perceive themselves (i.e., their identity). However, decisions in one sphere of life do not always take another part of life into account. Greenhaus and Powell (2007) suggested that decisions in one part of life can vary in the extent to which they are influenced by considerations in the other role, what they referred to as the “work–family relatedness of a decision”.

Types of work–family decisions

Greenhaus and Powell (2007) propose that individuals take extra-role considerations into account either to avoid work–family conflict or to increase work–family enrichment. Of course, work–family decision making extends beyond the decision to pursue or avoid a particular job. In their conference paper, Greenhaus and Powell (2007) proposed four types of work–family decisions: (1) *role entry decisions*, such as seeking full- or part-time employment, pursuing an advanced education, entering a particular occupation, getting married or having children; (2) *role participation decisions* involve the investment of time and emotion in a role including deciding how many hours to devote to different roles, accepting (or declining) a developmental assignment at work and deciding whether to participate in work or family activities that compete for one’s attention; (3) *role boundary management decisions* include choices about segmentation and integration of different roles, transitions between the roles and the use of resources acquired in each role; (4) *role exit decisions* include decisions about quitting a job, departing a profession and ending a marriage.²

Greenhaus and Powell’s (2007) model of work–family decision making, conflict and enrichment suggests that work–family decisions are influenced by one’s life values and dispositional characteristics and, in turn,

influence work and family role characteristics (e.g., role ambiguity, overload, stress, lack of support) that affect both work–family conflict and enrichment (Byron, 2005; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Therefore, the authors suggest that work–family decisions indirectly affect work–family conflict and enrichment through their impact on role characteristics and experiences.

Gender and work–family decision making

The consideration of influences of sex and gender on work–family decisions allows for a more complex picture of the decision-making process. Powell and Greenhaus' 2009 ICWF conference paper (2009) addressing this issue was subsequently published in the *Journal of Management* (2010). It was reproduced in this volume because it presents a systematic overview and theoretical framework of the importance of gender for work–family decision making. Powell and Greenhaus (2009) argue that the femininity dimension of gender identity (Bem, 1974) and the subjective importance of the family role (Thoits, 1991) mediate the main effect of sex on family domain factors and the moderating effect of sex on the relationship between family domain factors and work-related decisions. Moreover, they suggest that variations across studies in sex differences in decision making may be due to the extent to which sex is associated with femininity or femininity is related to family role salience in different samples.

In her ICWF conference paper, Papi Gálvez (2005) applied a gender and constructivist perspective to work–family integration, focusing on the experience of female journalists. The context of professional journalism, characterized by an emphasis on fast news delivery, a lack of control over one's schedule, constant time dedication and demanding work deadlines, makes work–life integration challenging. Because many journalists do not have a stable work contract, access to companies' policies and perks is difficult, and one's partner and family networks represent the main sources of support. Papi Gálvez's (2005) findings show that depending on the personal situation, professional position and available resources, employees activate one of four work–life management models: (1) dedication to the profession; (2) family situation adaptation and career endowment, particularly when there is low family and partner support in private and domestic tasks; (3) putting profession above any family demands or projects when one can count on a supportive family, partner or both; and (4) putting limits on one's professional demands. Despite the difficulty of work–life reconciliation, two factors characterize the coping mechanisms put in place: the price one is willing to pay (professionally or personally) and the choices one makes to solve difficult situations.

Motivation and work–family decision making

In her conference paper, Masuda (2007) suggests that goal theory (Locke & Latham, 1990; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999) and social cognitive theory (Bandura,

1997) can shed light on individuals' decisions. She proposes that individual variables, namely self-efficacy, needs, values and motives influence work–family goal setting and thus decision making. Masuda argues that the widely used role-related theories in work–life research, such as role conflict theory, spillover theory and gender role theory (Madsen & Hammond, 2005) do not take into account motivational variables (such as cognitive intentions, personality, values and motives) that could help to uncover individual perceptions of work–family integration. Drawing on relevant theory, Masuda suggests that by setting difficult and specific goals (Locke & Latham, 1990) in both professional and private domains, individuals will experience higher well-being, compared to individuals pursuing work–family goals for extrinsic reasons. By understanding the strategies used to achieve one's goals, it could become clearer which skills and strategies prevail and which ones could be transmitted to another domain.

Work–family boundaries and decision making

In his contributions to the ICWF conference, Languilaire (2005, 2007) reported the results from his ongoing Ph.D. research on work–non-work-related decisions based on interviews with French middle managers. Specifically, his papers explore how these individuals managed their boundaries between work and life and whether they have “preferred styles”, perceiving and experiencing work–life spheres in either a segmented or an integrated way, and how they construct, manage and negotiate mental work–non-work boundaries to make their environment simpler and understandable (Ashforth et al., 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996). *Boundary management* refers to how mental boundaries are enacted through daily activities aimed at either separating or integrating the different domains (Nippert-Eng, 1996), paying attention to how these boundaries are crossed, maintained or changed over a period of time (Ashforth et al., 2000). Individuals can do boundary work in a proactive way (forecasting a conflicting situation), an active way (doing boundary work on the go), and in a reactive way (rationalization of the choices previously taken) (Ashforth et al., 2000; Kossek et al., 1999).

Based on his qualitative research, Languilaire (2007) concluded that most respondents report a tendency for segmentation, often framed as a proactive strategy that allows the best management of the work–non-work spheres and prevents their mutual negative effects. Nevertheless, at different points in time managers integrate various sides of life, as a reactive or passive way to manage work–life issues and not as a solution for their problems. In other words, segmentation seems to be a proactive approach whereas integration is a reactive approach because it appears to be a more natural and spontaneous way of boundary role management that does not require planning or arrangements set in place. Additionally, he raised the question about whether or not the option to segregate is something related to the French

culture. This leads to the importance of adopting a boundary management perspective across cultures to further explore relationships between work and non-work roles.

The decision process theory of work and family

Based on socio-cognitive theory (March, 1994; March & Simon, 1958; Simon, 1947), the decision process theory of work and family (Poelmans, 2005) describes individuals as active agents who interact with others in multiple dyads and make decisions that resolve or intensify work–family conflict. Individuals make choices based on a set of decision criteria with different weights, reflecting the preferences and values of the individual, to evaluate alternatives and the associated rewards (March, 1994). When resolving a work–family conflict, an individual uses less than rationally optimal strategies such as satisficing and incrementalism (Janis & Mann, 1977; Simon, 1976) to compare the inputs, costs and benefits of the actual situation with an alternative situation, resulting in the change of input or perception, or discontinuation of the employment relationship. If the exchange relationship is purely economic or transactional (Blau, 1964; Rousseau & McClean Parks, 1993), the individual will compute the ratio of inputs over benefits minus costs in a more rational way. If, however, the employee is engaged in a social exchange relationship or relational contract (Blau, 1964; Rousseau & McClean Parks, 1993), based on many years of mutual trust and respect, the employee will take into account the intrinsic motivation for the job or mere loyalty to colleagues or managers.

Epie (2005) draws on the decision process theory of work and family in order to interpret the results of a diary study of Nigerian managers enrolled in an MBA programme. The managers' attempts to integrate conflicting demands revealed two moments in the decision-making process: the intention to act, and the actual action, often affected by a variety of contextual factors. Based on this finding, Epie (2005) conceptualizes a day-to-day work–family decision-making process that encompasses factors that affect the individual's final decision. In this cultural context individual decisions not only affect one's personal life, but also have effects on the extended family dyad, the school dyad (professor) and the workplace dyad (boss), which have the power to pressure the individual and alter the final decision. This research shows that work–family conflict is experienced at its most painful when dyadic members exhibit pressure and especially when a choice has to be made between conflicting values when, for example, a manager is required to attend a strategically important meeting that takes place at the same time as his child's theatre presentation, which he had committed to attend. Epie's study offers a rich day-to-day description of the decision-making process, involving different factors that intervene and affect individuals' decisions within a specific cultural context.

Managerial work–family decision making

The second strand of research looking at work–family decision making is generally interested in the antecedents and consequences of managerial or organizational decisions concerning the application of work–life policies. Poelmans and Sahibzada (2004) grouped organizational decisions in four main categories: the *adoption decision* (whether and when to start incorporating work–life programmes), the *design decision* (selection and bundling of human resource policies according to business requirements and workforce needs), the *implementation decision* (how to implement and diffuse these policies within the firm) and the *allowance decision* (whether and when to approve the request of a certain work–family benefit to an employee). Therefore, we define *managerial or organizational work–family decision making* as “the mental or cognitive processes resulting in the selection of a course of action among several alternatives when a manager has to decide whether to introduce, how to design and implement, and whether and to what degree to allow work–family benefits to an employee”.

Several ICWF papers focused particularly on the decision-making process of managers and organizations. This research is important because on the one hand, managerial support is critical for work–life policy uptake in employees, yet on the other hand, managerial decision making can be affected by the workload and extensive responsibilities associated with a managerial position. The way that managers deal with work–life conflict sends a signal to their subordinates (Fried, 1999; Hammer et al., 2007; Perlow, 1998; Thompson et al., 1999; Veenis, 2000).

Testing theories of managerial decision making

In her conference paper, den Dulk (2005) focused particularly on the factors that shape managerial attitudes in the work–family decision-making process. According to *disruptiveness theory* (Powell & Mainiero, 1999), managers assess the potential disruptiveness of requests for the work of the department. As their primary responsibility is to assure the performance of the team or department, allowing policy use might imply an additional effort in the organization that could be perceived as additional work complexity that not everyone is eager to take on. According to *dependency theory* it can be expected that managers behave more favourably towards employees who possess specialized skills, contribute largely to the department's performance, or are in supervisory positions, and hence are more difficult to replace. Powell and Mainiero's (1999) vignette study conducted among 53 past or present managers enrolled in an MBA programme showed that managers are primarily guided by short-term considerations. Klein et al. (2000) applied dependency theory to examine long-term considerations. Klein et al.'s (2000) vignette study showed that employees who perform well

are difficult to replace, have good connections and threaten to leave receive more positive attitudes towards their requests.

In their ICWF conference paper, den Dulk and Ruijter (2005, published in 2009) examined managers' attitudes toward work–life requests using both theories. Their findings lend more support to the disruptiveness argument in the case of long-term requests and the dependency argument in the case of short-term demands. They found that requests, particularly for caring reasons, are seen more positively when they come from women than from men, indicating that women are seen as the primary source of caring. The main interest of managers was the performance of the department and team. The authors also suggest the possibility of negative attitudes associated with approval decisions because supervisors might prefer to avoid resentment or turnover from an employee if the request is not granted (den Dulk & Ruijter, 2005, published in 2009).

According to den Dulk (2005), the organizational culture and national context also play an important role in managers' decision making. Policies that are not integrated into the organizational culture and supported by top management may provoke large variation in managerial attitudes, depending on the managers' experiences and views on work–life issues (Fried, 1999). National context may also play a role to the extent that work–life issues are regarded as a state or organizational responsibility. For instance, in the Netherlands, UK and Portugal, legislation leaves discretionary power to organizations, while in Eastern Europe, where state responsibility stands out, the organization often does not play an important role in the promotion and support of work–life issues (den Dulk, 2005).

Building a framework of managerial allowance decision making

Continuing the exploration of the manager's allowance of work–life policy use, Poelmans and Beham (2007, published in 2008) adopt a systemic approach and look at multiple antecedents and consequences of what they conceptualize as the *allowance decision*. Poelmans and Beham (2007) propose a theoretical framework in which they conceptualize antecedents to a favourable allowance decision at three levels of analysis: individual, workgroup and organization. At the individual level, supervisor and individual characteristics, as well as the supervisor–employee relationship, are important. At the group level, Poelmans and Beham propose that managers tend to make unfavourable policy use decisions in small workgroups with highly interdependent (Saavedra et al., 1993) and non-eligible members for work–life policies, and in situations where the policy has a strong potential to disrupt the group work (den Dulk & Ruijter, 2005; Powell & Mainiero, 1999). Finally, at the organizational level, the existing work–life policies and organizational culture influence managerial decisions. Poelmans and Beham (2008) propose that fairness perceptions can moderate the effects of

unfavourable decisions (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997; Greenberg, 1996), such that if the decision is perceived as fair (although negative), negative outcomes can be prevented. At the relational level, allowance decisions boost the quality of employee–supervisor and employee–co-worker relationships (Whitener et al., 1998).

Changing mindsets and practices

In her contribution to the ICWF conference, Quijada (2005) claims that a cognitive shift is needed in order to manage employees who work on flexible schedules. Managers' hesitation to support flexible policies often originates in the fear that all employees will use them, which would impair managers' work outcomes (Eaton, 2003) and increase their own workload (Silverstein & Srb, 1979). Research showed that this fear was not well grounded and that flexibility had a positive impact on productivity (Boston College Center for Work and Family, 2000). Quijada (2005) contrasts the "line of sight" schema with a more "target-based" schema that is characterized by a focus on results. In order to research the practices of managers who adopt a "target-based" management style, Quijada (2005) conducted a qualitative study of 22 US software engineers who worked as programmers or line managers in highly flexible jobs. The interviews showed that successful managers used a specific set of principles when they evaluated, tracked and related to their employees. Planning practices encompassed *careful preparation* of a project's timeline and *clear and frequent deliverables*, which allowed assessment of the work progress. The execution practices facilitated the interaction between team members, allowing for different schedules and working strategies. They included *core working hours*, during which employees are expected to be available (e.g., from 10am to 2pm or 3pm); *recurrent status meetings* to track the progress of a project; and *leveraging technology* to improve productivity by providing tools such as instant messaging, high speed connections and increased computer power. Quijada concluded that through a cognitive shift and the implementation of different principles and practices, managers can support flexible schedule implementation.

Vision for the future of work–family decision making

This section reviews the recommendations for future research provided by the ICWF decision-making track members, supplemented by additional recommendations that we believe are important for this line of research.

Broadening the spectrum

In the presentation of their conclusions, the work–family decision-making experts called for broadening the spectrum when referring to decision making. Most research on decision making focuses on work–family dilemmas,

but there are many other life domains that deserve more attention, such as personal (e.g., self-care, leisure) and social (e.g., friends, community service) life. Work–life decisions are often set in a context of conflicting domains and threat, but are just as relevant in situations where individuals can enrich one domain with positive moods, resources and skills accumulated from other domains (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Moreover, researchers should broaden the type of decisions studied; for example, “automatic” as well as consciously strategized decisions and proactive, preventive decisions as well as reactive decisions. In addition, because organizational contexts often limit the options that individuals see as feasible, studying employees’ choices as a function of company policies is much needed.

Promising theories

In addition to the theories developed specifically for the work–life field (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Poelmans, 2005), work–life researchers can profit from theories developed in the basic disciplines in which they operate. For example, role theory, social identity theory, boundary theory, gender role theory, goal-setting theory, social exchange theory and decision process theory of work and family were cited at the conference. In addition, behavioural decision theory, which has been successful in unravelling decision making in a broad range of situations, has many potential applications to work–family decision making. For instance, the Nobel-prize winning work of Tversky and colleagues (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Kahneman et al., 1982; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974, 1981) has uncovered several decision-making biases and related phenomena (confirmation bias, inertia, wishful thinking or optimism bias, choice-supportive bias, anchoring, group think, incremental decision making and escalating commitment, the self-fulfilling prophecy, effects of losses versus gains) that could be studied in work–family decision-making research. In addition, game theory (von Neumann & Morgenstern, 1944) may be relevant in couple decision making and allowance decision making because it studies decisions in which one needs to take into account how another person will respond to a decision.

As work–life conflicts are often about emotionally charged dilemmas, emotions are likely to play a major role in work–family decision making. For example, the somatic marker hypothesis is relevant to decision making because feelings guide decisions when individuals assess the severity of outcomes, the probability of their occurrence and their emotional quality (Bechara & Damasio, 2005; Damasio 1994). In addition, research on emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) has direct relevance for the work–life field in general and for work–family decision making more specifically.

The importance of individual characteristics

Participants in the decision-making track suggested that future research should examine individual characteristics that influence work–family

decision making and particularly the extent to which a decision is affected by extra-role considerations. Characteristics suggested by track members, such as gender, career orientation (protean versus organizational), generation (X versus baby boomers) and locus of control, can be supplemented with additional individual characteristics: positive and negative affectivity, risk orientation, cognitive style, analytical and negotiation skills, emotional intelligence, neuro-linguistic orientation and cultural values. Future research, which should examine the malleability of individual characteristics, can also profit from cross-disciplinary collaborations with behavioural economists, neurologists and neuro-psychologists, cognitive scientists, linguists and cross-cultural researchers.

The intertwined processes of decision making and coping

It is difficult to separate decision making and coping processes. According to Thompson et al.'s (2007) process model of coping with work–family conflict, individuals go through two stages of appraisal (evaluation of threat and evaluation of coping resources) to then choose (decide) which of the coping resources to use in a particular situation. Following this model, decisions punctuate a process in which information is gathered, processed and compared against resources and courses of action. Based on a review of 30 years of research on coping with work–family conflict, Thompson et al. (2007) concluded that there are some common themes among the studies, including the distinction between active, problem-focused coping and passive, emotion-based coping. It is clear that researchers interested in decision making can apply the coping literature, theories and methods, and collaborate with coping researchers in studying the processes that individuals use to alleviate or resolve work–life conflict.

A positive psychological approach to work–family decision making

In line with the movement of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), work–life scholars have increasingly focused on the “positive side” of the work–life interface, defining and testing variables such as positive spillover, facilitation, work–life balance, work–life enhancement and work–life enrichment. A new line of research could consist of studying healthy, “balanced” individuals and couples who seem to manage extensive role demands to create harmony in their work, family and personal lives. Another research approach to access these “best practices” would be to study how experienced coaches help their client to achieve harmony between work, family and personal life. Positive psychology can also inspire managerial and organizational decision-making research by examining how managers and organizations facilitate employees’ work–life enrichment through their adoption decisions, design decisions, implementation decisions and allowance decisions (Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004).

Work–family decision-making research methods

One of the major challenges facing decision-making researchers is to select a methodology that is appropriate to their line of scholarship. Decision making is a tacit, often not entirely conscious process that develops over time in interaction with multiple actors. It is a neuro-socio-cognitive phenomenon that can easily be distorted if we get too close or too distant. Observing decision making in a naturalistic setting necessitates some loss of control over possible confounding variables, whereas observing it in a laboratory risks losing its very essence. Therefore the eternal challenge will be to marry controllability and authenticity of data. Research methods that allow studying decision making in real-time, over time, while controlling for confounding variables are undoubtedly preferable but represent major challenges.

First, time is a crucial variable if we define decision making as a process. Hence, methods that allow us to observe decision making over time, such as ethnographic and diary research, are needed. Second, because there is a major risk of distortion of data collected after the fact and reconstructed relying on subjective accounts, vignette studies or simulations conducted in a laboratory setting can prove helpful. Third, as many decisions are social phenomena, researchers should use methods that study decision making in the context of bargaining and communication between parties. Fourth, decisions need to be taken across an increasing number of “fault lines” of diversity, one of which is national culture. Because the very meaning of work, family and personal life may differ greatly across cultures, it is likely that values, decision criteria and weights, options to work flexibly, alternatives and choices, and social norms and latitude in decision making also vary across national cultures. This calls for cross-cultural research of work–family decision making, adding yet another layer of complexity when choosing research methods.

Implications for practice

Because decision making is ubiquitous in work and life, understanding individual and managerial decision making has many practical implications. Preceding and following each work–life conflict there are instances of decision making, punctuating episodes during which an individual experiences something between a vague discomfort and an excruciating dilemma. Understanding techniques for sound decision making might help individuals prevent and resolve dilemmas more efficiently and create more harmony in their lives. This is certainly the hope of a myriad of practitioners – social workers, family therapists, coaches, career counsellors, human resource managers, diversity officers and supervisors – who are confronted daily with individuals and couples struggling with work–life dilemmas.

As for managerial decision making, we have argued elsewhere (Poelmans & Beham, 2008) that it represents “the moment of truth” because all previous

organizational efforts of adopting, designing and implementing work–life policies in an organization, which may have taken years, converge in single, discretionary decisions of supervisors (allowance decisions) whether or not to apply these policies to specific employees in their work units (Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004). Resources invested in developing and implementing work–life policies can suffer important losses in return if managers who make allowance decisions haven't been given information about company policies, organizational values and the impact of their decision on the personal lives of their collaborators. A manager without any prospect of administrative, logistical or professional support may deny a legitimate request for flexibility to avoid further hassles. Understanding the information that managers factor into their allowance decisions, and the consequences of misinformation, emotions and biases on the quality of these decisions are relevant for those concerned with the full implementation and utilization of work–life initiatives.

Conclusions

A review of the ICWF conference papers and the broader literature indicates that research on work–family decision making is in an incipient phase. The bulk of the work is conceptual and qualitative in nature, which suggests that most authors are still trying to understand the phenomenon, exploring it, defining concepts, analysing the process or mapping out the antecedents and consequences of decision making in the form of theoretical models. Empirical studies to test the models and the ideas that emerge from the exploratory studies are somewhat limited.

Yet, for several reasons, it is a research line that holds a great deal of promise. First, decisions reveal the true nature of the decision makers. By studying decisions we can learn more about the inter-individual differences that influence work–life conflicts. In those cases in which more than one person is participating in the decision, we can learn about the quality of their relationship and their willingness and capacity to communicate, bargain, collaborate and compromise to attain their mutual role expectations and cope with interrelated work–life conflict. Second, several broad societal trends will push decision making further to the forefront: globalization and migration, advances in technology and virtualization, protean careers and the diversification of family structures. Persons who already have a difficult time harmonizing work, family and personal life will have to confront even more severe work–life dilemmas if they interact with a much more diverse group of people, anytime, anywhere, especially if their family situations are particularly complex or unsupportive.

This unfolding complexity will require individuals to make decisions that increasingly cross spatial, temporal, psychological and cultural boundaries. Diversity comes with choice and choice implies making decisions.

Moreover, because decision making pervades a wide range of disciplines it makes sense that scholars in organizational behaviour, occupational health psychology, human resource management, gender and diversity, career management, family studies, cross-cultural research and political science adopt a decision-making lens when studying work–life issues.

To conclude, work–family decision-making research is both practically and scientifically relevant, and several societal trends only reinforce its significance. We have sufficient theories and methods at our disposal that enable us to expand empirical research in this area. We hope that this chapter convinces researchers of the importance of work–family decision making and stimulates them to develop empirical research programmes to gain further insight into the process. Research is already lagging far behind practice. We spend billions every year to fight diseases that kill a small percentage of the working population, yet have only just started to study how to improve decisions that affect the lives of a very high percentage of the global population. This chapter goes out to a new generation of work–life researchers and students who understand and anticipate the changes in our society.

Notes

1. We use the term “work–family” decision making rather than the broader “work–life” decision making throughout this chapter to remain consistent with the literature. However, we recognize that decisions have implications for a variety of life roles such as community, self-development and leisure, and we periodically employ concepts such as work–life conflict and practices such as work–life policies to reflect this breadth.
2. In their 2010 article included in this volume, Powell and Greenhaus condense the four types of decisions to three types: role entry, role participation and role exit.

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8

Sex, Gender, and Decisions at the Family–Work Interface

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Abstract

What is the linkage between individuals' sex and the interface between their work and family roles? The answer to this question is by no means straightforward as gender roles, work roles, and family roles evolve. To address the question, we examine the influence of family-domain factors on work-domain decisions and their linkages to sex and gender. According to the logic of appropriateness, a theory of decision making, people develop and apply rules in decision-making situations that are consistent with their personal identities. We identify three broad types of decisions in the work domain – role entry, participation, and exit decisions – that may be influenced by factors in the family domain according to such rules. Next, we review the literature on the linkage between individuals' sex and an example of each of these types of decisions: the role-entry decision about whether to start a business, the role-participation decision about the number of hours to devote to

one's job or business, and the role-exit decision about whether to quit a job. Our review suggests that (1) family-domain factors mediate effects of sex on work-domain decisions and (2) sex moderates relationships between family-domain factors and work-domain decisions. Based on the review, we offer a model of the linkages among sex, family-domain factors, and work-domain decisions that incorporates constructs from theories of the psychology of gender (femininity) and identity theories (family role salience). Finally, we offer guidelines for future theory and research to test and extend the model.

Sex, gender, and decisions at the family→work interface

What is the linkage between individuals' sex and the interface between their work and family roles? This is a familiar question for work–family scholars, as sex is the demographic characteristic that has been most frequently examined in the extant literature (Korabik, McElwain, & Chappell, 2008). To understand how men and women experience the work–family interface, it is essential to distinguish between the terms *sex*, which refers to the binary categories of male and female, and *gender*, which refers to the psychosocial implications of being male or female (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Caplan & Caplan, 2009; Korabik, 1999).

According to theories of the psychology of gender (cf. Denmark & Paludi, 2008; Eagly, Beall, & Sternberg, 2004; Unger, 2001) such as social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000), the linkage between sex and the work–family interface is straightforward. *Gender roles*, consisting of traditional beliefs about what role behaviors are appropriate for members of each sex (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998), set norms for the roles that men and women should emphasize: Women's proper place is in the home and men's in the workplace. *Gender stereotypes*, consisting of traditional beliefs about what psychological traits are characteristic of members of each sex (Kite, Deaux, & Haines, 2008), set expectations for the behaviors that men and women will exhibit: Women are more likely to exhibit “feminine” traits (e.g., compassion, nurturance, sensitivity to the needs of others) that are viewed as particularly important in the family domain, whereas men are more likely to exhibit “masculine” traits (e.g., aggressiveness, decisiveness, independence) that are viewed as particularly important in the work domain.

Gender roles and stereotypes are instilled during childhood by gender socialization processes (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Lippa, 2005) and reinforced during adulthood by expectancy confirmation processes (Roese & Sherman, 2007). Thus, powerful forces mandate that (1) men will regard their work role as more important and their family role as less important than women do and that (2) both men and women will make decisions about how to allocate their time and energy between work and family roles accordingly.

However, given societal changes, the relationship between sex and the work–family interface no longer seems so simple. As the proportion of

women in the workforce has increased over the last three decades, the traditional family structure of male breadwinner and female homemaker has given way to dual-career partnerships, single parenthood, and other alternative family structures (Marks, 2006). In fact, much of the scholarly attention devoted to the work–family interface has been motivated by the increasing proportion of dual-career couples, now over half of all married couples (U.S. Department of Labor, 2009), resulting from women's increased labor force participation. Further, in an extension of social role theory, Eagly and Diekmann (2003) argued that gender roles are malleable to some extent such that expectations for sex differences in social behavior are diminished when the actual behavior of men and women becomes more similar. In times characterized by an apparent decline in adherence to traditional gender roles, the relationship between work and family has become increasingly complex and sex differences in this relationship can no longer be regarded as straightforward.

Understanding the influence of sex and gender on the work–family interface is particularly important in light of the inconsistent findings in the literature (Powell & Greenhaus, *in press*). For example, evidence regarding sex differences in work–family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), a construct that represents negative interdependencies between work and family roles, is mixed, with some studies finding no sex difference and other studies finding that women experience either higher levels or lower levels of conflict than men (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Evidence regarding sex differences in positive interdependencies between work and family roles (e.g., positive spillover, enrichment, facilitation) is similarly mixed (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Eby et al. (2005: 181) concluded that gender is “deeply engrained” in work–family relationships and that both sex differences and gender issues must be considered to understand the work–family interface. However, with few exceptions (e.g., Livingston & Judge, 2008; Powell & Greenhaus, *in press*), constructs associated with gender stereotypes and roles that might help to explain the presence or absence of sex differences in work–family phenomena have not been included in studies of the work–family interface.

The present article reviews the literature on sex differences in the work–family interface, proposes a model that links sex and gender to the intersection of work and family lives, and makes recommendations for future theory and research. Because the work–family literature encompasses a variety of disciplines (e.g., management and organizational behavior, psychology, sociology, economics, family studies) and perspectives (e.g., conflict, enrichment, balance), such a review could take many different directions. Moreover, the range of work- and family-related constructs that may be influenced by gender considerations is enormous (Eby et al., 2005), as is the range of gender-related constructs (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Caplan & Caplan, 2009; Korabik, 1999), presenting a further challenge for a review.

We respond to this challenge by focusing on individuals' decisions that can affect the nature of the interface between their work and family roles. Research on individuals' choices in the work–family arena such as their role synthesis strategies (Kossek, Noe, & DeMarr, 1999), goal setting (Baltes & Heydens-Gahir, 2003), time allocation decisions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003), and time management strategies (Adams & Jex, 1999) suggests that individuals create and modify work and family role demands through the decisions they make. A decision is defined as a choice between alternative courses of action when the decision maker has sufficient control over the situation to have a choice (Hastie, 2001; March, 1994). Poelmans (2005) proposed a decision process theory that views individuals as making a stream of “work–family decisions” throughout their lives, i.e., decisions in one domain that are influenced by factors in the other domain. An examination of work–family decisions acknowledges the active role that individuals may play in how their lives unfold. Therefore, instead of examining the effect of sex on work–family outcomes such as conflict, enrichment, and balance, we examine the impact of sex on decisions that may ultimately affect these outcomes (Greenhaus & Allen, *in press*).

In particular, we focus this review on decisions at the family→work interface; that is, decisions in the work domain that are influenced by family-domain factors. We examine the influence of family factors on work decisions (rather than the influence of work factors on family decisions) because as management scholars, we are most interested in decisions and outcomes involving work. We explore whether sex differences in work-domain decisions can be explained by family-domain factors and whether the effect of family-domain factors on work decisions is different for women and men. We believe that answers to these questions can provide important insights into the role of sex in the interplay between family and work lives.

We realize that work-related experiences and outcomes are not always the result of an individual's freely-selected decision or choice. For example, a man's long work hours may say more about an organization's “long work hours culture” (Burke & Cooper, 2008) than his preference to spend a great deal of time in the work domain. And a woman's decision to quit a job for family reasons may say more about an organization's lack of flexibility and the gendered division of labor in the family domain (Shelton & John, 1996) than about her preference to leave her employer. Therefore, it would be misleading to view sex differences simply in terms of men's and women's “personal choices based on their motivations, natures, and needs” (Crosby, Williams, & Biernat, 2004: 677).

That said, individuals do make decisions about whether to enter or leave a work-related role and can have some latitude regarding the nature of their participation in the work domain. These decisions are influenced not only by individual preferences but also by real or perceived restrictions due to social pressures and constraints. Therefore, if women and men make different

decisions in the work domain or if their decisions are differentially influenced by family considerations, these differences are not necessarily due to deeply-rooted and immutable differences between the sexes but may be influenced by individual, organizational, and cultural factors, all of which are included in our reviews.

We next identify three types of decisions made in the work domain that may be influenced by factors in the family domain – role entry, role participation, and role exit decisions – and select a specific example of each type of decision on which to base our reviews of the literature. For each review, we examine (1) the linkage between family-domain factors and the particular work decision, (2) whether family-domain factors can explain sex differences in the work decision, and (3) whether the effect of family-domain factors on the work decision may be different for women and men. Given space limitations, we review one example of each type of decision because we are interested in demonstrating the relevance of family-domain factors in a variety of work-related decisions. Based on our reviews and other relevant literature, we offer a model of the linkages among sex, selected gender-related constructs, and the family→work interface and discuss its implications for future theory and research.

Role entry, participation, and exit decisions

Individuals make three broad types of decisions regarding their work domain – role entry, participation, and exit decisions – that may be influenced by factors in their family domain. *Role entry decisions* involve choices about whether to enter a particular work role, *role participation decisions* involve choices regarding how one engages in a particular work role, and *role exit decisions* involve choices regarding leaving a particular work role. We next elaborate further on each type of decision and describe the particular example of decision selected for review.

Role entry decisions

In the work domain, role entry decisions include the decision about whether to seek full-time or part-time employment, to seek employment in a specific occupation, to enhance one's credentials for that occupation, to pursue and accept a specific job in a specific organization, and to start a business. A choice regarding role entry in the work domain is not necessarily influenced by factors in the family domain. For example, an individual may be attracted to an occupation purely on the basis of her work-related talents, interests, and values with no consideration of family-domain factors. However, many role entry decisions are influenced by family-domain factors. For example, an individual may avoid a particular occupation or decline an offer for a particular job because of the belief that the given occupation or job will unduly interfere with his family life.

In this article, we select one particular role entry decision for further scrutiny, the decision whether to start a business. Entrepreneurial activity initiated by individuals who start businesses is increasingly critical to job creation and economic output in both developed and developing countries (Busenitz, West, Shepherd, Nelson, Chandler, & Zacharakis, 2003). Individuals' decisions about whether to start a business have been attributed to many factors, including demographic characteristics, personality traits, cognitive factors and biases, career satisfiers, and social networks (Blackburn & Kovalainen, 2009; Busenitz et al., 2003; Hisrich, Langan-Fox, & Grant, 2007; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The influence of family factors on the selection of an entrepreneurial career has long been recognized (Shapiro & Sokol, 1982) if not systematically reviewed (Busenitz et al., 2003; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

Moreover, the linkage between sex and business ownership has been characterized as an "enduring area" of research in organizational studies that draws upon relationships between several disciplines, e.g., psychology, sociology, and economics as well as the entrepreneurship field of management (Blackburn & Kovalainen, 2009: 139). Entrepreneurship is often depicted as a masculine preserve (Mulholland, 1996), with entrepreneurs described in terms that are associated more with men than women, e.g., "the conqueror of unexplored territories, the lonely hero, the patriarch" (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004: 407). The gendered construction of entrepreneurship as a masculine activity marginalizes female entrepreneurs and contributes to their perceiving the entrepreneurial environment as an unfriendly place (Lewis, 2006); in a 17-nation study, women perceived the entrepreneurial environment in a less favorable light than men, which contributed to a significant sex difference in entrepreneurial propensity favoring men within each nation (Langowitz & Minniti, 2007). Despite the masculine norm for entrepreneurship, women-owned business firms represent the fastest growth segment of privately-held business firms, and female business owners are increasingly important contributors to their country's economic growth (Brush, Carter, Gatewood, Greene, & Hart, 2006; Fielden & Davidson, 2005). Nonetheless, although the sex difference in business start-ups is diminishing, women are still less likely than men to start a business (Blackburn & Kovalainen, 2009; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007). Thus, attention to the influence of family-domain factors that may be related to sex and gender on decisions about whether to start a business is warranted.

Role participation decisions

In the work domain, role participation decisions include the investment of time and emotion, participation in role-related activities, participation in employer-sponsored work-family programs, and the mobilization of support and use of coping resources to manage role requirements. As with role entry decisions, role participation decisions in the work domain are

not necessarily influenced by factors in the family domain. Individuals may expand or restrict their participation in the work role, accept or decline an opportunity to participate in a particular work activity, or engage in a coping behavior solely for work-related reasons. However, many role entry participation decisions are influenced by family-domain factors. For example, an individual may decide not to work over the weekend to meet an imminent project deadline because of a family commitment.

In this article, we focus on the decision about how many hours to devote to one's job or business, an intentional allocation decision (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) regarding the distribution of time between the work domain and other life domains. The number of hours that individuals devote to work may have both positive (Hewlett & Luce, 2006) and negative (Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002; Ng & Feldman, 2008; Ng, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2007) consequences for their work and family domains as well as their personal lives. Although some workers are bound by labor contracts or employment agreements that mandate extra pay for extra work ("overtime"), other workers – especially managers, professionals, and business owners – do not receive extra pay for working long hours. Thus, work hours may have both a discretionary and nondiscretionary component (Ng & Feldman, 2008). We are particularly interested in decisions by individuals who may exercise discretion over the number of hours they work.

Research in several disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, family studies, and the organizational behavior, human resources management, and entrepreneurship fields of management) has shown that family-related factors are associated with the number of hours worked (e.g., Feldman, 2002; Humbert & Lewis, 2008; Ng & Feldman, 2008; Shelton & John, 1996). Moreover, there has been a consistent sex difference in the number of hours worked over the past several decades with women devoting fewer hours to paid work than men (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004). Although this sex difference is due in part to women's greater likelihood of working part-time (Bollé, 2001), men work more hours than women even among full-time workers (U.S. Department of Labor, 2008), and male business owners devote more hours to their business firms than female business owners (Humbert & Lewis, 2008; Longstreth, Stafford, & Mauldin, 1987). Thus, attention to the influence of family-domain factors that may be related to sex and gender on work hour decisions is warranted.

Role exit decisions

In the work domain, role exit decisions include the decision to have a voluntary employment gap, to abandon an occupation or career path, to quit a job or leave an organization, to retire, and to sell or close a business. Similar to other types of decisions, exit decisions in the work domain are not necessarily based on factors in the family domain. For example, an individual may quit a job solely for work-related reasons. However, as with other types

of decisions, many role exit decisions are based on family considerations, e.g., quitting a job may be based on the desire to work closer to home.

In this article, we focus on the decision to quit a job, which has considerable ramifications for individuals, their families, and their employers. For some people, this decision is accompanied by a role entry decision to find alternative employment working for others, which may require relocation or other family adjustments, or to start a business (Mallon & Cohen, 2001; Mattis, 2005). For others, this decision entails leaving the labor force altogether, which has financial and other implications for their families (Barnes & Jones, 1974). For employers, having an employee quit a job may require a costly search to fill the open position.

Published reviews of research in a variety of disciplines (e.g., industrial and labor relations, economics, psychology, family studies, and the organizational behavior and human resources management fields of management) have revealed a wide array of predictors of turnover intentions or behavior (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979); turnover intentions have been consistently found to have a strong positive relationship with turnover behavior (Griffeth et al., 2000). Predictors of intentions or behavior include individual-level variables such as personality traits (Zimmerman, 2008), organizational-level variables such as human resources practices (Batt & Valcour, 2003), and interactions between the two such as person-organization fit (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006). Of particular relevance to this review is the demonstrated effect of family factors on turnover intentions or behaviors (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Reitman & Schneer, 2005; Rosin & Korabik, 1990; Sicherman, 1996; Stroh, Brett, & Reilly, 1996).

The effect of sex on turnover has received much attention in the turnover literature. An early meta-analysis found that women are more likely to quit jobs than men, especially among managers and professionals (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986), whereas a more recent meta-analysis found no sex difference in quit rates (Griffeth et al., 2000), suggesting that the linkage of sex to turnover has diminished over time and may no longer be present. Thus, attention to whether family-domain factors that may be related to sex and gender contribute to explaining trends in the decision about whether to quit a job is warranted.

In summary, we selected three distinct decisions to include in our review. Each decision – starting a business, working many or few hours, and quitting a job – has been examined by researchers in several disciplines; has important consequences for individuals, families, employers, and society; and may be influenced by family-domain factors. In addition, the presence of consistent sex differences in one of these decisions (work hours) and the apparent trend towards reduced sex differences in the other two decisions (starting a business and quitting a job) may provide insight into the conditions under which sex and gender play a role in these decisions. Moreover, our inclusion

of decisions regarding role entry, participation, and exit, as well as decisions about self-employment and employment in organizations owned or managed by others, enhances the diversity of perspectives examined.

However, it is important to note that these types of decisions are not mutually exclusive. For example, unless the decision maker is leaving the labor force, the decision to exit a work role may be made simultaneously with the decision to enter a different work role, and both decisions may be accompanied by decisions about exactly what the nature of one's participation will be in the new work role in contrast to what it was in the exited work role. Also, decisions about self-employment may be made simultaneously with decisions about employment by others.

Review

March's (1994) theory of decision making, when considered simultaneously with identity theories (Burke & Reitzes, 1991; Stryker, 1968; Stryker & Serpe, 1994), provide a useful framework to guide our review. March (1994) distinguished between two perspectives of the reasoning process by which people make decisions. The prevailing perspective on decision making, which March (1994) called the logic of consequences, views decision making as a process that is guided by purely rational considerations (Hastie, 2001). The second perspective, called the logic of appropriateness, views decision making as a process of establishing *identities* and matching *rules* consistent with these identities to recognizable *situations*. Because of the linkages of sex and gender to issues of identity (Powell & Greenhaus, in press), the logic of appropriateness is particularly applicable to this review.

Decision makers who follow the logic of appropriateness (March, 1994), in accordance with Poelman's (2005) definition of a work–family decision, define decision-making situations in the work domain as ones that may be influenced by factors in the family domain. Whether family-domain factors actually influence work-domain decisions is determined by the extent to which the decision maker identifies with the family role. Identity theories (Burke & Reitzes, 1991; Stryker, 1968; Stryker & Serpe, 1994) suggest that the more salient or important a particular role is to an individual, the more likely he or she is to invoke the role identity in decision-making situations. Further, individuals may identify highly with more than one role, such that multiple role identities are “co-activated” (Rothbard & Ramarajan, 2009) in decision-making situations (e.g., family and work identities).

According to the logic of appropriateness, established identities determine the nature of the rules that people invoke in decision-making situations (March, 1994). We expect that a person who identifies highly with the family role will view it as more salient and adopt rules that ensure the primacy of family-domain factors when making work-domain decisions. In contrast, we expect that a person who identifies minimally with the family role will

view it as less salient and adopt rules that ignore or downplay the influence of family-domain factors on work-domain decisions. Further, although the focus of this review is on the influence of family-domain factors, we expect that a person who identifies highly with both family and work roles (i.e., whose family and work identities are co-activated; Rothbard & Ramarajan, 2009) will adopt decision-making rules that incorporate factors from both domains.

Thus, the reasoning process associated with the logic of appropriateness for decision making in general (March, 1994) may be applied to the decisions that are the subject of our review. In the remainder of this section, we review the literature on the influence of family-domain factors on work-domain decisions regarding starting a business, hours worked, and quitting a job. For each decision, we first identify family-domain factors that have been proposed in theoretical articles or prior reviews, or observed in empirical studies, to influence the decision. Then, we specify the family-domain factors for which sex differences have been proposed or observed (*mediation*) as well as the family-domain factors for which effects on the decision are different for women and men (*moderation*). Further, we identify contextual factors that have been proposed or observed to influence the relationships examined.

Decision about whether to start a business

As Table 8.1 indicates, four types of family-domain factors have been proposed or observed to be related to the decision to start a business. *Family background* factors that are positively related to this decision include having one or both parents with self-employment experience (Bowen & Hisrich, 1986; Gartner, 1985; Hisrich & Brush, 1986; White, Thornhill, & Hampson, 2007), parental support for pursuing self-employment (Bowen & Hisrich, 1986), authoritative parenting, which “provides support and rules while simultaneously granting authority” (Schmitt-Rodermund, 2004: 500), and financial backing from family members such as gifts, loans, or inheritance (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). *Family structure* factors such as marriage to a self-employed spouse and the self-employed spouse’s income are positively related to the decision to start a business (Bruce, 1999; Brown, Farrel, & Sessions, 2006; Caputo & Dolinsky, 1998). *Family supports* such as the spouse’s or partner’s support for one’s career as a business owner and support from other family members increase the likelihood that an individual will start a business (Baron, 2002; Bowen & Hisrich, 1986; Hisrich & Brush, 1986; Jennings & McDougald, 2007); however, having a social network consisting of a greater proportion of family members decreases this likelihood (Renzulli, Aldrich, & Moody, 2000). *Family-related motives* – the desire to integrate one’s business and family lives, achieve work–family balance, and gain flexibility in meeting family demands and responsibilities – also are positively related to the decision to start a business (Baron, 2002; Boden,

Table 8.1 Decision about whether to start a business: influence of family-domain factors and linkages to sex

| | Direction of relationship | Study | Study type |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| <i>Family background</i> | | | |
| Self-employed parent(s) | Positive | Gartner (1985) | T |
| | | Bowen & Hisrich (1986) | T |
| | | Hisrich & Brush (1986) | E |
| | | White et al. (2007) | E |
| Parental supportiveness | Positive | Bowen & Hisrich (1986) | T |
| Authoritative parenting | Positive | Schmitt-Rodermund (2004) | E |
| Financial backing from family | Positive | Greenhaus & Powell (2006) | T |
| <i>Family structure</i> | | | |
| Being married | Positive for women, no effect for men | Carr (1996) | E |
| Having young children at home | Positive for women, no effect for men | Boden (1996) | E |
| | | Boden (1999) | E |
| | | Carr (1996) | E |
| | | Caputo & Dolinsky (1998) | E |
| | | Heilman & Chen (2003) | T |
| Having self-employed spouse | Positive | Caputo & Dolinsky (1998) | E |
| | | Bruce (1999) | E |
| | | Brown et al. (2006) | E |
| Spouse's self-employed income (<i>higher for women</i>) | Positive | Caputo & Dolinsky (1998) | E |
| <i>Family demands and responsibilities (higher for women)</i> | | | |
| | Positive for women, no effect for men | Belcourt (1991) | T |
| <i>Family supports</i> | | | |
| Proportion of family members in social network (<i>higher for women</i>) | Negative | Renzulli et al. (2000) | E |
| Priority given to one's career as a business owner by spouse/partner (<i>lower for women</i>) | Positive | Jennings & McDougald (2007) | T |
| Spouse/family supportiveness | Positive | Bowen & Hisrich (1986) | T |
| | | Hisrich & Brush (1986) | E |
| | | Baron (2002) | T |
| | | Jennings & McDougald (2007) | T |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>Family-related motives</i> | | | |
| Business–family life integration (<i>higher for women</i>) | Positive | Brush (1992) | T |
| Work–family balance | Positive | Buttner & Moore (1997) | E |
| | | Mallon & Cohen (2001) | E |
| | | Baron (2002) | T |
| | | Heilman & Chen (2003) | T |
| | | Jennings & McDougald (2007) | T |
| Flexibility in meeting family demands and responsibilities (<i>higher for women</i>) | Positive | Loscocco (1997) | E |
| | | Boden (1999) | E |
| | | DeMartino & Barbato (2003) | E |
| | | Heilman & Chen (2003) | T |
| | | Mattis (2005) | E |
| Kepler & Shane (2007) | E | | |
| <i>Contextual factors</i> | | | |
| Lack of flexibility to meet family demands and responsibilities when working for others | Positive for women, no effect for men | Mallon & Cohen (2001) | E |
| | | Mattis (2005) | E |
| Gendered construction of entrepreneurship as a masculine activity | Negative for women, positive for men | Mulholland (1996) | E |
| | | Bruni et al. (2004) | E |
| | | Lewis (2006) | E |
| | | Langowitz & Minniti (2007) | E |

Note: Study type: E = empirical, T = theoretical/review.

1999; Buttner & Moore, 1997; DeMartino & Barbato, 2003; Heilman & Chen, 2003; Jennings & McDougald, 2007; Kepler & Shane, 2007; Loscocco, 1997; Mallon & Cohen, 2001; Mattis, 2005).

Table 8.1 indicates which family-domain factors have been proposed or observed to differ for men and women, such that these factors may *mediate* the relationship between sex and the decision about whether to start a business. The greater priority assigned to men's than women's careers as business owners in their respective households (Jennings & McDougald, 2007) and the lower proportion of family members in men's than women's social networks (Renzulli et al., 2000) may help to explain the sex difference favoring men in the decision about whether to start a business (Blackburn & Kovalainen, 2009; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007). In contrast, the greater income of women's self-employed spouses than those of men (Caputo & Dolinsky, 1998) and women's greater desire to achieve business–family life integration (Brush, 1992) and flexibility in meeting family demands and responsibilities (Boden, 1999; DeMartino & Barbato, 2003; Heilman & Chen,

2003; Kepler & Shane, 2007; Loscocco, 1997; Mattis, 2005) may act as constraints on or contribute to reducing this sex difference. Further, women have greater family demands and responsibilities that, unlike those of men, are typically not relieved when they start a business (Belcourt, 1991), suggesting that their greater desire for flexibility to meet such demands and responsibilities has a basis in their family situations.

In addition to these potential mediating effects, Table 8.1 shows that sex may *moderate* the linkages of marital and parental status to the decision to start a business, such that women's decisions but not men's decisions are positively affected by being married (Carr, 1996), having young children at home (Boden, 1996, 1999; Carr, 1996; Caputo & Dolinsky, 1998; Heilman & Chen, 2003), and having greater family demands and responsibilities (Belcourt, 1991). Further, linkages of sex to this decision are suggested to be moderated by contextual factors at the organizational and societal levels. At the organizational level, the lack of flexibility to meet family demands and responsibilities when working for others has an impact on women's decisions about whether to leave the organization to start a business but not men's decisions because women are more motivated than men to attain such flexibility (Mallon & Cohen, 2001; Mattis, 2005). At the societal level, the gendered construction of entrepreneurship as a masculine activity (Bruni et al., 2004; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007; Lewis, 2006; Mulholland, 1996) encourages men to start a business and discourages women from doing the same.

In the studies reviewed, gender-related constructs such as gender roles (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998) and theories of the psychology of gender such as social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly et al., 2000) were often invoked to argue that mediating or moderating relationships would be present or to explain significant relationships that were found. For example, Brush (1992: 6) based her argument that female entrepreneurs are more motivated to integrate their business and family lives than male entrepreneurs on a "new perspective...rooted in psychological and sociological theories that submit women's social orientations (compared to those of men) are more focused on relationships...that include family, community, and business." However, the actual role of gender-related constructs in most of the mediated and moderated relationships suggested by this review has not been tested.

Decision about number of hours to devote to job or business

As Table 8.2 depicts, five types of family-domain factors have been proposed or observed to be related to the decision about how many hours to devote to one's job or business. The literature reviewed included studies of work hours for individuals employed by others as well as for self-employed individuals. *Family background* factors – having a workaholic parent or dysfunctional family experiences in childhood – are positively related to work hours (Ng et al., 2007). *Family structure* factors – single parenthood

Table 8.2 Decision about the number of hours to devote to job or business: influence of family-domain factors and linkages to sex

| | Direction of relationship | Study | Study type |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| <i>Family background</i> | | | |
| Workaholic parent(s) | Positive | Ng et al. (2007) | T |
| Dysfunctional family experiences in childhood | Positive | Ng et al. (2007) | T |
| <i>Family structure</i> | | | |
| Being married | Negative | Feldman (2002) | T |
| | Negative for women, positive for men | Corrigall & Konrad (2006) | E |
| Having children at home | Negative | Feldman (2002) | T |
| | Negative for women, positive for men | Humbert & Lewis (2008) | E |
| | | Ng & Feldman (2008) | T |
| | | Jacobs & Gerson (2001) | E |
| Number of children at home | Negative for women, no effect for men | Corrigall & Konrad (2006) | E |
| | | Maume (2006) | E |
| Being a single parent (<i>higher for women</i>) | Positive | Heymann et al. (2004) | E |
| Responsibility for household income/ "breadwinner" role (<i>lower for women</i>) | Positive | Feldman (2002) | T |
| | | Major et al. (2002) | E |
| | | Corrigall & Konrad (2006) | E |
| Spouse's work hours (<i>higher for women</i>) | Negative for women, positive for men | Maume (2006) | E |
| Spouse's managerial or professional employment | Negative for women, positive for men | Maume (2006) | E |
| Spouse's educational attainment | Negative for women, no effect for men | Maume (2006) | E |
| <i>Family demands and responsibilities</i> | | | |
| Hours spent with children | Negative | Humbert & Lewis (2008) | E |
| Hours spent on housework (<i>higher for women</i>) | Negative | Shelton & John (1996) | T |
| | | Corrigall & Konrad (2006) | E |
| | | Ng & Feldman (2008) | T |

Table 8.2 (Continued)

| | Direction of relationship | Study | Study type |
|--|--|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Self as provider of childcare (<i>higher for women</i>) | Negative | Humbert & Lewis (2008) | E |
| Time pressure from spouse | Positive | Roxburgh (2006) | E |
| Time pressure from parent(s) | Positive | Roxburgh (2006) | E |
| <i>Family supports</i> | | | |
| Spouse's hours devoted to housework (<i>lower for women</i>) | Positive for women, no effect for men | Shelton & John (1996) | T |
| Other providers of childcare: | | | |
| Spouse (<i>lower for women</i>) | Positive | Humbert & Lewis (2008) | E |
| Domestic help or babysitter (<i>higher for women</i>) | Positive for women, no effect for men | Humbert & Lewis (2008) | E |
| Private childcare service (<i>higher for women</i>) | Negative | Humbert & Lewis (2008) | E |
| <i>Family-related attitudes</i> | | | |
| Satisfaction with work–family balance | Negative | Valcour (2007) | E |
| Marital happiness | Negative for women (<i>Note: men not studied</i>) | Rogers (1996) | E |
| Family satisfaction | Positive for women, no effect for men | Brett & Stroh (2003) | E |
| Concern about negative effects of work hours on family life (<i>higher for women</i>) | Positive | Wharton & Blair-Loy (2006) | E |

Note: Study type: E = empirical, T = theoretical/review.

and responsibility for household income – are also positively associated with work hours (Corrigall & Konrad, 2006; Feldman, 2002; Heymann, Earle, & Hanchate, 2004; Major et al., 2002). Some *family demands and responsibilities* – hours spent with children and on housework and childcare

responsibilities – are negatively related to work hours (Corrigan & Konrad, 2006; Humbert & Lewis, 2008; Ng & Feldman, 2008; Shelton & John, 1996), whereas time pressures from spouse and parents are positively related to work hours (Roxburgh, 2006). Among *family supports*, childcare by one's spouse is positively related to work hours, whereas using a private childcare service is negatively related to work hours, a surprising finding (Humbert & Lewis, 2008). Also, favorable *family-related attitudes* – satisfaction with work-family balance and marital happiness – are negatively related to work hours (Rogers, 1996; Valcour, 2007), whereas unfavorable attitudes such as concern about negative effects of work hours on family life are positively related to work hours (Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2006).

Table 8.2 also indicates which family-domain factors, because of their proposed or observed differences between men and women, may *mediate* the relationship between sex and work hour decisions. The greater hours devoted to housework by women (Corrigan & Konrad, 2006; Ng & Feldman, 2008; Shelton & John, 1996), the greater hours devoted to paid work (Maume, 2006) and lower hours devoted to housework (Shelton & John, 1996) by husbands than wives, women's lower likelihood of assuming a breadwinner role within the family (Corrigan & Konrad, 2006; Feldman, 2002; Major et al., 2002), women's greater likelihood to handle childcare themselves or use a private childcare service rather than to have their spouse handle childcare (Humbert & Lewis, 2008), and women's greater concerns about the negative effects of their work hours on their family life (Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2006) may help to explain the consistent evidence that men work more hours than women (Humbert & Lewis, 2008; Jacobs & Gerson, 2004; Longstreth et al., 1987). In contrast, women's greater likelihood of being an employed single parent (Heymann et al., 2004) and having domestic help or a babysitter handle childcare (Humbert & Lewis, 2008) may act as constraints on or contribute to reducing this sex difference. However, other evidence suggests that the sex difference in family-domain factors such as hours devoted to housework (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004) and breadwinner status (U.S. Department of Labor, 2009) is narrowing; if these trends continue, the mediating role of such variables may decline in the future.

In addition, sex is suggested to *moderate* the relationships between several family-domain factors and work hour decisions. Some evidence suggests that men work more hours when they are married or have children, whereas women work fewer hours under the same circumstances (Corrigan & Konrad, 2006; Jacobs & Gerson, 2001); however, other studies have suggested that these effects are similarly negative for men and women (Feldman, 2002; Humbert & Lewis, 2008; Ng & Feldman, 2008). Also, having a spouse who holds a managerial or professional job and works longer hours is negatively related to women's work hours and positively related to those of men (Maume, 2006). Further, for women, having a greater number of children at home and a spouse who is more highly educated are negatively related

to work hours (Maume 2006), whereas having a spouse who devotes more hours to housework (Shelton & John, 1996), having domestic help or a babysitter to handle childcare (Humbert & Lewis, 2008), and experiencing greater family satisfaction (Brett & Stroh, 2003) are positively related to work hours; in contrast, these family-domain factors are unrelated to work hours for men.

Overall, our review suggests that men's decisions about work hours are less constrained by family-domain factors than women's decisions. For men, these results could be driven by the desire to "get out of the house" for comforts of work or by the need to fulfill their breadwinner role. For women, these results could be driven by the importance of family in their lives or by the felt need to restrict their work involvement to meet their family's needs. Although these possible explanations are consistent with theories of the psychology of gender (Denmark & Paludi, 2008; Eagly et al., 2004; Unger, 2001), research to test their relative merit has been lacking.

Some of the inconsistencies in results of moderation may be due to differences in the nature of the population from which they were obtained. For example, although some studies found that women who were higher in positive family-related attitudes (Rogers, 1996; Valcour, 2007) worked fewer hours, Brett and Stroh (2003) found that women who were higher in family satisfaction worked longer hours. However, Brett and Stroh (2003) surveyed MBA alumni, whereas Valcour (2007) surveyed telephone call center representatives and Rogers (1996) used data from a US national survey. Compared with female workers in other populations, female MBA graduates may be more likely to hold managerial and professional jobs that enable them to afford paid childcare, thereby alleviating the need to devote their own time to childcare, without feeling that their family satisfaction is suffering. However, single parents, most of whom are women (U.S. Department of Labor, 2009), are more likely to work long hours than married parents (Heymann et al., 2004); they may need to work long hours out of economic necessity despite not being able to afford paid child care. Thus, differences in the nature of the population such as in socioeconomic class may influence the direction of the relationships between family-domain factors and work hours.

In summary, a wide range of family-domain factors are related to individuals' decisions about the number of hours to devote to their job or business. In some instances, these factors are suggested to mediate the relationship between individuals' sex and the decision, whereas in other instances, the effects of family-domain factors are suggested to be moderated by sex. In addition, the nature of the population may influence the relationships found among sex, family-domain factors, and the decision.

Decision about whether to quit a job

Table 8.3 summarizes family-domain factors that have been proposed or observed to influence the decision about whether to quit a job. *Family*

Table 8.3 Decision about whether to quit a job: influence of family-domain factors and linkages to sex

| | Direction of relationship | Study | Study type |
|--|---|--|------------------|
| <i>Family structure</i> | | | |
| Being married | Negative | Mobley et al. (1979) Cotton & Tuttle (1986) Lee & Maurer (1999) | T T E |
| Number of children at home | Negative | Mobley et al. (1979) Cotton & Tuttle (1986) Stroh et al. (1996) Lee & Maurer (1999) | T T E E |
| <i>Family demands and responsibilities</i> | | | |
| Household responsibilities (higher for women) | More positive for women than men | Sicherman (1996) | E |
| Illness in the family | More positive for women than men | Sicherman (1996) | E |
| Expectations of family members regarding whether to quit | Positive | Hom et al. (1979) Prestholdt et al. (1987) Maertz & Griffeth (2004) | E E T |
| Change of residence | More positive for women than men | Sicherman (1996) | E |
| Spouse's job relocation | Positive for women (Note: men not studied) | Rosin & Korabik (1990) | E |
| <i>Family supports</i> | | | |
| Use of employer childcare centre | Negative | Milkovich & Gomez (1976) | E |
| Access to family-friendly programs | Negative | Grover & Crooker (1995) | E |
| Access to employer eldercare assistance | Negative | Denton et al. (1990) | E |
| Access to employer childcare centre | Negative | Youngblood & Chambers-Clark (1984) | E |
| Access to flexible scheduling at work | Negative | Batt & Valcour (2003) | E |
| Supervisor's support for meeting family Needs | Negative | Batt & Valcour (2003) | E |
| Prior leave of absence (higher for women) | Positive | Lyness & Judiesch (2001) | E |
| <i>Family-related motives</i> | | | |
| Childrearing (higher for women) | More positive for women than men | Sicherman (1996) | E |

Table 8.3 (Continued)

| | Direction of relationship | Study | Study type |
|---|---|--------------------------|------------|
| | | Reitman & Schneer (2005) | E |
| Work closer to home (higher for women) | More positive for women than men | Sicherman (1996) | E |
| Spend more time with children | Positive for women (Note: men not studied) | Rosin & Korabik (1990) | E |
| <i>Work–family Interdependencies</i> | | | |
| Work→family conflict | Positive | Kossek & Ozeki (1999) | T |
| | More positive when family role centrality is higher | Hom & Kinicki (2001) | E |
| | | Boyar et al. (2003) | E |
| | | Maertz & Griffeth (2004) | T |
| | | Carr et al. (2008) | E |
| Family→work conflict | Positive | Kossek & Ozeki (1999) | T |
| | | Boyar et al. (2003) | E |
| Family→work enrichment | Negative | Wayne et al. (2006) | E |

Note: Study type: E = empirical, T = theoretical/review.

structure factors – being married and having more children at home – are negatively related to inclinations to quit a job (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Lee & Maurer, 1999; Mobley et al., 1979; Stroh et al., 1996), whereas *family demands and responsibilities* – expectations of family members regarding whether to quit and a spouse’s job relocation – are positively related to inclinations to quit (Hom, Katerberg, & Hulin, 1979; Maertz & Griffeth, 2004; Prestholdt, Lane, & Mathews, 1987; Rosin & Korabik, 1990). *Family supports* include employer-sponsored “family-friendly” programs such as childcare and eldercare assistance and flexible scheduling. Use of such programs, or having access to them even if they are not used, and supervisory support for meeting one’s family needs are negatively related to the decision to quit (Batt & Valcour, 2003; Denton, Love, & Slate, 1990; Grover & Crooker, 1995; Milkovich & Gomez, 1976; Youngblood & Chambers-Clark, 1984), suggesting that family-friendly programs intended to benefit employees may also benefit employers. In contrast, having taken a leave of absence is positively related to the decision to leave a job (Lyness & Judiesch, 2001), suggesting that prior use of a family-friendly program may predict future inclinations to quit a job. Factors pertaining to *work–family interdependencies* operate in both directions. High levels of both work→family and family→work conflict make people more inclined to quit a job (Boyar, Maertz, Pearson, & Keough,

2003; Hom & Kinicki, 2001; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999; Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). However, family→work enrichment improves the work situation and makes people less inclined to quit a job (Wayne, Randel, & Stevens, 2006).

Table 8.3 also suggests mediating and moderating processes involving sex, family-domain factors, and the decision about whether to quit a job. For example, women's greater likelihood of having taken a prior leave of absence (Lyness & Judiesch, 2001) represents a mediating factor that increases the likelihood that women will decide to quit jobs compared with men. Also, sex is suggested to moderate the linkages of experiencing an illness in the family and a change of residence to quit decisions, such that the linkages are more positive for women than men (Sicherman, 1996). Moreover, three other family-domain factors – greater household responsibilities and the motives to work closer to home and take time off for childrearing – not only have more positive effects on quit decisions for women than men (*moderation*) but are also experienced more frequently by women than men (*mediation*), suggesting a “double impact” of sex on the decision to quit a job (Reitman & Schneer, 2005; Sicherman, 1996).

Further, family role centrality has been suggested to moderate the relationship between work→family conflict and the decision to quit a job (Carr, Boyar, & Gregory, 2008). Family role centrality is conceptually similar to family role salience, the construct suggested by identity theories (Burke & Reitzes, 1991; Stryker, 1968; Stryker & Serpe, 1994), in that higher levels of both constructs indicate a greater importance placed on the family role (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000). We suggested earlier that decision makers who follow the logic of appropriateness (March, 1994) and for whom the family role is highly salient will adopt rules that emphasize the importance of family-domain factors when making work-domain decisions. Consistent with this reasoning, in Carr et al.'s (2008) study, individuals who viewed their family role as more central in their lives were more likely to quit jobs that caused high work→family conflict than individuals for whom the family role was less central.

Overall, this review suggests that although the sex difference in quit rates appears to be diminishing (Griffeth et al., 2000), women are more likely to quit jobs for family-related reasons than men. However, the same gap in the literature is present as for the role entry and participation decisions reviewed: Virtually none of the studies regarding the decision to quit a job incorporated a gender-related construct that may have explained the proposed or tested linkages to sex. This gap represents an opportunity for future theory and research.

In summary, although it was not the intent of this article to examine the differential effects of family-domain factors across the three types of work-domain decisions, five trends are worth noting. First, there is ample evidence that family-domain factors are associated with each of the three decisions we

examined. Second, two categories of family-domain factors (family structure and family supports) were predictive of all three decisions, and three additional categories (family background, family demands and responsibilities, and family-related motives) were predictive of two of the three decisions. Third, evidence suggests that family-domain factors mediate the effects of sex on all three decisions. Fourth, evidence also suggests that sex moderates the relationships between family-domain factors and all three decisions. Finally, when moderation was found to be present, the relationship between a family-domain factor and a work-domain decision was either stronger for women than men (all three decisions) or was constraining for women and enabling for men (work hours decision).

Discussion

What is the linkage between individuals' sex and the interface between their work and family roles? To address this question, we reviewed the linkages of sex and family-domain factors to three types of decisions that individuals may make in their work domain – role entry, role participation, and role exit decisions. Overall, the answer to this question suggested by our review is “complex, dynamic, and by no means straightforward.” We next discuss the various components and linkages in a model that captures what we have learned from our review (Figure 8.1). Then, we discuss the implications of the model for future theory and research.

Model

The dependent variable in our model consists of decisions that an individual makes in the work domain. According to the logic of appropriateness (March, 1994), family-domain factors influence work-domain decisions in accordance with rules adopted by decision makers that are consistent with their identities. As *path 1* in Figure 8.1 indicates, a wide range of family-domain factors may influence decisions in the work domain, including family background (e.g., Ng et al., 2007; White et al., 2007), family structure (e.g., Carr, 1996; Feldman, 2002), family demands and responsibilities (e.g., Belcourt, 1991; Maertz & Griffeth, 2004), family supports (e.g., Batt & Valcour, 2003; Humbert & Lewis, 2008), family-related motives (e.g., Heilman & Chen, 2003; Sicherman, 1996), family-related attitudes (e.g., Brett & Stroh, 2003; Valcour, 2007), and work–family interdependencies (e.g., Boyar et al., 2003; Wayne et al., 2006). The types of family-domain factors depicted in Figure 8.1, although representative of the types of family-related constructs that have been examined in the work–family literature (Eby et al., 2005), are not necessarily exhaustive. Also, a particular family-domain factor may not have the same influence on all decisions of the same type (role entry, participation, or exit) or all decisions across types.

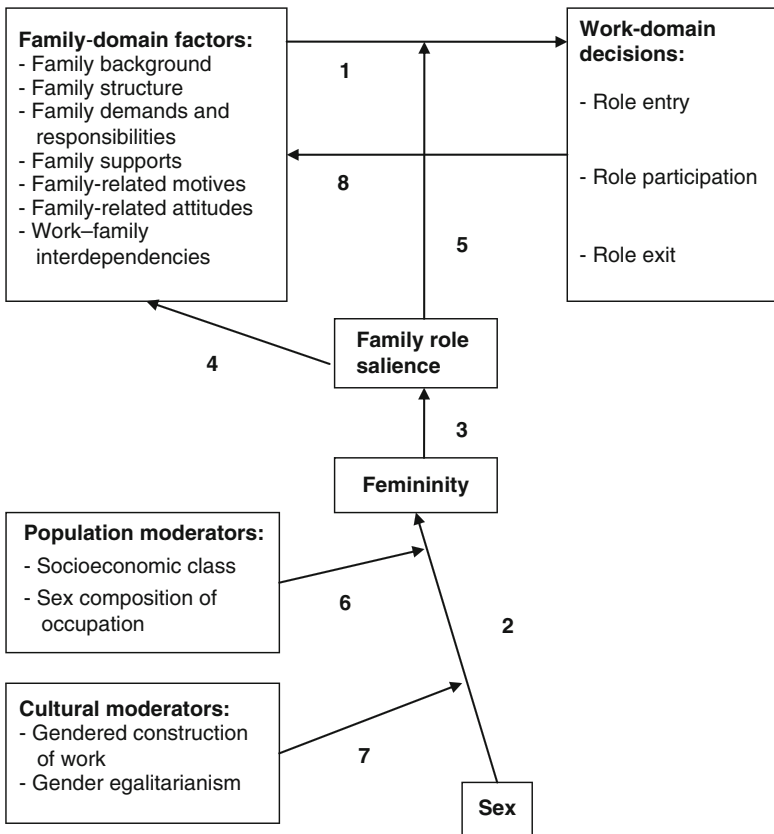


Figure 8.1 Effects of sex and gender on decisions at the family→work interface

Our review also suggests that family-domain factors mediate the effect of sex on work-domain decisions (e.g., Belcourt, 1991; Lyness & Judiesch, 2001; Maume, 2006) and that sex moderates the relationship between family-domain factors and work-domain decisions (e.g., Carr, 1996; Corrigan & Konrad, 2006; Sicherman, 1996). However, it does not explain why these mediating and moderating relationships occur. For this purpose, we incorporate two additional constructs into the model.

First, the model incorporates the construct of *femininity*, which is drawn from theories of the psychology of gender (Denmark & Paludi, 2008; Eagly et al., 2004; Unger, 2001). Femininity is defined as individuals' beliefs about the extent to which they possess feminine traits (e.g., nurturance, sensitivity to the needs of others) associated with women in gender stereotypes (Bem, 1974; Kite et al., 2008; Wood & Eagly, 2009). It is considered a component of individuals' gender belief systems, consisting of the set of

internally consistent ideas that they have about notions of gender (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998). Individuals who see themselves as high in femininity display an interdependent self-construal (Cross & Madson, 1997) in which others (e.g., family members) are considered part of the self, as opposed to an independent self-construal in which others are seen as separate from the self.

Second, the model incorporates the construct of *family role salience*. As noted earlier, family role salience is drawn from identity theories (Burke & Reitzes, 1991; Stryker, 1968; Stryker & Serpe, 1994) and is conceptually similar to family role centrality (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000), which was a moderator in Carr et al. (2008). It is defined as the psychological or subjective importance of the family role to an individual (Thoits, 1991). Individuals who are high in family role salience are more likely to invoke their family identity in a variety of situations (Stryker, 1968), including decision-making situations.

The constructs of femininity and family role salience are associated with four linkages in the model. First, sex is related to femininity (*path 2*), with women higher in femininity than men. This linkage is consistent with gender stereotypes (Bem, 1974; Kite et al., 2008; Wood & Eagly, 2009). It may result from individuals witnessing the division of labor in society along gender lines (Eagly et al., 2000), being subjected to gender socialization processes (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Lippa, 2005), and experiencing the differential status assigned to women versus men in society (Ridgeway, 2006). All of these processes instill and reinforce beliefs that traits reflecting an interdependent self-construal (Cross & Madson, 1997) are more characteristic of women than men and lead individuals to apply these beliefs to themselves, such that women see themselves as more feminine than men do.

Second, femininity is positively related to family role salience (*path 3*). Highly feminine individuals regard the family role as particularly important because it offers the opportunity to apply their feminine traits for the benefit of important people in their lives (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; Eagly et al., 2000). Also, consistent with their interdependent self-construal (Cross & Madson, 1997), they are especially concerned with the quality of their family life because of the value they place on relationships in general (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; Eagly et al., 2000).

Third, family role salience is related to family-domain factors (*path 4*). For example, individuals who are high in family role salience may be more likely to assume family demands and responsibilities (Belcourt, 1991; Humbert & Lewis, 2008) and to be motivated by the desire for flexibility to meet these demands and responsibilities (Heilman & Chen, 2003; Kepler & Shane, 2007) than individuals who are low in family role salience. Such individuals may also be more likely to take advantage of corporate family-friendly programs such as child care centers (Milkovich & Gomez, 1976) and to seek supervisory support for meeting their family needs (Batt & Valcour, 2003). However,

it should be noted that family role salience is unlikely to influence certain family-domain factors such as family background.

Fourth, family role salience moderates relationships between family-domain factors and work-domain decisions (*path 5*), such that the relationships are stronger when family role salience is higher. In our review, Carr et al. (2008) found that family role centrality moderated the relationship between work→family conflict and the decision to quit a job, such that the relationship was stronger for individuals who were higher in family role centrality. Consistent with Carr et al. (2008) and the logic of appropriateness (March, 1994), individuals for whom the family role is more salient may be more likely to adopt decision-making rules that stress the importance of family-domain factors when making work-domain decisions.

Note that direct paths representing the main effect of sex on family-domain factors or the moderating effect of sex on relationships between family-domain factors and work-domain decisions are *not* included in the model in Figure 8.1. Instead, in paths 2–5, we suggest that femininity and family role salience collectively mediate the main effect of sex on family-domain factors and the moderating effect of sex on the relationships between family-domain factors and work-domain decisions. Although family-domain factors have been proposed or observed to mediate the effect of sex on work-domain decisions, the model depicts family-domain factors as mediating the effect of family role salience, which is linked to sex through femininity, on work decisions. Similarly, although sex has been proposed or observed to moderate relationships between family-domain factors and work decisions, the model depicts family role salience as moderating these relationships.

What would account for the apparently diminishing sex difference in two of the three decisions examined in this review, the decision about whether to start a business (Blackburn & Kovalainen, 2009; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007) and the decision about whether to quit a job (Griffeth et al., 2000)? In the literature on the psychology of gender, gender roles are typically depicted as constants. However, Eagly and Diekmann (2003) argued that gender roles may evolve over time to reflect changing work and family roles. In our model, the effect of evolving gender roles would be most likely to be exhibited in a weaker relationship between sex and femininity. If this relationship is weaker, sex differences are less likely to be found in family-domain factors or their linkages to work-domain decisions. Thus, attention to potential moderators of this relationship is warranted.

We propose that the relationship between sex and femininity is moderated by characteristics of the study population (*path 6*). Our review of the relationship between positive family-related attitudes and the decision about how many hours to devote to one's job or business yielded differences in the direction of results for women that may have been due to differences

in socioeconomic class (Brett & Stroh, 2003; Rogers, 1996; Valcour, 2007). In the same vein, the socioeconomic class of the population may moderate the relationship between sex and femininity. For example, the relationship between sex and femininity may be stronger for blue-collar workers, who are more likely to possess images of an ideal family life in which men are breadwinners and women are homemakers (Deutsch & Saxon, 1998), than for a more professional and highly-educated population that is less likely to endorse traditional gender roles (Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002). Further, a population drawn from an occupation with a balanced sex composition may be less likely to exhibit sex differences in personal traits such as femininity than a population in which sex is a more salient characteristic (Kanter, 1977). Thus, workplace trends that have contributed to a reduction of blue-collar vis-à-vis professional jobs and a greater balance in the sex composition of occupations over the last three decades (England, 2006) may have weakened the relationship between sex and femininity.

We also propose cultural moderators of the relationship between sex and femininity (*path 7*). The extent to which entrepreneurship (Bruni et al., 2004; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007; Lewis, 2006; Mulholland, 1996) and other types of work (Ely & Padavic, 2007) are socially constructed as masculine activities may serve as a moderator by suppressing the expression of sex differences in femininity in the workplace. Further, the gendered construction of work may be most evident in societies that are low in gender egalitarianism, defined as the extent to which a society minimizes sex differences while promoting gender equality (Emrich, Denmark, & Den Hartog, 2004). Traditional gender roles and stereotypes are more likely to be emphasized in less gender egalitarian cultures (Emrich et al., 2004). As a result, cultures that are low in gender egalitarianism may exhibit a more pronounced sex difference in femininity than cultures that are high in gender egalitarianism.

Finally, the model incorporates the potential influence of work-domain decisions on family-domain factors (*path 8*) that may affect future work-domain decisions. For example, the decision to devote longer hours to a job, a role participation decision, has been found to contribute to work→family conflict (Major et al., 2002), which in turn increases the likelihood of the decision to quit the job, a role exit decision (Boyar et al., 2003; Hom & Kinicki, 2001; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999; Maertz & Griffeth, 2004). This set of relationships essentially constitutes a negative feedback loop. Thus, the model is dynamic, allowing for the influence of family-domain factors on work-domain decisions and vice versa.

Implications for future theory and research

In the proposed model, femininity and family role salience represent constructs that may help to explain linkages between sex, family-domain factors, and work-domain decisions identified in our review. We believe that the model best serves as an example of how extant theories of the

work–family interface may be extended by incorporating theories of the psychology of gender, as well as decision theories and identity theories, to examine decisions at the intersection of work and family lives. However, future studies are necessary to confirm and expand the model in important respects. In such studies, it will be desirable to obtain samples from different types of populations with varying sex compositions and representing different socioeconomic classes.

Beyond these broad suggestions, we recommend several additional specific areas for future research. First, the model is based on a review of a broad but non-exhaustive set of family-domain factors and three specific work-domain decisions: starting a business, hours worked, and quitting a job. Although our review demonstrated the relevance of family considerations to work-related decisions and revealed several consistencies across the different decisions, additional research is required to determine the impact of an even broader range of family-domain factors on a wider array of entry, participation, and exit decisions in the work domain. Second, the selected gender-related construct (femininity) is intended to be illustrative rather than definitive and is drawn from a larger set of gender-related constructs. Other gender-related constructs such as gender schemas and attitudes toward gender roles (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Korabik, 1999; Lippa, 2005) should be examined as additional or alternative mechanisms that may explain the role of sex in the family→work interface.

Third, virtually all of the studies reviewed were conducted in a single nation. Dimensions of national cultures may moderate relationships between family-domain factors and work-domain decisions in ways that are influenced by sex and gender. For example, Spector et al. (2004) found that the cultural dimension of individualism–collectivism (Hofstede, 2001) moderated the relationship between work→family stressors (which were higher for women than men) and the decision about how many hours to devote to one's job, such that the relationship was more negative in individualist Anglo cultures than in collectivist cultures in China and Latin America. Similarly, Spector et al. (2007) found that the relationship between strain-based work→family conflict and the decision about whether to quit a job was more positive in individualist Anglo cultures than in collectivist cultures in Asia, Europe, and Latin America; relationships of study variables with sex were not examined in this study. Further, Cho et al. (2009) found that the cultural dimension of gender egalitarianism (Emrich et al., 2004) moderated relationships between sex and some components of work–family conflict but not other components in ways that were not predicted by gender roles. However, the question of whether the presence or absence of sex differences in relationships between family-domain factors and work-domain decisions across national cultures may be explained by individual-level factors such as femininity and family role salience has not been addressed. We recommend that future studies be conducted to explore whether linkages of sex

to family-domain factors and work-domain decisions differ across national cultures and to explain cultural differences using gender-related constructs if found.

Fourth, we encourage the development of complementary theories that address the influence of sex and gender on the work→family interface, as represented by the influence of work-domain factors on important role entry, participation, and exit decisions in the family domain. It is likely that family-domain decisions such as the decision to marry or enter a long-term relationship, to have or adopt a child, to use child care or elder care services, or to leave a spouse or partner may be influenced by work-domain factors and have important consequences for all parties concerned (Pinsof & Lebow, 2005).

Fifth, the model predicted decisions at the work-Family interface because of the impact of these decisions on employees' lives. However, additional research is necessary to determine whether the consideration of family factors in making work-domain decisions (and the consideration of work factors in making family-domain decisions) actually affects the level of conflict, enrichment, and balance individuals experience. Furthermore, research is required to capture the *process* by which men and women make decisions to shape the intersection of their work and family roles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2007; Poelmans, 2005). That is, what decision-making mechanisms are used to take family-domain (work-domain) factors into account in making decisions in the work (family) domain? Finally, sex and gender differences in decisions and actions need to be studied in the larger context of cultural norms, assumptions, and constraints rather than assuming that different actions or outcomes for men and women are due to differences in underlying preferences, motivations, and needs (Crosby et al., 2004).

In conclusion, as gender roles, work roles, and family roles evolve, the ways in which these three types of roles intersect and affect each other are of keen interest to scholars as well as laypeople. Examining decisions at the family→work interface has the potential to increase our knowledge, and appreciation, of the complex dynamics between sex, gender, work, and family.

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Part V

Coping and Strategies for Harmonizing Work and Life

9

New Directions in Work–Family Coping Research

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Abstract

A copious amount of research has been conducted on the antecedents and outcomes of work–family conflict. Research on coping with this conflict has been much more limited. This chapter provides an assessment of the work–family coping literature primarily through the lens of research presented at the International Conferences of Work and Family. In particular, we review the literature on individual work–family coping strategies and the agents involved in multiple role managing. While envisioning future work–family coping research, we offer a model rooted in the emerging idiosyncratic deals literature. The need for research on preventive coping and “non-rational” coping mechanisms is also discussed. Methodological recommendations for the future of work–family coping research are offered.

Introduction

Work–family researchers acknowledge that more work has been devoted to understanding the nature of work–family conflict, as well as its causes and consequences, than to coping with such conflicts (cf. Eby et al., 2005; Hammer et al., 2011; Major & Morganson, 2011). As noted in a major review of the work–family literature, less than one per cent of work–family research has examined *coping* (Eby et al., 2005). The need to better understand work–family coping was evident at the first three International Conferences of Work and Family (ICWF), as the coping theme-track appeared in some form in all three programmes.

Coping constituted its own theme-track at the first conference and coping and work–family enrichment were a combined theme-track at the second. For the third conference, coping and decision making were combined in

a single theme-track. At the third conference, the treatment of coping was characterized by a desire to understand both individual and organizational contributions to the coping process. The influence of Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) coping theory and the work–family coping model based on their work (Thompson et al., 2007) was also evident.

Participants in the coping theme-track contributed to an overarching work–family coping model designed to capture the “state of the literature”. Shown in Figure 9.1, the model is largely based on Thompson et al.’s (2007) process model of coping with work–family conflict. Both models acknowledge episodic work–family coping, which occurs in response to conflict, as well as preventive coping, which is aimed at decreasing the likelihood that conflict will occur. Space limitations preclude a full discussion of the model here, but a few key elaborations are noted. First, Thompson et al.’s (2007) recognition of “the situation” was broadened to include objective and subjective resources and demands in both the work and family domains. Second, individual characteristics and resources/demands were acknowledged to influence preventive coping in addition to more reactive forms of coping. Third, the model adds a feedback loop indicating that experienced outcomes (i.e., secondary outcomes) may prompt and influence preventive coping attempts.

In the remainder of this chapter we offer a review of the work–family coping literature, focusing primarily on coping research from ICWF, and

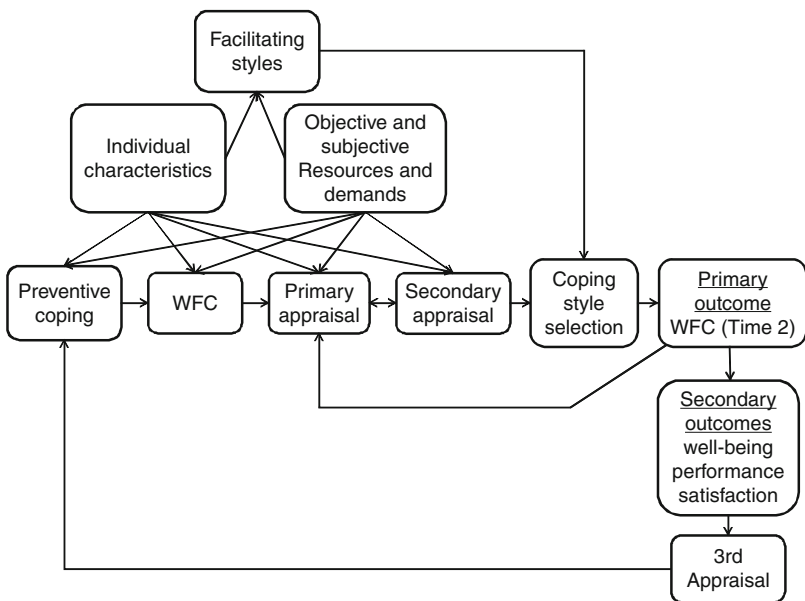


Figure 9.1 Elaborated work–family coping process model

provide a vision for future coping research. Given space limitations, our review is necessarily selective, focusing on the “coping style selection” box in Figure 9.1 and the notion that work–family coping may be best perceived as a process of managing multiple roles, which involves not only the individual employee but also agents from both the work and family domains. In our vision for future research, we emphasize the preventive coping aspect of Figure 9.1 and present a model of work–family coping rooted in the concept of idiosyncratic deals.

Brief review of work–family coping

Research on coping with work–family conflict has emphasized individual coping mechanisms. In this section, we review the literature on individual work–family coping strategies. We also consider work–family coping as a process of managing multiple roles, which includes agents from the work and family domains beyond the individual employee.

Individual coping strategies

Current research has introduced many coping models positing differing strategies for coping with work–family conflict. For instance, researchers suggest that individuals can cope by psychologically detaching from work (Moreno-Jimenez et al., 2009), by asking for support from others (Rotondo et al., 2003) and by delegating responsibilities to others (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). This section reviews coping strategies and the relationships between coping strategies and work–family conflict in the recent literature (see Table 9.1). Primarily, this research was either presented at ICWF or was subsequently published based on a conference paper. The literature review below is not intended to be exhaustive; its purpose is to provide a targeted assessment of the state of work–family coping research and to identify gaps.

A review of Table 9.1 makes apparent overlapping constructs across studies. In some instances, the findings for these coping mechanisms indicate a clear picture as to how they relate to work–family conflict. Specifically, the similar constructs of passive coping and avoidance/resignation are related to increased conflict and are not effective coping strategies (Andreassi, 2007; Rotondo et al., 2003). For the most part, however, the conflicting findings are a testament to the need for replication in work–family coping research, in addition to the introduction of novel coping strategies. For instance, examining the similar strategies of help seeking, advice seeking, and social support coping, results are inconsistent as to whether they are related to decreased conflict (Rotondo et al., 2003) or increased conflict (Andreassi, 2007; Rotondo & Kincaid, 2007). Moreover, the research summarized in the table shows that coping with work–family conflict is complex in that some mechanisms are effective for reducing conflict in one domain but not the other. For example, positive thinking is related to decreased work

Table 9.1 Summary of coping strategies

| Source | Coping constructs and definitions | Relationship to work–family conflict | Episodic versus preventive |
|-------------------------------|---|---|--|
| *Moreno-Jimenez et al. (2009) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Psychological detachment from work</i>: being physically away from the workplace and being mentally occupied by non-work activities • <i>Verbal expression of emotions</i>: expression of both positive and negative emotions and awareness of one's emotional state | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low psychological detachment; stronger positive relationship between WIF & psychological strain • Low psychological detachment; stronger negative relationship between FIW & life satisfaction • Low verbal expression of emotions; stronger positive relationship between FIW & psychological strain • High verbal expression; greater positive relationship between WIF and psychological strain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episodic |
| Poelmans (2007) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Separation (segmentation)</i>: striving for spill-over between the work and family domains to be at a minimum • <i>Availability (integration)</i>: spillover is allowed and clear lines between domains are not drawn • <i>Super(wo)man</i>: individuals attempt to be the best they can in both domains • <i>Hic et nunc (here & now)</i>: individuals are skilled at making unconscious spontaneous transitions from one domain to the other • <i>Harmony</i>: harmonious combination of domains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical • Discusses the difficulties with mental and temporal disconnection for each strategy, as it is contended that those who have this ability and are flexible at connecting/disconnecting will be more productive, creative, have less work–family conflict, and fewer marital problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventive |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| *Rotondo et al. (2003) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Direct action</i>: problem focused where specific action is taken to remove the stressor • <i>Help seeking</i>: involves asking for and receiving social support from others • <i>Positive thinking</i>: controlling one's thoughts and cognitions to be optimistic • <i>Avoidance/resignation</i>: cognitively escaping or passively ignoring the source of stress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct action and help seeking in family domain; decreased FIW • Direct action and help-seeking in work domain; no relationship with WIF • Positive thinking; no relationship with WIF or FIW • Avoidance/resignation; increased WIF and FIW | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episodic |
| Rotondo and Kincaid (2007) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cognitive reappraisal</i>: changing the way something is viewed or lowering expectations in an attempt to reduce stress • <i>Positive thinking</i>: see above • <i>Direct action</i>: see above • <i>Advice seeking</i> (i.e., help seeking): see above | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct action and advice seeking not related to WIF • Direct action related to decreased FIW • Advice seeking related to increased FIW • Positive thinking related to decreased WIF, not related to FIW • Cognitive reappraisal related to increased WIF & FIW | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episodic |
| Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Super at home (or work)</i>: doing work or family duties single-handedly and perfectly • <i>Good enough at home (or work)</i>: lowering work or family responsibilities to a level that is less than perfect • <i>Delegation at home (or work)</i>: managing work or family duties by delegation responsibilities to others • <i>Priorities at home (or work)</i>: only taking on family or work duties with the highest priority | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sig predicted WIF; sex \times gender role ideology \times good enough at home, good enough at work, and delegation at work • Sig predicted FIW; sex \times gender role ideology \times good enough at home, delegation at home, super at work, delegation at work, and priorities at work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventive |

Table 9.1 (Continued)

| Source | Coping constructs and definitions | Relationship to work–family conflict | Episodic versus preventive |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| Andreassi (2007) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Passive coping</i>: ignoring the stressor and discontinuing management of the stressor • <i>Active coping</i>: directing action to reduce the stressor, planning how the stressor can be reduced and suppressing competing activities to focus on the stressor • <i>Social support coping</i>: seeking advice, getting sympathy, and venting emotions • <i>Positive thinking</i>: see above | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive coping was related to increased strain and time-based work–family conflict • Active coping not related to work–family conflict • Social support (venting) related to increased strain-based work–family conflict • Positive thinking related to decreased strain-based work–family conflict | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episodic |
| Shaffer et al. (2009) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Differentiation</i>: ability to keep roles separate • <i>Diffusion</i>: ability to link role identities • <i>Delineation</i>: prioritization of role identities • <i>Deletion</i>: removal of a role from one's set of roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical • Cross-cultural model • Strategies to balance multiple role identities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventive |

Note: * denotes papers that were not presented at the conference or based on a conference paper. WIF = work interference with family; FW = family interference with work.

interference with family, but not related to family interference with work (Rotondo & Kincaid, 2007), and direct action is related to decreased family interference with work, but not related to work interference with family (Rotondo et al., 2003; Rotondo & Kincaid, 2007).

Table 9.1 also demonstrates a lack of consensus concerning taxonomies of coping strategies. Many researchers use similar strategies, yet they may investigate different sets of strategies in their studies. For instance, positive thinking was identified as a coping mechanism in three of the studies described above (Andreassi, 2007; Rotondo et al., 2003; Rotondo & Kincaid, 2007), yet the other mechanisms explored in those same studies are not identical. Thus, the current coping literature is lacking cohesion. A good starting point may be agreeing upon terminology. For instance, Shaffer et al.'s (2009) differentiation and Poelmans' (2007) segmentation and separation can all potentially be used interchangeably. Similarly, the constructs of availability, integration and diffusion can potentially be used interchangeably (Poelmans, 2007). If these are truly differing phenomena then a case should be made for that, if not, the coping literature could benefit greatly from coming to a consensus on terminology.

Another theme that emerges from the current coping literature is the use of mechanisms that are either episodic or preventive in nature. Episodic coping strategies are enacted as a response to stressors or events that have already occurred. Preventive coping, in contrast, entails anticipation of stressors or events that will require coping. Of the papers summarized in Table 9.1, four seem to have an episodic focus (Andreassi, 2007; Moreno-Jimenez et al., 2009; Rotondo et al., 2003; Rotondo & Kincaid, 2007) and three seem to suggest preventive coping strategies (Poelmans, 2007; Shaffer et al., 2009; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2007). However, two of the three preventive coping papers are conceptual rather than empirical. We contend that more empirical research is needed to understand how individuals preventively cope.

Future research is also needed to address *why* people enact a particular coping mechanism. ICWF participants took issue with the underlying assumption that coping strategies are selected in a rational manner as may be suggested by models like the one presented in Figure 9.1. As discussed in the Vision for Future Research section of this chapter, we echo the strong support emerging from ICWF for investigating coping models that rely less on rational choice and more on other factors, including personality, emotion, scripts and habits.

Multiple role managing

Participants in the 2009 coping track emphasized broadening the conceptualization of work–family coping beyond individual coping strategies. Employing the term *multiple role managing*, the group defined this as

the conscious or unconscious use of affective, cognitive and behavioural resources to capitalize on opportunities or to cope with demands of different roles to enhance individual functioning and well-being. Whereas *coping* emphasizes the individual's role in dealing with work–family conflict, the concept of *managing* may be more inclusive of multiple agents, including the individual employee, family domain supporters, supervisors, co-workers, and the employing organization (for reviews see Ayman & Antani, 2007; Ford et al., 2007; Michel et al., 2010).

As summarized in Table 9.1, research regarding the individual employee has focused primarily on the strategies used in an effort to cope. With its organizational behaviour emphasis, ICWF papers did not highlight family domain supporters. However, the extant literature has considered the role of emotional and instrumental support from family in work–family coping. For example, Lapierre and Allen (2006) found that instrumental support from family was negatively associated with both time-based and strain-based work interference with family. Although not uniquely associated with diminished work–family conflict, emotional support from family contributed to employee reports of physical well-being. In their meta-analysis, Ford et al. (2007) broadly examined “family support” and found that it was negatively related to family stress, family conflict and family interference with work. In addition, family support was positively related to job satisfaction.

Ford et al. (2007) also demonstrated that general work support was negatively related to work interference with family. Moreover, support from specific sources, including managers, supervisors, co-workers and the organization, was also negatively related to work interference with family. In another meta-analysis, Michel et al. (2010) demonstrated that work and family support are primarily related to diminished role ambiguity and role conflict in the same domain and that work role conflict is primarily related to work interference with family, while family role conflict is primarily related to family interference with work.

ICWF papers added depth to the discussion of workplace agents in work–family coping. With respect to the immediate supervisor, Major et al. (2007) proposed the application of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory as a framework for understanding how the quality of the supervisor–subordinate relationship influences work–family coping. Subsequently, Major and Morganson (2011) more fully developed a LMX-based model that considers both episodic and preventive work–family coping. With regard to co-workers, Korabik et al. (2007) described the potentially complex role of co-workers in work–family coping. In particular, while co-worker support may facilitate work–family coping, co-worker resentment of those with family responsibilities may create a backlash that exacerbates work–family conflict (see also Warner et al., 2009). Trefalt's (2009) ICWF contribution, presented in this volume, describes a rich qualitative study documenting the strategies that lawyers use to prevent the resentment and backlash that

could potentially result from perceptions of unfairness as they strive to enact flexibility.

ICWF papers also recognized the importance of organizational work-family culture as well as organizational family-friendly policies (Poelmans & Stepanova, 2009; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2009). Moreover, these papers argued that the integration of organizational factors is essential to understanding individual work-family coping behaviour. For example, Poelmans and Stepanova (2009) developed a model in which work-life culture and subculture influence attitudes toward organizational work-life policies and subsequent intentions to use them. In addition, their model demonstrates how supervisor and co-workers influence subjective norms that in turn also influence intentions to use work-life policies.

Taken together, the ICWF work-family coping papers convey the common message that in order to better understand work-family coping, (1) we must expand our consideration of agents to include others besides the individual employee; especially supervisors, co-workers and the organization, and (2) individual *perceptions* of support from multiple sources are not sufficient to understand effective work-family coping. The efficacy of these positions is supported by recent empirical work that focuses on the actual behaviours that contribute to diminished work-family conflict. Hammer et al. (2011) conducted an intervention study in which supervisors were trained to engage in family-supportive behaviours and to self-monitor the use of those behaviours. Interestingly, results showed that supervisors' training had more positive effects for employees initially high in family interference with work, and actually had negative effects for employees initially low in family interference with work, a possible manifestation of backlash. We advocate for more research of this type in which the behaviour of multiple agents is examined, and when possible it should be manipulated using quasi-experimental designs in field settings.

Vision for future research

Figure 9.2 presents our conceptual model for guiding future research on coping with work-family conflict. The model depicts how demands and resources from both the work and family domains are affected by preventive and episodic coping as well as how these demands and resources affect levels of work-family conflict. Central to this model is the concept of idiosyncratic deal (i-deal) negotiation in which employees create individualized arrangements with their supervisors in order to decrease the likelihood that conflict will occur (in a preventive manner) or deal with conflict as it arises (in an episodic manner). Another central aspect of this model is preventive coping, in which individuals cope in anticipation of work-family conflict by building up and employing their resources. Preventive coping is included in our model of coping with work-family conflict as a precursor to

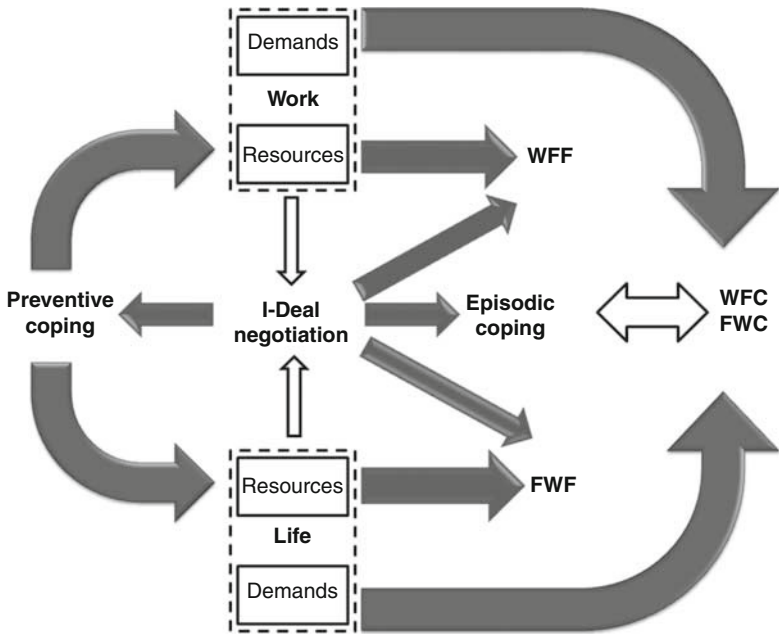


Figure 9.2 An i-deals based model of preventive and episodic work-family coping

the occurrence of work-family conflict. It is possible that if an individual's preventive coping actions are effective, the individual will not experience conflict between their work and family. Lastly, this model incorporates the construct of work-family facilitation into the coping process.

Preventive coping

The idea of preventive coping was introduced over a decade ago by Aspinwall and Taylor (1997) and has been included in models of coping with work-family conflict (Thompson et al., 2007), including the summary model produced by ICWF participants. Preventive coping has been defined as "efforts undertaken in advance of a potentially stressful event to prevent it or modify its form before it occurs" (Aspinwall & Taylor, p. 417). In contrast to episodic coping, preventive coping takes place before conflict is experienced in an effort to prevent the conflict from happening, or to lessen its eventual effects when it does happen. Although this type of coping was introduced in the general coping literature over a decade ago, its appearance in the work-family literature is more recent (Jones, 2010; Major & Morganson, 2011; Thompson et al., 2007). Following its introduction into the work-family literature, preventive coping has been considered, implicitly or explicitly,

in several pieces. As noted in Table 9.1, both Poelmans (2007) and Shaffer et al. (2009) considered coping mechanisms in their theoretical pieces that could be considered preventive in nature. Major and Morganson (2011) also included preventive coping when they considered how the LMX relationship contributes to two forms of preventive coping (emotion-focused and problem-focused). They proposed that individuals in high LMX relationships would be able to better preventively cope due to their supervisor's increased willingness to negotiate i-deals (problem-focused coping) and provide emotional support (emotion-focused coping).

While these theoretical treatments of preventive coping are promising and useful in guiding future research, there are some initial empirical findings regarding preventive coping in a work–family context. As noted in the above review of the literature, Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2007) considered work–family specific coping styles that could be considered preventive in nature although they were not introduced in the literature as such. These coping strategies, good enough at home/work, super at home/work, delegation at home/work, and priorities at home/work were found to be related to lower levels of work–family conflict.

Recently, another framework for considering preventive coping with work–family conflict has been introduced. Jones (2010) developed and validated a measure to capture preventive coping with work–family conflict. The measure consists of five factors indicating different ways in which individuals may preventively cope with work–family conflict: accumulating resources, strategic planning, cognitive structuring, withdrawal from family and withdrawal from work. These factors were developed based on focus groups with working adults as well as a review of the literature and were subsequently validated on a sample of working adults.

Initial research supports the five-factor structure (Jones, 2010). However, findings also indicate that not all preventive coping mechanisms are associated with lower levels of work–family conflict; in fact, some are associated with increased levels of conflict. Accumulating resources, strategic planning and cognitive structuring were all negatively related to work interference with family, whereas withdrawal from family was positively related to work interference with family, and withdrawal from work was unrelated to work interference with family. Strategic planning and cognitive structuring were the only coping mechanisms significantly related to family interference with work and were negative in their associations. The fact that fewer preventive coping mechanisms were related to family interference with work may indicate that this type of conflict is less predictable and therefore less suitable for preventive coping.

There may be many reasons why individuals choose certain coping mechanisms over others. Preventive coping is particularly likely to be related to the personality variable “proactive personality”. Proactive individuals are described as people who “scan for opportunities, show initiative, take

action, and persevere until they reach closure by bringing about change" (Bateman & Crant, 1993: 105). It seems likely that these individuals would be more likely to engage in preventive coping in order to avoid experiencing work–family conflict. In fact, the preventive coping mechanisms accumulating resources, cognitive structuring and strategic planning have all been shown to be significantly and positively related to proactive personality (Jones, 2010). Another reason why individuals may be likely to engage in preventive coping is if the quality of the LMX relationship with their supervisor encourages them to do so (Major & Morganson, 2011).

Preventive coping has been included as a future research direction in reviews of both general coping (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004) and coping with work–family conflict (Thompson et al., 2007), but has only recently been empirically investigated (e.g., Jones, 2010). One measure of preventive coping with work–family conflict has already been developed and validated (Jones, 2010), but future research should work to cross-validate this measure on multiple samples. In addition, longitudinal research is needed to examine the effects of preventive coping over time.

Another important avenue for future research concerns the trainability of preventive coping skills. Clinical psychology has long employed interventions centred around teaching coping skills for the treatment of psychiatric disorders (Beck, 1993). However, it has not been determined whether or not coping mechanisms to prevent work–family conflict are equally as trainable as those included in psychiatric interventions. Research on the trainability of these skills would be beneficial for individuals and work organizations as training employees may be a successful intervention for ameliorating work–family conflict. Providing initial insight into effective work–family coping intervention programmes, vanSteenbergen et al. (2007) found that it is possible to influence employees' cognitive appraisals and experiences of work–family role combination through informational support.

Idiosyncratic deals

Work–family researchers have long recognized that family-friendly organizational policies and practices are not adequate to ensure effective coping (e.g., Thompson et al., 1999). Keeping with the characterization of coping as a multiple role management process involving individual employees and organizational agents, idiosyncratic deals have been proposed as a mechanism that contributes to effective preventive and episodic coping (Major & Lauzun, 2009; Major & Morganson, 2011). Shown in the centre of Figure 9.2, idiosyncratic deals (i-deals) are "a form of customization granting employees special conditions differing from peers doing similar work [...] They are intended to benefit both the employee and the firm giving a valued worker something otherwise not obtainable through the firm's standard practices" (Hornung et al., 2008: 655). Major and Morganson (2011) argue

that employees and supervisors engaged in a high quality LMX relationship are especially likely to negotiate i-deals that contribute to effective multiple role management, assuming that is a desired goal. For example, empirical research demonstrated that individuals who negotiated for flexibility i-deals experienced diminished work–family conflict (Hornung et al., 2008). In contrast, i-deals aimed at increasing development opportunities were positively related to work–family conflict (Hornung et al., 2008).

In addition to further research examining how negotiating i-deals contributes to effective preventive and episodic coping, we also recommend that research examine the multi-domain resources and demands that influence i-deal negotiation. In terms of demands, Major and Lauzun (2009) posited that those with greater dependent care demands may be more likely to negotiate a work–family i-deal. In terms of resources, i-deals may also be more likely to be sought and obtained when the workgroup climate and organizational culture are family supportive (Major & Lauzun, 2009; Poelmans & Beham, 2008). Likewise, individual resources such as organizational tenure and human capital contribute to i-deal negotiation (Lauzun, 2010). The qualitative methodology used by Trefalt (see this volume) to study fairness issues in enacting flexibility would lend itself to the in-depth study of how i-deals are negotiated and enacted effectively.

Work–family facilitation

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, at the second International Conference of Work and Family, work–family coping and work–family facilitation were combined in a theme-track. Work–family facilitation refers to a positive process in the work–family interface where functioning in the work (family) domain is facilitated by resources coming from the family (work) domain (Demerouti, 2007). Crozier-Durham's (2007) paper from that year's conference focuses on the positive side of the work–family interface, suggesting that greater attention should be paid to thriving in all aspects of life as means for effective work–family balance. Further, in line with our discussion on the multiple agents involved in the coping process, she contends that both organizational and individual approaches for effective work–family balance are needed.

The combination of facilitation and coping in a theme-track leads to some interesting ideas about how these constructs are intertwined. Specifically, the model that was created at the conference suggested that individual characteristics, needs, values and cognitive styles lead to specific coping styles and strategies as well as facilitating styles and strategies. Further, facilitating styles and strategies impact coping styles and strategies, which in turn impact the experience of work–family conflict. Thus, the model provides insight into how the positive and negative aspects of the work–family interface may interact with one another. In an empirical test of the relation

between coping and facilitation, Stanko (2009) found that when coping strategies that allowed for diffusion of skills and learning across roles were employed, there was a positive relationship with role facilitation. However, compartmentalization, which can be effective for managing the stress of balancing multiple roles, was negatively related to facilitation.

In line with the ideas brought forth at the second conference, our conceptual model (Figure 9.2) incorporates work–family facilitation into the coping process. We contend that successful i-deal negotiation fosters work–family and family–work facilitation. Further, resources from the family (work) domain serve to facilitate family–work (work–family) facilitation. Overall, our knowledge of how work and family facilitate one another is limited (Demerouti, 2007). Therefore, a ripe area for future research is the exploration of the role of work–family facilitation in the coping process.

Beyond rational choice

An additional potential avenue for future work–family coping research is further investigation into the reasons why individuals use certain coping mechanisms. In line with Poelmans' (2007) contention, we propose that coping may not necessarily be a conscious, rational choice made by an individual. Specifically, emotion as well as scripts and habits may guide how one copes. These driving forces are likely to be somewhat more unconscious and less deliberate than coping mechanisms typically considered in work–family conflict research. Research with children has demonstrated that the emotional reaction triggered by a situation is related to the strategy used to cope (Beaver, 1997). Scripts and habits may unconsciously dictate how one copes. Coyne and Gottlieb (1996) argued that habitual behaviours are a necessary part of the domain of coping as individuals develop response patterns to stressful situations that are reoccurring. This type of coping becomes apparent in patients (and the families of patients) with serious health issues. These individuals find a way to cope and habitually return to this strategy when the stressful situation reoccurs (Coyne & Gottlieb, 1996). The general coping literature has linked emotions and habits to coping; we contend that these concepts are equally applicable to work–family conflict and are an area for future research.

Coping has been recognized as a dynamic process, such that it changes when an individual encounters a stressful environmental stimulus (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). As personality traits are agreed to be consistent across time and situations, researchers criticize the logic of linking such structure to the dynamic process of coping (Suls & David, 1996). However, Suls and David (1996) argue that structure can be a function of a dynamic system, thus the association of personality with preferred coping mechanisms makes sense. Moreover, there is meta-analytic evidence that personality is related to coping (Connor-Smith & Flachsbart, 2007). In line

with this contention, we argue that personality traits may explain individuals' enactment of particular mechanisms to cope with work–family conflict. Specifically, personality characteristics such as proactive personality may direct how one copes with work–family conflict. For example, Jones' (2010) results showed that all but the withdrawal scales of her preventive coping measure correlated significantly with proactive personality. Future research should continue to investigate how personality traits may be linked to the use of particular coping mechanisms.

As with all other future research directions we have discussed, best practices in terms of methodology are of concern. While self-report methods are often considered a limitation, this may be the best way to capture coping's relation to personality. However, longitudinal methods are recommended as they would show how personality relates to enacted coping mechanisms over time. We suggest that the role of emotions and habits in the coping process would benefit from real-time methods. Specifically, Grzywacz et al. (2002) advocate for the use of diary studies to gain a better understanding of the work–family interface. Moreover, the use of diary studies is a valid and reliable way of investigating daily stressors and the coping mechanisms employed as there is less time between the event and reporting it (Tennen et al., 2000). Thus, we contend that future research should employ diary methods to understand how emotions and habits impact coping.

Physiological measures of Work-family conflict (WFC)

Advances are being made in assessing physiological manifestations of work–family conflict. For example, in a study of employees in extended care settings, Berkman et al. (2010) found that employees with less supportive supervisors with regards to work–family balance slept less each night and were more at risk of cardiovascular disease. Another study revealed that the combination of high family demands and high job strain was associated with an increase in blood pressure among college educated women (Brisson et al., 1999). Although these advances are being made, they are not yet common in the work–family literature. We encourage future researchers to include physiological measures when studying work–family conflict, especially when studying the effects of different coping mechanisms on the experience of work–family conflict.

The changing workforce and coping with WFC

Today's workforce is changing in a multitude of ways (Major & Germano, 2006). These changes include becoming more ethnically diverse (Congressional Research Center, 2011) and being comprised of more than just the traditional nuclear family (Pew Research Center, 2010; Population Reference Bureau, 2010). More and more families are living in multi-generational

households (Pew Research Center, 2010), while the number of single-parent households is also increasing (Population Reference Bureau, 2010). Although multi-generational households are becoming more common in all demographic subgroups, Hispanics, African Americans and Asians are more likely to live in these types of situations. The trend towards these types of living arrangements could have varied implications for coping with work-family conflict. For some individuals, these types of living arrangements could provide a built-in support system and provide extra resources such as back up childcare or help with household duties. Alternatively, these arrangements could also place greater strain on individuals who are responsible for caring for these extra family members in their households. Future researchers should investigate the benefits and drawbacks of living in a multi-generational household for coping with work-family conflict. At the other end of the spectrum from multi-generational households lie single-parent households. These households are also unique situations which deserve targeted research to determine how coping with work-family conflict is altered by being the sole care provider in the household.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a brief review of the extant work-family coping literature with an emphasis on research from ICWF. To date, rational choice models in which individual employees consciously select work-family coping strategies seem to have dominated the literature. Building on the ICWF coping theme-tracks, this chapter offers several avenues for advancing work-family coping research: (1) broaden the conceptualization of coping to include multiple role managing and multiple agents from the work and family domains in addition to the individual employee; (2) pursue the study of preventive work-family coping using newly available survey research tools and rich qualitative methodologies such as interviews; (3) consider work-family coping in light of the emerging literature on i-deals, a lens that allows for the examination of multiple agents and both episodic and preventive work-family coping (employ diary studies for in depth, real-time investigation of i-deal negotiation); (4) expand the study of work-family coping beyond rational choice models by studying how coping is influenced by personality, emotions, scripts and habits; (5) pursue cutting edge physiological measurements; and (6) examine how the changing nature of the workforce impacts coping with work-family conflict.

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10

Fairly Flexible: Preventing Perceptions of Unfairness in Enactment of Workplace Flexibility

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Workplace flexibility – that is, individuals' ability to affect when, where and how much they work – can be an effective approach to dealing with competing work and non-work demands (Bailyn, 1993; Johnson, Shannon, & Richman, 2008; Pitt-Catsouphes, Smyer, Matz-Costa, & Kane, 2007). As individuals attempt to enact flexibility, however, they encounter numerous challenges and obstacles (Bailyn, 1993; Barker, 1993; Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002; Briscoe, 2007; Evans, Kunda, & Barley, 2004; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010; Lautsch, Kossek, & Eaton, 2009; Perlow, 1997, 1998; Powell & Greenhaus, 2006; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, et al., 1999). This chapter adds to this emerging literature by studying concerns with fairness¹ that also critically shape individuals' coping with the competing demands of work, and life outside of work. When one person gets flexibility, another is likely to have to pick up the slack, be inconvenienced, or perceive that he or she has been somehow short-changed in comparison. Such concerns can limit individuals' ability to manage the multitude of demands. Yet, many find ways to address fairness concerns while still enacting the desired flexibility. This chapter illuminates ways in which individuals do this and thus contributes to the theory of coping with work–non-work conflict, and provides practical ideas for those facing simultaneous work and non-work demands.

Workplace flexibility and fairness

To reduce work–non-work conflict, individuals use formal workplace flexibility, regulated by organizational policies and officially sanctioned, as well as informal workplace flexibility, the unofficial adjustments in the

time, location and duration of work. When flexibility is available, fairness concerns arise (Grover, 1991; Nord et al., 2002; Parker & Allen, 2001; Rousseau, 2001; Young, 1999). These are important to consider: perceptions of unfairness are associated with many negative experiences, including work–non-work conflict (Tepper, 2000).

Work–life researchers have explored fairness concerns regarding the *design and accessibility* of flexibility policies. The focus was on understanding “work–family backlash”, negative responses to policies available only to those with family-care needs (Young, 1999). Young found that people have different beliefs about fair access to policies. Those who think that policies should be accessible to everyone (equality) or that accessibility should be based on merit (equity) perceive need-based policies, such as parental leaves, as unfair. People are also more likely to see policies as unfair if they have never used them in the past (Parker & Allen, 2001), do not think they will benefit from them in the future (Grover, 1991), or if they hold negative attitudes toward those who may benefit from them (Grover, 1991). Older workers, Caucasians and those with less interdependent tasks see flexibility policies as less fair than younger, minority workers, and workers charged with more interdependent tasks (Parker & Allen, 2001).

Our understanding of the role of fairness in the *enactment* of flexibility – the day-to-day use of work–non-work policies, idiosyncratic deals and informal flexibility – is much more limited. Only one published study explored enactment of flexibility, showing that procedural fairness plays an important role in the enactment of policies by moderating the negative relationship between work–non-work conflict and organizational commitment (Siegel, Post, Brockner, Fishman, & Garden, 2005).

Yet, people are concerned with fairness and assess it using three fairness principles (Colquitt, Greenberg, & Zapata-Phelan, 2005; Deutsch, 1975, 1985; Lerner, Miller, & Holmes, 1976). *Equity* principle directs people to allocate resources commensurate to contributions, such as performance, effort, or time of service. *Need* principle dictates that those with greater needs get more resources than others. And *equality* principle suggests that everyone should get the same share, irrespective of contributions and needs. These concerns are prevalent in enactment of workplace flexibility, as well, and can stifle individuals’ attempts to cope with conflicting work and non-work demands (Trefalt, 2008). This study uncovers the approaches that individuals use to address fairness concerns and avoid perceptions of unfairness in flexibility enactment and thus advances theory and practice by providing a needed understanding of how individuals can deal with them.

Method

Research site and data

This study is grounded in a qualitative exploration of attorneys at Mack & Clark (a pseudonym), a large US law firm. I selected this setting because

attorneys, like other professionals, enjoy a significant amount of autonomy regarding when, where and how long they work, which enabled me to examine a variety of approaches to flexibility enactment. The attorneys at Mack & Clark conducted their legal work in teams, which differed in size and composition. More senior attorneys on a project directed the work of more junior attorneys, assigned tasks to them, checked their work, gave them feedback and returned work for revision.

I interviewed 70 attorneys at Mack & Clark. Interviewees occupied all levels of seniority (32 were junior associates, 17 were senior associates, 3 were of counsel² and 18 were partners) in litigation ($n=43$) and corporate ($n=27$) practices. Equal numbers of men and women were in the sample, and 19 of each had children. Nine attorneys had a reduced workload arrangement.

The interviews averaged 73 minutes in length; all but three lasted at least an hour. They were semi-structured, with three main themes: (1) a description of the responsibilities at work and outside of work, (2) one or more recent examples of a conflict or tension that the respondent experienced between professional and personal life, and (3) a general discussion of the habits, rules and principles that characterized the respondent's decisions and practices concerning work-life balance, as well as the consequences that they experienced.

Analysis

To answer my research question, I analysed the interviews using a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Attorneys provided 176 examples of enacting formal and informal workplace flexibility. For the purposes of this study, I focused on how attorneys addressed fairness concerns when enacting flexibility.

I explored the commonalities and differences across examples of flexibility enactment to develop initial categories related to fairness (what attorneys considered to be fair, how they experienced fairness, how disagreements about fairness occurred, etc.). As categories began to emerge, I iterated between the data and the relevant literature to further clarify the emerging conceptual categories, revise them and recode the data, or to discard them entirely. Once the categories were fairly well developed and defined, a research assistant and I individually and independently coded a subset of data for evidence of each one. In comparing the coding of this subset, we further clarified the categories and agreed upon definitions of each code. We then independently coded all of the examples, coding separately for the fairness principle applied by the interviewee and for the principle that the interviewee perceived that others applied in the situation. In several meetings, we compared the coding, discussed our differences and resolved them. I then categorized examples in which interviewees' perspectives about fairness aligned with the perspectives of those who were affected by flexibility, based on ways in which attorneys achieved such an alignment.

Fairness evaluations in flexibility enactment

Attorneys assessed fairness – others' and their own – using three fairness principles, equality, equity and need (Deutsch, 1975). When applying *equality*, attorneys assessed as fair the outcome that was the same for everyone. They thought that everyone should contribute the same amount of work, that everyone should be entitled to the same benefits, or that people should return favours with the same kinds of favours. When applying this principle, attorneys felt that the right thing to do was what “everybody” did, which sometimes enabled them to ask for flexibility and at other times prevented them from doing so. They managed others' impression of their fairness by presenting their actions to others as doing what others did, and wanted others to grant them what their colleagues had been granted.

When applying *equity*, attorneys thought that each person was entitled to benefits proportionate to his or her contributions. They saw themselves as doing the right thing if they requested concessions based on their prior contributions or if they were willing to contribute more in the future in exchange for these concessions. They managed impressions by explaining to others the costs that they had to bare to enjoy the concessions. Attorneys thought that they were treated fairly if others granted them more concessions after they had contributed more, as well as if others expected more of them after they had been granted concessions. What concessions and contributions attorneys saw as relevant and what ratio they used as a comparison varied across situations and across attorneys.

When applying *need*, attorneys wanted each person to get benefits based on his or her needs. They saw themselves as doing the right thing when they requested the needed concessions. They justified their requests to others by appealing to the severity of their needs. They thought others treated them fairly when they granted their requests based on needs, irrespective of their prior contributions.

Individuals sometimes disagreed about the principle of fairness to apply to a particular situation. When that happened, interpersonal tensions arose and attorneys were concerned about negative consequences of strained relationships and damaged reputations. Most often, however, attorneys were able to act according to their own sense of fairness and preserve favourable impression in others' eyes by recognizing the interpersonal nature of the enactment process and the perspectives of those who were affected.

Preventing perceptions of unfairness

To prevent disagreements about fairness, attorneys worked on *aligning principles of fairness*, their own and others'. Attorneys *anticipated* the principles that others would apply to a situation and acted in line with those principles, or they *influenced* principles that others applied to align with their own. They varied the *timing* of their approaches, and used some approaches

| Aligning Timing | Anticipating others' principles of fairness | Influencing others' fairness assessment |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Planning non-work | Scheduling non-work in downtime | Planning non-work far in advance |
| | Picking your battles | |
| Enacting non-work | Judging the audience | Legitimizing |

Figure 10.1 Approaches to preventing disagreements about fairness

when they *planned* non-work activities and others when they *enacted* them. Five approaches covered the different combinations of aligning fairness principles and timing (see Figure 10.1). Attorneys scheduled their non-work activities in downtime, planned far in advance, legitimized their non-work activities, judged their audience and picked their battles. They often used several approaches concurrently.

Scheduling non-work activities in downtime

As a rule, attorneys planned their non-work activities during times when they could reasonably expect that these would not conflict with their work obligations. They often scheduled vacations only after taking work-related deadlines into account and many avoided making weeknight plans, anticipating that they might have to work during the week. This made it more likely that their non-work activities would not come into conflict with work at all, and thus they would not be perceived as unfair. If work ended up conflicting with their personal plans after all, however, the fact that attorneys scheduled carefully worked to their advantage. Although others were perhaps not particularly enthusiastic about letting them get away from work, they tended to see that as the right thing to do. Reba, an associate, explained:

I take tennis every Monday and I haven't had to miss that because of work but I think the main reason is because I've scheduled the tennis class from 9 to 10 p.m. . . . Nobody knows that I take tennis . . . So, whenever I say [to someone], tonight I am going to be out of the office from 9 to 10, I mean, they are going to feel really silly saying, "Oh, well, I really need you to be in the office from 9 to 10," I mean, it's already late, most people aren't here anyway, I mean it's just, you know, just based on the time, it's kind of unreasonable to say no.

– Reba, junior associate

Reba anticipated that, should a conflict occur, others would make their decisions using principles of equity and equality and thus planned her tennis lessons for a time when others, using those principles, wouldn't think it was appropriate to ask her to stay at work. She concluded that others would find asking her to stay at work on Monday evenings "unreasonable", because working at that time was not part of the deal she had made with the firm (equity) and because most people (equality) are no longer in the office by then.

Planning far in advance

Planning far in advance and letting others know about one's plans signalled the importance of the planned event. It implied a higher need within the need paradigm, or higher cost of forgoing the event within the equity paradigm. Others were thus more likely to see the request as justified, because foregoing the event seemed like a particularly big sacrifice. At the same time, planning ahead gave others a chance to make the necessary arrangements for someone's absence without major difficulties, so that the cost incurred by granting the flexibility was not particularly high. An associate described her experience:

I make arrangements before I leave, like before this last vacation, I tried to anticipate everything that could come up that could be an issue while I was gone, and then I got other people, I filled other people in on everything that I was doing, like, "Okay, Gina, here's my pro bono case and there's this crazy defendant and he might file this motion, and if that happens, here's the file and Frank knows about it and call our co-counsel and here's the client's number," and she does sort of babysit that for me in case something happened. Then the bigger case that I am working on, you know, I had two to three different projects and I just made sure that the legal assistants knew what they were doing on all of those and I asked a senior lawyer to be willing to be their point of reference if they had any questions, as things came up, and I don't know.

– *LuAnn, junior associate*

Judging the audience

Attorneys adjusted how they talked about their non-work activities to specific people. If they expected the other person to consider their personal obligations as important, they disclosed more details to emphasize their need. If they thought the other person would be less understanding, they tended to say less, disclosing only that they had a personal conflict but saying nothing about its nature to justify their request for flexibility, implying that they deserved a break because of the contributions that they had made

at work at other times. Don, an associate, shared quite a bit of detail about a commitment with two colleagues he thought would give him the flexibility to spend his fiancée's birthday with her:

I'm on a case with two other lawyers, a partner and an associate that's more senior than me... We decided we're going to have this guy's deposition. So the partner, says, "Let's do it on X date. Does that sound good to you guys?" And so I looked at my schedule. That day is Tina's [my fiancée's] birthday... So I said, "It's Tina's birthday... I can do it if I need to. But it's more difficult." And then we were talking about it and we changed it to two days earlier... I wrote that it was Tina's birthday... because that was saying something specific rather than saying, "I have a personal conflict."... these are two lawyers I like a lot, I know them, and... I think you judge your audience, that they seem to be the kind of people I can say [this to], you know, I've talked with [the partner] about Tina.

– Don, junior associate

Legitimizing non-work activities

In this approach, attorneys influenced others' fairness assessments by making sure that others saw their non-work activities as legitimate and important, as well as by influencing others to apply fairness principles that led to favourable outcomes. If attorneys' non-work activities were of the kind that were widely recognized as legitimate (such as obligations related to family members and health), attorneys simply needed to share the nature of their obligation to legitimize it. When activities were important to attorneys but not viewed as particularly important in general (such as getting together with friends), attorneys tried to legitimize them by explicitly referring to them as "commitments", discreetly drawing attention to the amount of planning they had done and the financial costs that they would have to forgo in case of cancellation. In addition, they emphasized that, if they had to miss the activity, they would have to let down other people, rather than just be disappointed themselves. A young partner recounted:

I was in middle of a trial... I was first chairing this trial... It was a \$4 billion dispute. I had a Fortune 100 client whose existence turned on the outcome of this case and it was a very stressful time career-wise for me... In the middle of that trial, my daughter turned four... I said [to the client], "It's my daughter's birthday, I haven't seen her in a month and what I propose to do is the following... [I will take] the red-eye flight from [the place of the trial] landing [at home] at seven in the morning. We scheduled her birthday party to like 9:30, so I would run home, take a shower, go to her birthday party, and [be] on a noon flight back... and

then [spend] the rest of the day back with the team getting ready for the next day of trial” ... And they said, “We are sorry that you’re working as hard as you are and you have to do this, but that sounds like a reasonable accommodation.”

– *Christopher, partner*

Picking the battles

This approach involved carefully selecting the occasions in which attorneys enacted their flexibility in a way that was visible to others. With this approach, attorneys prevented disagreements about fairness by not asking for flexibility each time that they wanted it. Working within the equity paradigm, they attempted to make sure that their contributions were always seen as high enough for them to be “due” for a break given the general expectations or when compared to others. In addition, if they asked for flexibility rarely, their justification or assessment of the non-work occasion as particularly important was credible and suggested that it would be costly for them to miss it – always a favourable factor under the principle of equity. It also implied a more severe need within the need paradigm. Yet, this approach required that attorneys forgo some of their plans. An associate who missed a sailing trip explained:

I mean, it was one of the things that, you know, I wanted to do but it wasn’t something that I would, you know, take a stand on that this is something that I really need to do and upset the flow of work to get it done, so you know, my sense is that you need to pick your battles basically and I have no problem with drawing the line in the sand on certain things. And you know, fighting as much as I can to make sure that that line doesn’t get crossed, but I think you have to use that judiciously. This is one of the things that I wanted to do but it wasn’t so important to me that I was going to use that capital.

– *Jonathan, junior associate*

Combining the approaches

More often than not, attorneys combined several approaches that prevented perceptions of unfairness. Most often, they combined approaches that were applied in the planning phase and those that were appropriate for the enactment phase, and they balanced between anticipating others’ principles of fairness and influencing them. Reba, for example, did not only schedule her tennis lesson in downtime but she also picked her battles, deciding not to put herself in a position where she would regularly have to ask for flexibility in order to attend the lessons. Don did not only judge his audience when he told his colleagues that he preferred a particular date for a deposition

because of his fiancée's birthday, but he also legitimized his request for flexibility by providing a reason that was quite strong. After he explained that he chose to talk about details because of who his colleagues were, he added: "[Also,] I think a fiancée's birthday does count, as opposed to having a haircut." By combining their approaches, attorneys balanced their desire to enact flexibility with their desire to be seen as fair.

Discussion

In this chapter, I explored how individuals cope with fairness concerns when they enact flexibility in the workplace. By addressing fairness concerns both at the time of planning non-work activities as well as at the time of enacting them (*timing*), and by anticipating fairness principles that others applied to the situation as well as influencing them (*aligning*), attorneys were regularly – albeit not always – able to attend to their important non-work activities and be perceived as fair at the same time. In short, the approaches they used allowed them to be fairly flexible – quite flexible while retaining a sense of fairness in their own and others' eyes.

When we take fairness concerns into account, the resolution of work–non-work conflict becomes more difficult to achieve. We realize that even when people are able to meet non-work demands, they may still not be satisfied if they feel that they were unfair to others in the process (Lerner, 1977; Meindl, 1989) or that others perceived them as unfair. Moreover, they may decide against enacting flexibility in order to preserve their sense of being fair to others and to maintain positive impressions. This study therefore unpacks Type I coping (Hall, 1972), the process through which individuals renegotiate and redefine the expectations that others have of them. While this type of coping has been shown to be quite effective (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983; Hall, 1972; Kaitz, 1985), the interpersonal concerns that arise when individuals attempt to renegotiate their roles have remained under-explored. This study begins to fill that gap theoretically and practically. It provides one theoretical framing, that of fairness, to understand the difficulties that arise in the process.

On a practical note, it shows how individuals can benefit from adopting the approaches that attorneys used to prevent perceptions of unfairness. Using those approaches, individuals can count on help without resentment in dire circumstances, when they work with people who care for them, and when they have contributed diligently in the past. By carefully combining the various approaches described above, individuals can remain fair to others in the workplace while still often enacting the flexibility they need in order to attend to important non-work activities.

This study, like all, has some limitations. Perhaps the main one is the fact that data were collected from one perspective only. Therefore, only perceptions about fairness assessments of others were available. Future research could explore the accuracy of those perceptions and their effects

on coping. These effects would likely differ depending on the nature of the inaccuracy: was a focal individual's sense that others agreed with her assessment of fairness misguided, or did she unnecessarily fear being perceived as unfair? Exploring this latter type of disagreement could be particularly fruitful. Less powerful individuals frequently forgo flexibility enactment rather than taking a risk of being perceived as unfair. Yet, attorneys with different psychological contracts with the firm (Rousseau, 1995) enact quite different degrees of flexibility. In my sample, those who enacted more flexibility were not perceived as less fair if they did so skilfully. One possible explanation for this is that those who enacted less flexibility inaccurately assessed that they would be perceived as unfair if they did. Future research could explore this and alternative explanations.

Finally, the results of this study should not be interpreted to mean that the entire responsibility to manage work and non-work demands rests on the individuals. While the focus here was on the examples in which individuals were able to be fairly flexible, attorneys shared multiple stories in which others perceived them as unfair for enacting the needed flexibility. They faced the dilemma between two inadequate choices: to enact the flexibility they need and be perceived as unfair, or to forgo the flexibility to be fair to their colleagues. Organizations need to recognize that fairness concerns regarding workplace flexibility are not resolved when organizational policies are designed. Instead, fairness continues to be an important concern in the *enactment* of flexibility. To help individuals cope with competing work and non-work demands, organizations should prevent (or minimize) negative effects of an individual's flexibility enactment on others as well as clearly and widely communicate these steps, so that everyone is aware of their own and others' rights and responsibilities.

Notes

1. The terms justice and fairness are used interchangeably (Colquitt et al., 2005).
2. The "of counsel" attorneys I interviewed were people who were not interested in becoming partners and agreed to stay with the firm indefinitely.

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Part VI

Work–Life Facilitation and Enrichment

11

Issues in the Development of Research on Inter-role Enrichment

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Introduction

Despite Meissner's (1971) lament about the "long arm of the job" and its detrimental effects on workers' home lives, there is a substantial body of research findings, many of which have been reported at the ICWF conferences, supporting the notion that the nature of a job can also be positively related to employees' well-being and their ability to integrate their work and family lives. Organizations have recognized the importance of work (characteristics) for individuals' lives and they have started to respond by enriching jobs through providing resources in order to promote life-long learning and enhancement of their employees. This trend follows the spirit of our times in paying attention to individuals' wishes and needs in designing their jobs in a very contemporary manner, with terms like job crafting, idiosyncratic deals and role adjustments (Grant & Parker, 2009).

The present chapter aims to contribute to the development of research on inter-role enrichment. It does so first by pointing to some issues that are crucial for the conceptualization and measurement of enrichment between different roles. Our main argument is that research on enrichment should try to avoid the mould of the research on work-family conflict. Therefore, we provide suggestions on how to pursue this direction. Our second aim is to shed some light on the mechanisms by which enrichment can arise. In this respect we describe several strategies that individuals (can) use to enhance their experience of enrichment. Our main tenet is that enrichment is not the consequence of the absence of unfavourable mechanisms that lead to

conflict. Rather, partly different mechanisms seem to lead to enrichment like the generalization of resources or inter-role integration. Third, we provide some overview of potential antecedents, moderators and mediators of the enrichment process to guide scholars interested in conducting research on key aspects of the enrichment phenomenon. Moreover, we present several ideas on possible outcomes of enrichment so that this topic becomes more relevant for organizations, research and practice. The chapter ends with suggestions for individuals, families and organizations on how to increase enrichment.

Literature review enrichment: construct definition and measurement

Construct definition

Positive experiences derived from engaging in multiple roles within the work and non-work domains have been named work–family synergy, work–family enhancement, positive spillover, work–family facilitation and work–family enrichment. We prefer to use the scope of the enrichment concept (inter-role or work–non-work). Moreover, we will refer to “work–family” or “family–work” enrichment when we are describing studies that measured a specific type of enrichment and to inter-role or work–non-work enrichment when we are discussing processes of enrichment that go beyond a specific study. In a convergent fashion, all the previous conceptualizations stem from the same positive perspective endorsed in the role accumulation theory (Sieber, 1974), the expansion approach (Marks, 1977), the expansionist theory of gender, work and family (Barnett & Hyde, 2001) and finally the enrichment argument (Rothbard, 2001). According to these theories, participating in several roles allows individuals to build personal energy and support resources, which can compensate for the increased demands that might arise. The main differences among all previous conceptualizations of work and non-work positive experiences are the effect of such experiences in the receiving domain and the level of analysis (Shein & Chen, 2011; Wayne et al., 2007). In this sense, Wayne’s (2009) recent review provides a comprehensive framework for differentiating among all the current work and non-work positive interaction concepts in the literature, except for the work–family synergy concept.

A construct that has received less support up to the present time, work–family synergy, has been defined as “positive energy and mood states that emerge from participating in work and family roles” (Beutell, 2010: 651). As such, work–family synergy is conceptualized and measured as the frequency of experiencing positive energy and mood states, rather than the discrete transfer of resources (gains) between domains. As opposed to all the other positive constructs, work–family synergy incorporates temporal aspects in the conceptualization and measurement of the positive experiences stemming from the interaction between work and family roles.

Also, work–family synergy is the closest concept to Rothbard’s (2001) argument because it characterizes enrichment (i.e., positive work–family synergy) as a positive affective process.

Work–family enhancement has been conceptualized in terms of acquisition of resources and beneficial experiences associated with occupying multiple roles (Ruderman et al., 2002; Tiedje et al., 1990). However, the concept of work–family enhancement does not specify particular gains or potential impacts derived from the interaction between work and non-work domains.

Work–family positive spillover has been defined as “the transfer of positively valenced affect, skills, behaviors, and values from the originating domain to the receiving domain, thus having beneficial effects on the receiving domain” (Hanson et al., 2006: 251). In this sense, this concept differentiates from work–family enhancement because it specifies the gains involved (e.g., skills, values) and the bi-directional nature (work to non-work versus non-work to work) of the positive work and non-work interaction. All the subsequent conceptualizations of work and non-work positive experiences are based on the same notion that both directions of influence are distinct and require specific measures.

Work–family facilitation has been defined as “the extent to which an individual’s engagement in one life domain (i.e., work/family) provides gains (i.e., developmental, affective, capital, or efficiency) that contribute to enhanced functioning of another life domain (i.e., family/work)” (Wayne et al., 2007: 64). Thus, a key distinction between positive spillover and facilitation is that work–family facilitation occurs when the individual successfully applies the gains acquired in one domain to the other domain, consequently enhancing its functioning on a system level (i.e., family members, co-workers).

Last, work–family enrichment has been conceptualized as “the extent to which experiences in one role can improve the quality of life in the other role” (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006: 73). Specifically, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) define quality of life in terms of enhanced affect and role performance, meaning that work–family enrichment occurs when the individual successfully applies gains acquired in one domain to enhance functioning and affect in the other domain. Although work–family facilitation and work–family enrichment have similar definitions, a key distinction between concepts lies in the level of analysis (Wayne et al., 2007). In this way, work–family facilitation focuses on the system level of analysis, whereas work–family enrichment focuses on improved functioning at the individual level. Noticeably, the evidence on the work–family enrichment construct is built upon a strong theoretical framework and a corresponding validated measure. For this reason, the enrichment concept is the focus of this chapter.

Drawing on Greenhaus and Powell’s (2006) conceptualization, Carlson et al. (2006) extended the concept of work–family enrichment by

differentiating among the following four dimensions: development, affect, capital and efficiency. First, work-to-family and family-to-work development enrichment occurs when work (or family) involvement leads to the acquisition or refinement of skills, knowledge, behaviours or ways of viewing things that contribute to improve individuals' performance in the receiving domain. Second, work-to-family or family-to-work affect enrichment occurs when work (or family) involvement results in a positive emotional state or attitude that contributes to improve individuals' performance in the receiving domain. Third, work-to-family capital enrichment occurs when work involvement promotes gains of psychosocial resources such as sense of security or self-fulfilment, which contribute to improve individuals' performance in their family domain. Fourth, family-to-work efficiency enrichment occurs when involvement in the family role results in greater focus and time management skills, which contribute to improve individuals' performance of the work role. The multidimensional conceptualization of the work–family enrichment experience has just recently started to receive further empirical support (Stoddard & Madsen, 2007) with much of the support coming from ICWF papers (Bagraim & Mullins, 2009; Boz et al., 2009; Kalliath, 2009; McNall et al., 2009).

Although the experience of work–family enrichment brings about a series of positive outcomes, by no means does it relate to the absence of work–family conflict, interference or negative spillover. As negative experiences have long been thought to be incompatible with the positive experiences between the work and non-work domains, earlier conceptualizations of work–life balance may have endorsed the notion of balance or positive fit between work and non-work domains as related to the absence of or low levels of conflict (Frone, 2003; Grzywacz & Bass, 2003). However, a recent review of empirical studies on the relationship between conflict and enrichment revealed a small non-significant negative relationship between both constructs. Such result draws attention to the need for considering both types of experiences in order to advance current knowledge on how individuals feel about the work and non-work interface (Powell & Greenhaus, 2006). In fact, previous studies that examined both conflict and enrichment have demonstrated that these experiences are indeed independent and that individuals may combine negative and positive experiences when performing work and non-work roles concurrently (Boz et al., 2009).

Measurement issues

So far, measurement of the various concepts representing the positive interaction between work and non-work domains has been inconsistent mainly due to the use and operationalization of these concepts interchangeably (Carlson et al., 2006). However, increasing attempts to empirically advance the literature resulted in the recent publication of two globally validated scales, for (1) measuring positive spillover (Hanson et al., 2006),

and (2) enrichment (Carlson et al., 2006). As for work–family facilitation, no known study has developed a scale that captures the recent conceptualization proposed by Wayne et al. (2007), focused on the system level of analysis.

Having received more support for its validity than any other similar measure in the literature, the multi-dimensional scale of work–family enrichment (Carlson et al., 2006) has been successfully used in several recent empirical investigations that added to the current knowledge on enrichment’s specific dimensions (Bagrami & Mullins, 2009; Boz et al., 2009; Kalliath, 2009). Nevertheless, difficulties in differentiating among the proposed dimensions of positive spillover and work–family enrichment have been highlighted (McNall et al., 2009), suggesting that further investigation is still needed to disentangle the different conceptualizations of the positive work and non-work interaction.

In this sense, several scholars (Demerouti (2009), including ICWF authors Shaffer et al. (2009), have suggested that a relevant venue for improving the current measurement of enrichment experiences would be to specifically address different life domains other than work and family only, as well as the several identities/roles that individuals may adopt within and across these domains (i.e., co-workers, siblings, spouses, etc.).

Most important, innovative measurement and data collection techniques may help to advance knowledge of the work–family enrichment experience. For instance, the use of diary studies or qualitative techniques may allow for examining specific episodes of enrichment. In turn, such episodes could elucidate questions related to new potential antecedents and consequences, prevalence and frequency of specific dimensions, and mechanisms underlying these positive experiences.

Finally, Shaffer et al. (2009) call attention to the need for considering an etic approach when developing concepts and measurement models of work–family enrichment in different cultural contexts. Mainly, research on work–family enrichment and similar constructs has been developed in Western populations and contexts. Such bias may embed ethnocentric value systems in the existing scales, compromising the successful application of such instruments, and the subsequent analysis and interpretation of results in other contexts (Shaffer et al., 2009).

Conclusion

Recently, important efforts have been made for clarifying the conceptualization of the different work and non-work positive experiences, and consequently improving the existing measurement systems for these constructs. Naturally, at this stage more advancement has been made in terms of conceptualization than measurement, as the field of positive work and non-work interactions has just started to receive more attention and empirical support in the literature. Briefly, the main suggestions for advancing research on the enrichment construct definition and measurement are the following:

(1) the experience of enrichment improves functioning through resource gains in the receiving domain and in the individual level of analysis only; (2) work–family enrichment does not represent the absence of conflict and therefore may coexist with negative experiences within individuals; (3) more evidence focused on construct dimensionality is needed to consolidate the current model of work–family enrichment; (4) expanding the scope of examined domains and roles may strengthen the expansionist perspective while unveiling the extension of benefits derived from experiencing enrichment; (5) innovative measurement and data collection techniques are essential for disentangling specific enrichment events and capturing mechanisms not covered by the existing scale; and finally (6) an etic approach is required in the conceptualization and measurement of work–family enrichment, opening avenues for full cross-cultural validation of future explanatory models.

Uncovering the mechanisms of enrichment

Specification of role domains

An important set of challenges that work–family enrichment research (but also research on work–family conflict) has to deal with is (a) whether work and family are unitary domains including only one role each, and (b) whether focusing solely on the work and family domain is sufficient to uncover all important interfaces that individuals are confronted with.

A useful theoretical framework to specify domains and roles relevant for the enrichment mechanism is identity theory. According to identity theorists, role identity is a process involving several elements or components. Initially, identity is formed or constructed in response to various identity motives derived from fundamental human needs such as self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, belonging, efficacy and meaning (Vignoles et al., 2006). In this process of identity formation, individuals organize their role identities in terms of centrality and importance. Another component of the identity process is one of identity reinforcement or self-evaluation. During this phase, individuals evaluate their role identities through processes of self-verification, self-enhancement and self-assessment (Dauenheimer et al., 2002). Finally, individuals engage in self-enactment of roles by communicating through daily activities their role identities to others (Shaffer et al., 2009).

According to the identity-based model of life balance of Schaffer et al. (2009) an array of personal, social and environment forces influence all aspects of the identity process. For example, personal qualities such as gender or personality may affect how an individual constructs, reinforces and enacts a particular role identity. Similarly, relationships with others (e.g., breadth and quality of social networks) and environmental or contextual (e.g., culture) forces will also influence all phases of the identity process. Thus, based on identity theory, we could expect that within each domain

different roles/identities are possible, which makes the consideration of intra-domain role interrelationships necessary.

In a similar vein, based on identity theory, Demerouti (2009) suggested that individuals can define themselves not only as members of groups (collective or group identity), or as partners in close relationships (relational or role identities), but also in terms of personal aspects or traits (personal or individual identities) (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Lobel, 1991; Rothbard & Ramarajan, 2009). Identities are often activated by the occurrence of particular situations that activate relevant identities (Bargh et al., 1996). In Hall's (1972) study of college-educated women, the following pressures or triggers of identity were identified: home (wife or mother role), non-home (employment, voluntary work) and self (personal desire for free time to develop interests such as sports or to take courses). Thus, personal desires (or the core, according to Hall) also represent aspects of one's identity. Similarly, Kreiner et al. (2006a, 2006b) suggested that individuals hold personal and social identities. Personal identity is "comprised of aspects of self that arise from personal characteristics, as well as social categories in which the individual claims membership" (Kreiner et al., 2006a: 1318). Rothbard and Ramarajan (2009) treated personal, social and role identities as equivalent, to the extent that individuals psychologically define themselves based on these various characteristics. In a similar vein, Edwards and Rothbard (2000) suggested that individuals do not divide their time exclusively between work and family. Rather, they distribute their time among multiple life domains, like work, family, community and personal activities.

Based on identity theory, it can be suggested that focusing solely on the enrichment between work and family represents a rather limited view of work-life balance. A more comprehensive view would be to integrate personal identity or individuals' sense of self-operationalized as personal desires, activities and interests in the work-life interface. Kreiner et al. (2006a, 2006b) introduced the term work-self balance, which is conceptualized as an optimal overlap between aspects of individual and organizational identities. In this way, Kreiner and colleagues set the basis for viewing individuals as active agents who are able not only to respond to identity pressures but also to proactively initiate identity dynamics and to co-construct the interface of identity boundaries.

Building on identity theory and the agentic view towards individuals, Demerouti (2009) suggested to focus not only on the conditions by which work or family domains facilitate each other, but also on the process by which they enhance individual functioning as well as how individuals facilitate the functioning of their work or family domains. This is consistent with the notion that identification with and engagement in a role can be enriching to other roles and identities (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Rothbard, 2001). In this way, enrichment occurs when resource gains generated at work or family promote functioning or affect during time devoted to personal

interests as well as the other way around. For instance, individuals may use a foreign language at work, which they might want to improve further during personal time (e.g., following language courses). Alternatively, one's personal interest (e.g., in languages) might influence the work assignments one is choosing (e.g., international collaboration).

Taken together, based on identity theory, it can be suggested that the enrichment literature would benefit by viewing work and family as domains that contain different roles and by investigating the enriching effect of work or family on the individual or more specifically on individual's personal interests.

Enrichment and strategies for managing roles

In order to uncover how individuals can come to experience greater inter-role enrichment, it is important to explore how preferences for managing work and non-work boundaries influence the experience of enrichment. In their ICWF paper, Coyne, Rothbard, and Wilk (2009) suggested that preferences for managing the boundary between work and life can be viewed on a spectrum from high segmentation to high integration. Individuals with preferences for segmentation deliberately attempt to keep the domains of work and non-work independent by establishing clear boundaries between the two (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Individuals with preferences for integration make an effort to combine and merge all domains, often crossing and blurring boundaries between work and life (Ashforth et al., 2000). For example, an individual with integration preferences might bring a child into the workplace or take phone calls from home where an individual with segmentation preferences would prefer not to do so. Preferences for integration may lead to enriching or depleting effects. On the one hand, a preference for integration may foster enrichment in the form of greater transfer of skills, resources and ideas from non-work settings to the workplace (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). On the other hand, this preference may lead to greater depletion through greater transfer of emotional baggage and more distraction due to interruptions, as was found by Rothbard (2001).

Coyne et al. (2009) suggest that preferences for integration may have an enriching effect on performance through the mechanism of social networks. Social relations and connections can provide assistance and support that allow employees to perform their job effectively (Burt, 1992, 2000). On the contrary, individuals who prefer to segment roles and domains often have greater mental difficulty in crossing boundaries, and therefore limit the number of boundary crossings they have to make (Nippert-Eng, 1996). The study of Coyne et al. (2009) provides initial evidence that individuals with a preference to integrate have larger networks, and more close interactions in a social network (i.e., higher betweenness centrality, greater closeness and communicate more using mediums with higher richness like face-to-face communication).

Next to integration and segmentation, Shaffer et al. (2009) suggest that individuals may use the strategy of delineation and deletion in order to manage disruptions of the identity process and to proactively maximize resources and mitigate demands to achieve balance and experience inter-role enrichment. The delineation strategy refers to accommodation or the ability to prioritize role identities. Participants from different countries included in this study reported that within domains they made choices based on their life priorities. Deletion, or the removal of one role identity from the total set of role identities, was also often reported as a strategy in different countries. Participant comments indicated a feeling of security in their ability to eliminate, avoid, or neglect role identities that infringed on or prevented the effective management of other role identities.

Next to these rather general strategies to manage inter-role boundaries, coping could be viewed as an alternative, more situation-specific way to enhance enrichment. Rotondo and Kincaid (2008) examined how direct action, advice seeking, positive thinking and cognitive appraisal influence inter-role conflict and facilitation levels. Using a large sample representative of the general US population characteristics they found that while advice seeking increased FWC, it also tended to raise work–family facilitation. Involving others in the decision making and problem solving processes at work is normally performance enhancing, and this may feed into work–family facilitation through the attitude and mood of the individual when leaving work and returning home. Additionally, co-workers have a similar background and knowledge and therefore also have the ability to provide instrumental support. Positive thinking also raised work–family facilitation. It is interesting that positive thinking promotes work–life balance by reducing work–family conflict and increasing work–family facilitation, yet it has no significant effect in the family-to-work directions. Direct action was found to increase family–work facilitation (just as it reduced family–work conflict). Similar to positive thinking, direct action serves an important function in promoting work–life balance. Opposite to positive thinking, direct action operates in the family domain and it played no role in the work domain (in reducing conflict or promoting facilitation). These findings still wait for confirmation using longitudinal research designs, in order to uncover the predictive value of coping for the experience of enrichment. However, it can be concluded from this study that while there are coping tendencies that diminish conflict and increase facilitation, some coping tendencies are inherent to promote the experience of facilitation, like positive thinking.

Taken together, although there are some strategies (e.g., positive thinking and direct action) that affect both enrichment (positively) and conflict (negatively), there are also specific strategies which are related either to the experience of enrichment or the experience of conflict. From practical (i.e., developing interventions) and theoretical (i.e., finding the underlying

psychological mechanisms) perspectives, it is very important that enrichment literature focuses on uncovering these mechanisms.

Role of resources in enhancing enrichment

Role enhancement theory is the dominant theoretical perspective used to explain why individuals may perceive benefits from multiple role memberships (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). According to Sieber (1974), people earn various rewards by partaking in multiple domains, such as (1) greater role privileges, (2) lower strain in one role due to a buffering effect of other roles, (3) greater status enhancement and (4) personality enrichment (e.g., greater flexibility, more tolerance of discrepancies). Moreover, Marks (1977) challenged the prevailing scarcity hypothesis, which stated that energy is limited, and argued that individuals may actually experience increased energy from engaging in multiple roles. This happens through the generation of resources, which help people manage work and family demands more successfully (McNall et al., 2009).

Building on these theoretical perspectives, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) offered five categories of resources that may be acquired to enable improved performance in the other role either directly (i.e., instrumental path) or indirectly (i.e., the affective path). These resources include skills and perspectives (e.g., interpersonal skills, coping skills, respecting individual differences), psychological and physical resources (e.g., self-efficacy, hardiness, optimism), social-capital resources (e.g., networking, information), flexibility (e.g., flexible work arrangements) and material resources (e.g., money, gifts). According to Demerouti et al. (2001), resources are functional in achieving goals, reduce demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, and stimulate personal growth, learning and development. Next to the resources referred to by Greenhaus and Powell (2006), other possible resources relevant for enrichment are national, cultural and community resources (Voydanoff, 2005), as well as resources derived from jobs, organizational teams, families and dyadic relationships.

There are several pathways through which the resources in one role/domain may influence behaviour within another role/domain. The first is a direct or instrumental pathway meaning that the domain/role provides individuals with resources like esteem, social support, opportunities for self-growth, and flexibility that may help them to perform better across other life domains (Carlson et al., 2006; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Thus, resources facilitate performance in another domain/role by providing means (e.g., social support from one's partner) or by enhancing individual abilities (e.g., opportunities for self-growth). Orthner and Pittman (1986) found that family support was positively related to the quality of job performance and the intention to pursue a career in the air force. Similarly, Madjar et al. (2002) found that support from family and friends for creativity at work predicted creative work performance. Alternatively, an indirect, affective path is

also possible, namely through positive affect (Madjar et al., 2002; Rothbard, 2001). When people experience that one domain/role positively influences another domain/role, this favourable cognitive assessment will enhance positive emotions. Positive emotions, in their turn, will make them more likely to engage in their work role. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed that resources in one role lead to high performance in another role through positive affect in the first role.

To conclude, it seems that enrichment functions through the generation of resources, which directly or indirectly help individuals to find balance and to experience enrichment.

Developing a comprehensive understanding of enrichment

Potential antecedents and moderators

To analyse the different antecedents and moderators of enrichment, we shall classify them on different levels: micro- or individual-related factors, meso- or family/work system-related factors and macro- or national/organizational-related factors.

Micro level

Positive affectivity. Positive affectivity is a personality trait that predisposes individuals to perceive enrichment because people high in positive affect perceive their environment in a more positive and outward-looking manner, and are more frequently in a good mood (Pettit et al., 2001). Moreover, individuals high in positive affect are capable of recognizing the positive aspects thrown up by a situation (Frederickson & Losada, 2005), and using them to achieve positive experiences (Wayne et al., 2007). Therefore, people high in positive affect are likely to perceive that the different types of positive experiences (e.g., affective, development) derived from the family or work domains can also be enriching for other domains (Bagraim & Mullins, 2009).

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is another personality characteristic that could contribute to the experience of enrichment. Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as people's belief that they can successfully complete a specific task. When people have a high level of self-efficacy they are capable of performing complex tasks and seeking opportunities to provide themselves with resources (Wayne et al., 2007). Self-efficacy imbues individuals with sufficient dynamism to become involved in several domains – family and/or work – and benefit from it. Thus, if self-efficacy increases success in one domain (e.g., family), this should generate positive affect that could be transferred to other domains (e.g., work). As Bagraim and Mullins (2009) suggest, people who consider that they have learnt to be patient with their children will transfer this capacity to the work setting and will also try to be patient with their colleagues. Because these two personal traits – positive affectivity

and self-efficacy – can predispose individuals to be more enriched, they could be included in studies as control variables for a better understanding of the impact of other antecedents on enrichment.

Gender. Due to the asymmetrical permeability of work and family boundaries for women and men, Pleck (1977) posited that women are more likely to experience greater negative interferences from family to work because of their greater participation and involvement in the family domain compared to men. Until now, the asymmetrical permeability of family-to-work boundaries for women has only been related to negative aspects of family-to-work spillover and women's career development (Kirchmeyer, 1993). However, enrichment experience might also be dependent on flexible boundaries and highly integrated roles (Clark, 2000; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Along these lines, Boz et al. (2009) used cluster analysis to show how women also experience family-to-work enrichment, despite the presence of conflict; however, they did not identify this pattern in men who only perceived enrichment or conflict in different patterns. Boz and colleagues (2009) argue that a more in-depth and simultaneous examination of enrichment experiences alongside conflict is required to understand the overall constellation of family-to-work experiences that women and men go through for real.

Most of the recent studies based on the enhancement perspective found women reporting higher levels of enrichment than men as a result of their greater investment of time in the family domain (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Rothbard, 2001; Van Steenbergen et al., 2007), and higher family identity salience (Bagger et al., 2008). Interestingly, women experience higher levels of positive spillover from work to family because of their higher levels of femininity (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). These findings are in line with earlier propositions that women evaluate combining multiple roles in a more positive and beneficial way than men (Barnet & Hyde, 2001).

Studies have tried to define the different processes used by women and men to obtain benefits from work–family interaction. In this sense, in relation to the positive spillover from work to family, Matias et al. (2007) observed in their ICWF paper that, in cultures with traditional gender role ideologies, women and men attach different values to the same types of antecedents. These authors show that supervisor support for conciliation is a powerful antecedent for both men and women. However, satisfaction with work appeared to be a much more important antecedent for women than for men. In relation to family-to-work enrichment, ICWF authors Matias and Fontaine (2009) observed that in cultures with a traditional gender ideology, for women it is important for the performance of their partners in relation to domestic work to exceed their expectations. However, for men, greater dedication to domestic work limits the positive influence of the family domain on work.

Open-minded values. Those people with attitudes and behaviours directed towards innovation, originality and positive thinking towards change are

the ones who make best use of each experience and develop creative problem-solving skills (Matias et al., 2007). Therefore, these people are more open to the influence of different settings and therefore they experience the positive effects of work–family interface. Specifically, Matias et al. (2007) observed that, for individuals with high incomes, open-minded values were a relevant resource, for they allowed the experience of positive spillover from the work to the family domain.

Meso level

Income. Income is a particularly relevant antecedent of enrichment. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) argued that income as a material resource is an important antecedent of work–family enrichment because it allows the generation of additional resources such as paid homecare and medical assistance that make family lives easier and more enjoyable.

Self-employment. Self-employment has traditionally been considered as a strategy for controlling the demands stemming from the conflict between work and family domains. However, no conclusive results exist about the effectiveness of self-employment for reducing conflict levels (Loscocco, 1997; Neider, 1987; Stoner et al., 1990). In their ICWF paper, Prottas and Thompson (2007) suggested that the efficacy of self-employment may have more to do with the resources generated by positive experiences than with the control of these demands. Firstly, these authors analysed the extent to which being employed by an organization or being self-employed influences experiences of positive transfer, finding that, in effect, self-employed people transfer more positive aspects from work to the family than employees of an organization. As indicated in the Conservation of Resources Theory (COR: Hobfoll, 1989, 2002), we try to generate and conserve the resources we have (e.g., objects, financial security), and people with more resources have a greater capacity for generating further resources. In this sense, the self-employed have more advantages than salaried personnel because, for example, they have more resources, such as a greater level of autonomy (Eden, 1975; Hundley, 2001; Tetrick et al., 2000). According to the model of Voydanoff (2005) autonomy is a resource that is highly valued for positive transfer between work and family. Prottas and Thompson (2007) observed that when the level of autonomy is controlled at work, the difference between working for oneself and for someone else does not have so much influence on the level of enrichment. Therefore, it can be argued that the benefits of self-employment for enrichment may stem from it generating resources such as autonomy. Moreover, the self-employed experience lower levels of work–family conflict and higher levels of positive affective spillover, relative to the organizationally employed. However, it appeared that self-employment might merely have instrumental value in that it enables people to gain more control over their jobs than they could attain by working for others. Further research is needed to determine whether there may be

additional benefits with respect to other dimensions of the work–family interface, and whether self-employment may be a useful way to manage work and family.

Social support. Social support consists of individuals' perception that the people around them care for and love them, provide them with affection and value them as members of a network (Cobb, 1976). According to the model of Greenhaus and Powell (2006), social support is considered an important resource for both work-to-family and family-to-work enrichment. Depending on the type of support that is perceived, social support may be emotional and/or instrumental. Emotional support means an increase in the feeling of emotional well-being (Erickson, 1993) as, for example, when the family provides good advice about aspects of work or helps to reduce the negative effects of stress on work (Graves et al., 2007). However, instrumental support implies that others hold attitudes and show behaviours that help individuals to cope with their demands, for example, when the family helps with the domestic work (Wayne et al., 2006).

Furthermore, social support can be perceived from different sources such as the family, the superior, colleagues and the organization. Studies such as the one by Wadsworth and Owens (2007) showed how important it is to differentiate between these sources of support to determine their effect on the interface between work and family. There is ample evidence that family support – both instrumental and emotional – has a positive influence on the experiences of family-to-work enrichment (Bagraim & Mullins, 2009). Specifically, in a South African sample Bagraim and Mullins (2009) observed this positive influence in each of the enrichment dimensions. People who perceive support from their relatives (e.g., listen to their problems, share their concerns, give advice, help with domestic work or other family responsibilities) show that the capacity to resolve problems, and the skills they deploy in the family setting may also be used in the work sphere. In this sense, the support received by the family is a source of energy and positive feelings that are transferred to work and reflected in aspects such as improved performance (Wadsworth & Owens, 2007).

Co-worker support has a strong influence on the attitudes and behaviours of employees (e.g., House 1981), and may even influence the well-being of people to a greater extent than family and friends (Hochschild, 1997). Despite there being much empirical evidence about the positive effect of co-worker support on work and personal well-being, very few studies have analysed their effect on work–family balance and specifically on work–family enrichment. In their ICWF paper, Korabik and Warner (2009) observed that those studies that have analysed the effect of co-worker support have used the perceived support from co-workers in general, without specifying the support on aspects related to work–family balance. However, as suggested by several studies on the support of the superior and the organization (e.g., Allen, 2001, Behson, 2002; Thompson et al., 2004), it seems important to specify the type of support perceived, to determine its effect on work and

family balance. Recently, Kossek et al. (2011) found that work–family specific supervisor support and organization support are more strongly related to work–family conflict than general supervisor support and organization support, respectively. The study by Korabik and Warner (2009) contributes in this sense by designing an instrument to assess the effect of co-worker support for work–family balance. Considering that colleague support may have a positive and negative effects at the same time on experiences of enrichment (Voydanoff, 2004), these authors also designed an instrument to assess the effect of co-worker opposition to work–family balance on enrichment. The results from their study showed that those employees who had supportive co-workers for work–family balance experienced higher enrichment levels through the use of family friendly policies (FFP) and that the enrichment mediated the relation between the support of colleagues and organizational commitment. However, despite opposition to work–family balance not being directly related to enrichment, it does have a negative influence with less frequent use of FFP.

Supervisor support is another resource which is not just important for reducing conflict (Lu et al., 2009), it also encourages enrichment experiences. Matias et al. (2007) showed empirically that subjective family support or flexible supervision is a strong predictor of work-to-family facilitation. For example, unforeseen situations often arise related to reconciling work and family and they can require reconciliation measures that are not included among the formal measures offered by the organization. On these occasions, having a supervisor who is flexible and tolerant towards reconciliation helps employees feel that their organization trusts them and this makes employees feel more motivated and involved. In this sense, motivation and engagement may also constitute resources that favour experiences of positive transfer between work and the family.

Work group cohesion (WGC). This concept is related to social support. Despite WGC having been analysed in relation to a wider concept such as that of satisfaction with work–family balance as in Valcour's (2009) ICWF paper, there is hardly any empirical evidence to support its definition as an antecedent of enrichment. WGC involves a high level of personal identification with members of the group and the desire to belong to it, and it is related to outcomes such as satisfaction and productivity (Stokes, 1983; Summers et al., 1988). Furthermore, group cohesion at work tends to smooth out disparities in individual resources and generate other instrumental and emotional resources (Gaines & Jermier, 1983; Leiter & Maslach, 1988) that may be used to cope, for example, with situations of emotional exhaustion and to generate a positive affective state resulting in the experience of enrichment.

Job complexity. This is a global concept that allows the definition of a work structure from the variety of skills required, the level of autonomy, feedback, task identity and task significance (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). When a job is complex it includes a wide variety of tasks that require the deployment of practical and cognitive skills, offering greater opportunities for learning and

taking one's own decisions. This all generates greater ability in the individual to develop problem-solving skills, and produces feelings of self-efficacy and self-esteem (Caplan & Schooler, 2006; Tierney & Farmer, 2002). The concept of job complexity itself can be considered a resource because to undertake complex work, the individual has to develop and put into practice several skills – personal resources – (Valcour, 2009). In this sense, complex tasks may favour enrichment because they motivate people to develop a greater number of skills and to trust in their own capabilities, which can constitute a valuable resource for other spheres of life. Valcour (2009) observed that job complexity was related, although mediated by emotional exhaustion, with satisfaction with work–family balance, in other words, with the general feeling that requirements in the work and family domains are covered (Valcour, 2007).

As for the positive influence of the family on work, some antecedents observed include satisfaction with the partner (Matias & Fontaine, 2009) and family support (Bagram & Mullins, 2009). However, and despite the different positive effects that the family may have on work, very few studies have analysed the antecedents and moderators beyond aspects such as the number of children or marital status.

Macro level

Organizational Support (OS). Two types of OS can be differentiated: specific OS for work–family balance, that is, work–family organizational culture (WFOC) and general perceived OS (Bagram & Mullins, 2009). WFOC prospers in those organizations that do not penalize dedication of time to the family but do allow flexibility to respond to family needs (Thompson et al., 1999). This type of support provides resources that are emotional (e.g., psychological support) and material (e.g., time flexibility) (Moore, 2000). On the contrary, OS is the perception of employees that the organization supports them, generating a feeling of confidence and positive affect that may have a positive influence in the family setting. Bagram and Mullins (2009) observed that perceived OS was positively related to work-to-family affect and development enrichment.

National culture. A country's culture may determine factors such as work or family, or the importance of a specific role identity, or gender equality values that influence how we experience the relationship between work and family (Aryee, 1992; Aryee et al., 1999; Yang et al., 2000). Along these lines, some studies have developed cross-cultural models to assess the work–life balance through role identity (Shaffer et al., 2009); however, no enrichment model has ever been tested empirically in cross-cultural studies.

Potential mediators

Emotional exhaustion. This mediator is capable of annulling the positive effects of resources such as job complexity on the satisfaction with

work–family balance. Despite not being orientated towards enrichment but to the more global concept of satisfaction with work–family balance as an outcome, Valcour’s work does propose mechanisms, such as emotional exhaustion, that help to explain the relation between job demands and resources and the work–family balance (Valcour, 2009). For example, it considers resources such as WGC, work–family organizational culture, job complexity and work–family identity salience, which influence the work–family balance through emotional exhaustion. It would be interesting in future studies to assess to what extent emotional exhaustion mediates the relation with enrichment.

Recovery. The work of Demerouti et al. (2007) shows how the factors that intervene in processes of positive transfer from family to work are not the same as in cases of negative transfer. One example is the process of recovery and its effect on concentration at work. In this sense, negative transfer from the family setting to work is produced as a consequence of a limited recovery that may negatively influence the concentration that is required to maintain good performance levels at work. However, the recovery process does not influence positive transfer from family to work.

Social network. Coyne et al. (2009) posit that boundary management preferences may represent a mental model for managing all roles and identities. These authors show that the integration of roles constitutes an element that enriches and may have important consequences for work, such as improved performance. This enriching effect would be the result of the mediating effect of the social networks to which individuals belong as social relations may provide help and support, enabling people to improve their performance at work (Burt, 1992, 2000). Thus, when people opt for integration, they will have a wider social network that will provide them with more resources to perform their work more effectively. People who integrate different roles are more open to new experiences (Kossek et al., 1999). In addition, people who show this personality trait have, at the same time, a wide social network (Klein et al., 2004). Therefore, people who integrate will have a broader social network. Coyne et al. (2009) argue that social network size, “betweenness centrality” (i.e., the number of paths in the network that pass through a given person), closeness and face-to-face communications are positively related to performance, and these characteristics of the social network mediate the relationship between the preference for integration and performance. Therefore, as the authors indicate, boundary management preferences for integration seem to have an enriching effect on work performance through the mediating mechanism of the structure and relations in a social network.

Expanding the range of outcomes

Different studies have assessed the effect of enrichment considered as a global concept, from its dimensions and from the interactive effect with

conflict experiences. The potential outcomes following this classification are outlined below.

Despite the growing interest in positive interference between the work and family domains, very few studies have analysed the influence of enrichment on the different outcomes and specifically the dimensions that form this construct. One study that does stand out is by Kalliath (2009). It analyses the differential effect of work–family and family–work enrichment (FWE) dimensions on outcomes such as job satisfaction, family satisfaction and psychological strain. Specifically, in relation to work–family enrichment, the authors observed in a sample of social workers that the capital dimension maintains a significant relation with all outcomes – positive relations with job satisfaction and family satisfaction, and a negative one with psychological strain – while the affective dimension only has a positive relation with job satisfaction and a negative one with psychological strain, and the development dimension has a positive relation with family satisfaction. On the other hand, in the family to work direction, the affective enrichment dimension is the only one that maintains a positive relation with job and family satisfaction and a negative one with psychological strain. On this point, longitudinal studies have shown that people who experience positive emotions in the family domain also do so at work and they are less inclined to suffer from depressive symptoms (Hammer et al., 2005). These results show how important it is to consider different dimensions to determine the effects of enrichment on outcomes.

Studies have shown that the global construct of FWE is positively related to higher levels of job and family satisfaction (Hill, 2005), psychological well-being (Carlson et al., 2006), life satisfaction (Hill, 2005), improved skills, self-acceptance and self-esteem (Ruderman et al., 2002), and positive affect (Rothbard, 2001). However, there are other outcomes such as work performance with which no definite relation has yet been established. Working in this direction is the study by Demerouti et al. (2010) about in-role performance and extra-role performance. The authors argue that positive emotions may broaden the repertoire of thoughts and actions and help develop new personal resources that may be physical, intellectual, social or psychological (Fredrickson, 2001). First, positive emotions relax and broaden cognitive schema and the ability to integrate new contents (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005; Isen, 1990, 2000). Thus, family–work facilitation will have a positive influence on in-role performance. Second, positive emotions also make people more likely to have an outward focus of attention. Thus they may lead to an increase in helping behaviours (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005), increased liking of others and the ability to start conversations (Clark & Isen, 1982; Wood et al., 1990); therefore, family–work facilitation has a positive influence on extra-role performance. The study conducted by Demerouti et al. (2010) highlights the importance of considering the positive influence of the family on both in-role and extra-role performance.

Assuming that individuals may experience family–work conflict (FWC) and FWE simultaneously, some authors point to the potential interactive effect of conflict and enrichment on individuals' outcomes. Grzywacz and Marks (2000) suggested that positive and negative spillover are orthogonal constructs and, as such, may coexist and have common consequences. Greenhaus and Powell (2006: 87) posit that “beyond simply having main effects on role-related and global outcomes, enrichment and conflict may interact to predict outcomes.” Specifically, the authors suggest that enrichment could perform a buffering role that protects an individual from the negative consequences of a stressor (family-to-work conflict). Demerouti and Geurts (2004) found a cluster of work–home spillover in which individuals perceived both positive and negative experiences simultaneously. This cluster presented better indicators of psychological health than the cluster formed by individuals who experienced only negative spillover. Moreover, Boz et al. (2009) found a similar cluster when analysing family-to-work conflict and enrichment for women, which presented the same levels of psychological well-being, life satisfaction and physical complaint as the cluster formed by women who experienced only enrichment. We posit that while experiencing conflict will inevitably exert a negative influence on several individual outcomes, the experience of something positive (enrichment) will be capable of mitigating or dampening this effect.

Vision for the future

Promoting enrichment

Suggestions on the individual level

As we saw in this review, individuals use several strategies to deal with balancing roles. Individuals may profit from participation in different life domains and various roles within each domain. In order to be successful in managing roles and to increase the enrichment experience, individuals may use different strategies including role integration, prioritization, segmentation, deletion, coping and recovery. The evidence suggests that some strategies might be more successful than others in enhancing enrichment, like inter-role integration, more active and positive ways of coping (i.e., direct action, advice seeking and positive thinking) as well as recovery. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest that individuals should be stimulated to use such strategies. At the same time, we have to keep in mind that sometimes it might be smarter to delete a role requirement rather than try to think positively about it. Therefore, we suggest that it might be even more successful to help individuals develop all these presumably favourable strategies such that they can choose the right strategy for each instance. Thus, we suggest that enhancing individuals' repertoire to deal with inter-role issues and developing the ability to choose the right, preferable strategy for each given situation would be more beneficial for the experience of enrichment.

Future studies are necessary not only to expand the list of possible individual strategies to enhance enrichment but also to test our suggestion regarding a more contingency driven approach.

Suggestions on the family level

Our review showed that families have the potential to stimulate enrichment experiences among family members. This is particularly the case when they are supportive or more generally speaking when they provide resources to individuals. Such resources might include recognition, stimulation and possibilities for personal development, providing psychological ties, allowing freedom of decision and facilitating recovery of individual members. In this way, families can develop to places where individuals replenish resources and develop enrichment experiences. Therefore, family counsellors should make families aware of this potential of the family domain. Additionally, gender issues and the related division of labour within the family should be re-examined. As we saw, women tend to profit more than men from participating in different roles and consequently to experience higher enrichment. Thus, creating conditions in the family such that women can participate in work and personal roles might be beneficial not only for the women themselves, but also for the families as systems, due to generation of resources or possible crossover effects. An additional issue relevant for families is the recognition that, next to family roles, individuals need to participate in personal roles (like hobbies) that are independent from families. Therefore, it is important for family systems to realize that non-work time represents the time that can be devoted not only to family but also to personal roles.

Suggestions on the organizational level

To date, strategies implemented by organizations have sought to mitigate the impact of family on work behaviour with an eye toward improving employee productivity at work, and have paid less attention to how working conditions can be improved in order to mitigate the negative influence of work on family. Most organizations use family responsive policies such as maternity and parental leaves, childcare programmes, flexible work schedules, and employee assistance and relocation programmes (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990), which are appropriate for dealing with family demands and consequently for reducing the negative influence of family life on work. Undoubtedly, such practices can help employees balance both life domains. However, findings suggest that organizations should simultaneously pay attention to work characteristics that increase the enriching role that work can play in the lives of employees and their families alike. The job has indeed “a long arm”, but this arm can take the form of a helping hand. Jobs that provide resources stimulate individuals to transfer their motivating effects on the time devoted to their personal interests, which gives them the energy and

the motivation to invest effort in all kinds of activities and thus to provide resourceful environments to their partners. At the same time, organizations should try to minimize or redesign aspects that have unfavourable effects on employees, like excessive job demands. In this way, enrichment could be maximized and conflict minimized, resulting in positive effects on organizational, family, individual and also societal lives. This is vital from an ethical point of view since every employee has the right to have a private life outside work. Moreover, such policies are beneficial for the organization itself because they are translated to better performance and thus more profit.

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12

The Impact of Co-workers on Work-to-Family Enrichment and Organizational Outcomes

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Most workers spend a large portion of their day interacting with their co-workers. Recent meta-analytic research (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008) has demonstrated that both positively (i.e., supportive) and negatively (i.e., antagonistic) valenced co-worker reactions have significant effects on a wide variety of employee outcomes (e.g., role stress; job satisfaction, involvement and commitment; job performance and withdrawal behaviours). It is likely, therefore, that the attitudes and opinions of these employees' co-workers will also have a considerable impact on workers' struggles to harmonize their work and family roles. For example, supportive co-workers could facilitate employees' efforts to manage their work and family demands, whereas antagonistic co-workers could impede their ability to cope effectively. The general purpose of this research was to examine the impact of co-workers' reactions on work-family (W-F) facilitation. More specifically, we investigated how workers' perceptions about their co-workers' reactions to W-F balance influenced their work-to-family conflict and enrichment, W-F policy use and the organizational outcomes of job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

This study is important because it addresses several current gaps in the W-F literature. These include the need for research directed at: (1) the role that co-workers play in the W-F interface (Eby et al., 2005), (2) both positive and negative co-worker reactions (i.e., co-worker support and antagonism) within the same study (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008), (3) the validation of a

multifaceted measure of perceived co-worker reactions specifically toward W-F balance (Warner et al., 2009), (4) the impact of co-workers on W-F conflict and W-F enrichment within one theoretical model (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), and (5) how perceptions about co-workers' reactions to W-F balance affect the W-F conflict and enrichment, and the organizational outcomes that workers experience (Byron, 2005; Eby et al., 2005; Grzywacz, 2000; Hill, 2005). Addressing these issues should lead to a better understanding of how co-workers can impact the W-F interface, and result in interventions that can foster W-F facilitation.

Work–family conflict and work–family enrichment

Two alternative perspectives about the W-F interface have been put forth in the literature. The older of these is the conflict approach. Here, the pressures from individuals' work and family roles are viewed as mutually incompatible in some respect (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). W-F conflict is conceptualized as being bidirectional. Thus, conflict can originate in either domain, producing either work interference with family (work-to-family) or family interference with work (family-to-work) (Frone, 2003).

A newer perspective on the W-F interface is that work and family roles may facilitate or enhance one another (Poelmans et al., 2008). Although significantly more limited in comparison to the W-F conflict literature, research on role enhancement, W-F facilitation, positive spillover, expansionist theory and W-F enrichment supports the notion that the dual roles of work and family can be beneficial for mental and physical health, job satisfaction and job performance (Poelmans et al., 2008). Although the terms W-F enrichment and W-F facilitation are often used interchangeably, distinctions have recently been made between them. Thus, Wayne (in press, as cited in McNall et al., 2009) argues that W-F enrichment pertains to enhanced functioning at the individual level, whereas W-F facilitation pertains to enhanced functioning at the systems level. Because the present study was focused on individual-level processes, we specifically concentrated on W-F enrichment. W-F enrichment has been conceptualized as being bidirectional (Frone, 2003) and as consisting of work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment. W-F conflict and W-F enrichment have rarely been examined together within the same study. Of the research that has looked at their interrelationship, small, non-significant correlations have generally been observed between the two constructs (Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Voydanoff (2008) has formulated an ecological model of the W-F interface that integrates the conflict and enrichment perspectives. She postulates that within-domain resources and within-domain demands can operate simultaneously on individuals, influencing the levels of W-F conflict and facilitation that they experience. According to Voydanoff, within-domain demands can

result in time- and strain-based stress, whereas within-domain resources contribute to facilitating processes that can improve role quality and well-being. Voydanoff (2004) examined the differential effects of work-related demands and resources on work-to-family conflict and facilitation. In support of her theory, she found that time- and strain-based work demands had strong positive relationships with work-to-family conflict, whereas enabling resources and psychological rewards showed strong positive relationships with work-to-family facilitation.

In the present study we applied Voydanoff's theory to examine the impact of co-workers' reactions on workers' experiences of work-to-family conflict and enrichment. According to Voydanoff's model, it would be possible for co-workers to simultaneously be both supportive of and antagonistic toward employees' efforts to attain W-F balance. Co-worker support would act as a within-domain resource that would lead to facilitating processes (enrichment) that are associated with positive outcomes, whereas co-worker antagonism would be considered to be a within-domain demand that would result in time- and strain-based stress (conflict) and negative outcomes.

In this study we examined only work-to-family (and not family-to-work) conflict and enrichment, as well as only work-related outcomes. We chose to focus only on work-related processes for several reasons. First, a growing body of research suggests that work-to-family conflict is much more prevalent than family-to-work conflict (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001) and that it is also more likely to result from work factors (Major et al., 2008). Moreover, in the North American cultural context, it can be argued that workplace peers will have a more proximal influence on what goes on in their co-workers' work lives than in their family lives. Finally, work-to-family conflict has been shown to be more highly associated with negative work outcomes, such as lower job satisfaction, than family-to-work conflict (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Michel et al., 2009).

Co-worker support and W-F conflict

It is well established that organizational and supervisor support can significantly decrease employees' W-F conflict (Ayman & Antani, 2008). However, we know much less about the impact of co-workers. Research has shown that co-workers can provide both informational and emotional support to their fellow workers and that general co-worker support can both buffer and directly reduce work stress and strain (Ayman & Antani, 2008). General co-worker support (i.e., not specifically for W-F balance) has also been shown to have a direct positive impact on organizational and individual outcomes. It has been related to decreased emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment; as well as to increased job satisfaction and performance, organizational commitment and family cohesion (see Warner et al., 2009).

Pfeffer notes that “for most people working in organizations, the most potent and relevant contextual effect is that of the group with which they work” (1982: 103). This is because employees routinely spend large portions of their working days engaging in task and social interactions with their co-workers (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). It should not be surprising, therefore, that some research has indicated that co-workers can have greater influence on employees’ attitudes and behaviours than do supervisors (e.g., Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Not only are interactions with co-workers more frequent than those with supervisors, but they often necessitate working together on complex and interdependent tasks (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). It has also been argued that, because it is more proximal, support from co-workers can be more important to workplace well-being than support from family and friends outside of work, which is more distal (Ouchi & Johnson, 1978, as cited in Erera, 1992).

The results from studies on the impact of co-worker support on W-F conflict have been mixed. *Perceived* co-worker support has been found to be significantly related to *decreased* W-F conflict in some studies (Major et al., 2005, 2008; Wang et al., 2010), but to have no direct effect in other studies (e.g., Frone et al., 1997; Thompson et al., 2005). On the other hand, *received* co-worker support for work domain issues has been associated with *higher* work-to-family conflict (Antani & Ayman, 2004). Likewise, the extent to which workers *received* support from their peers in the form of informal work accommodations was related to *greater* work-to-family and family-to-work conflict, although more so for the latter (Mesmer-Magus et al., 2008).

The discrepancies among study findings may be due to methodological differences in the manner in which they were conducted, including the inconsistent separation of co-worker support from other support constructs, combining different forms of support (e.g., emotional, instrumental), and measuring support (e.g., availability, use, satisfaction) and W-F conflict differently. In addition, Ayman and Antani (2008) propose that different processes may underlie how perceived versus received support operate. Thus, perceived support may be an antecedent to reduced W-F conflict. According to this reasoning, a greater perception that one’s co-workers will be supportive if needed will alleviate feelings of W-F conflict. By contrast, received support could be an outcome of W-F conflict. Accordingly, when workers are experiencing high levels of W-F conflict, they would be more likely to mobilize social support from their network sources, including co-workers. Longitudinal research is necessary to distinguish between these explanations.

Another issue is that in many studies what was measured was perceived support from co-workers in general, without specific reference to how co-workers felt about W-F issues in particular. Other bodies of literature (e.g., Allen, 2001; Behson, 2002; Thompson et al., 2004) suggest that supervisor and organizational support *for work and family balance* are stronger predictors

of W-F conflict than *general* supervisor and organizational support. Applying this logic to co-workers, co-worker support specifically for W-F balance is likely to have greater impact on W-F conflict than general co-worker support. Because of this, the present research was focused on perceived co-worker support specifically for W-F balance.

Based on the above and on research demonstrating the existence of negative relationships between organizational support for W-F balance and work-to-family conflict (Behson, 2002), and between general co-worker support and W-F conflict (Major et al., 2005), we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1. Higher levels of co-worker support for W-F balance will predict lower levels of work-to-family conflict.

Co-worker support for W-F balance and W-F enrichment

There has been very little previous research on co-worker support and W-F enrichment. The results of the research that has been carried out on the effects of work-related support on work-to-family enrichment, however, have been very consistent. Both job support (Demerouti et al., 2004; Karatepe & Bekteshi, 2008) and general co-worker support (Hill, 2005; Wadsworth & Owens, 2007) have been found to be positively related to work-to-family enrichment. Based on the results of these studies, as well as the literature on W-F enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Poelmans et al., 2008), we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2. Higher levels of co-worker support for W-F balance will predict higher levels of work-to-family enrichment.

Co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance, work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment

Co-worker antagonism can be defined as the degree of opposition, resentment, animosity or annoyance that workers perceive from their co-workers (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). There has been far less examination of co-worker antagonism than there has of co-worker support (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). In addition, almost all of the research that has been carried out has centred on co-worker antagonism in general (e.g., violence, bullying), rather than on antagonism specifically related to W-F issues. Moreover, of the studies on W-F related topics, the majority have focused on co-worker backlash toward W-F policy use rather than on general co-worker negative reactions to W-F balance (Warner et al., 2009).

Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) state that interpersonal interactions with co-workers, particularly antagonistic ones, can be a source of stress and result in many negative outcomes. They found that this can occur through

a variety of both direct (e.g., by withholding of behavioural resources) and indirect (e.g., by altering role perceptions and workplace attitudes) mechanisms. In our previous qualitative research (Korabik et al., 2007; Warner & Korabik, 2007), we found that individuals who perceived their co-workers to be resentful of their efforts to achieve W-F balance spoke about experiencing higher work-to-family conflict and lower work-to-family enrichment than those in more supportive environments. We, therefore, expected that:

Hypothesis 3a. Higher levels of co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance will predict higher levels of work-to-family conflict.

Hypothesis 3b. Higher levels of co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance will predict lower levels of work-to-family enrichment.

Co-worker support and antagonism, work-to-family conflict and enrichment and W-F policy use

Organizational and supervisor supports for W-F balance have been demonstrated to have a significant positive influence on employees' use of W-F policies (Andreassi & Thompson, 2008). Research has shown that the behaviour and reactions of their co-workers also may impact workers' policy use. For example, Lambert et al. (2008) found that the more their co-workers made use of W-F policies, the more workers were likely to use the policies themselves. Similarly, Hyde et al. (1993) found that fathers' perceptions of their co-workers' reactions were a significant predictor of their decisions about the length of their paternity leave. The results from two studies carried out in New Zealand have been mixed. One (Gardner & Smith, 2007) indicated that perceived co-worker support was not related to the number of policies used or to the use of any specific initiatives. However, in the other (McAulay, 1999, as cited in Gardner & Smith, 2007), perceived co-worker support was found to be positively correlated with the number of family-friendly initiatives used by workers. Moreover, Poelmans et al. (2008) maintain that by promoting an environment where employees are more likely to take advantage of beneficial workplace policies, supportive co-workers enhance W-F facilitation.

Conversely, co-worker antagonism and resentment may play a role in pressuring employees into not using W-F policies (Kossek & Van Dyne, 2008). Co-workers who do not use the policies may use a variety of tactics to punish workers who do use them (e.g., refuse to help them, exclude them from informal gatherings, withhold work-related information or blame them for problems that occur in their absence) (Kossek & Van Dyne, 2008). Research has shown that workers often fear that using W-F policies will result in negative consequences, hampering their career advancement and upsetting their co-workers (Kirby & Krone, 2002; Thompson et al., 1999). For example,

Kirby and Krone (2002) found that workers who heard their co-workers complaining about the additional responsibilities they had when people used family-friendly policies took this negative discourse into account and sometimes chose to refrain from using the policies that were available to them.

Previous research on W-F policy use as a mediator of the relationships between co-worker support or co-worker antagonism and W-F conflict or facilitation is sparse. However, extrapolating from the research cited above, we proposed that:

Hypothesis 4a. W-F policy use will partially mediate the relationship between co-worker support for W-F balance and work-to-family conflict, such that co-worker support will result in higher policy use, which will in turn lead to lower work-to-family conflict.

Hypothesis 4b. W-F policy use will partially mediate the relationship between co-worker support for W-F balance and work-to-family enrichment, such that co-worker support will result in higher policy use, which will in turn lead to higher work-to-family enrichment.

Hypothesis 4c. W-F policy use will partially mediate the relationship between co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance and work-to-family conflict, such that co-worker antagonism will result in lower policy use, which will in turn lead to higher work-to-family conflict.

Hypothesis 4d. W-F policy use will partially mediate the relationship between co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance and work-to-family enrichment, such that co-worker antagonism will result in lower policy use, which will in turn lead to lower work-to-family enrichment.

Outcomes of work-to-family conflict and enrichment

The outcomes associated with W-F conflict have been researched extensively (see Korabik et al., 2008). The most prevalent outcomes for individuals have been greater job and family distress, poorer health outcomes and decreased job and life satisfaction (Dorio et al., 2008; Mullen et al., 2008). By contrast, individuals who experience W-F facilitation may be better able to maximize multiple roles and the demands in both the work and family domains, which should result in greater satisfaction (Boyar & Mosley, 2007). Supporting this reasoning, work-to-family enrichment has been found to be positively related to job satisfaction (Boyar & Mosley, 2007; Hill, 2005). Numerous studies also have shown that job dissatisfaction is a precursor of intention to leave the organization (e.g., Tett & Meyer, 1993). Research also demonstrates that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work-to-family conflict and quit intentions (Boles et al., 1997; Dorio et al., 2008). Based on the above, the following hypotheses were put forth:

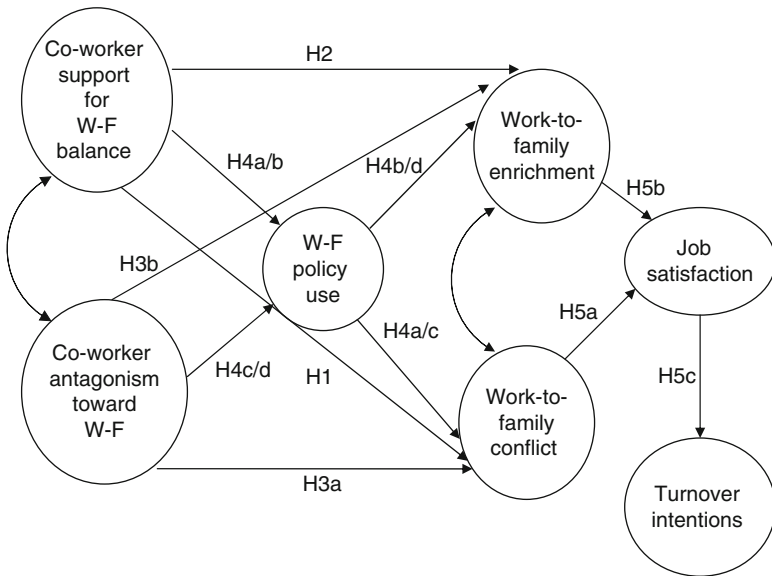


Figure 12.1 Hypothesized theoretical model

Hypothesis 5a. Higher levels of work-to-family conflict will predict lower levels of job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5b. Higher levels of work-to-family enrichment will predict higher levels of job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5c. Higher levels of job satisfaction will predict lower levels of intention to turnover.

The structural model portraying these hypothesized relationships can be found in Figure 12.1.

Method

Participants

The participants were 381 Canadian workers from a variety of organizations (38.1% Ontario rural municipal workers, 12.8% from two universities, 1.0% from a marine products engineering company in Nova Scotia, 33.9% from a telecommunications company in Ontario and 13.4% from a snowball sample). The total response rate cannot be calculated due to the use of snowball sampling methodology. The response rates for the other subsamples were as follows: the municipality was 13%, the first university was 37%, the second university was 32%, the marine products engineering company was 66% and the telecommunications company was 79%.

The mean age and job tenure of participants were 40.8 and 6.4 years, respectively. The average hours worked per week was 37.7. One hundred and fifty nine (41.7%) were men and 201 (52.8%) were women (21 participants did not report their gender). Three hundred and thirteen (82.2%) were full-time workers, 13 (3.4%) worked part-time and 33 (8.7%) were contract workers. Two hundred and forty five (64.3%) were non-management, 73 (19.2%) were management with direct reports and 33 (8.7%) were supervisors without direct reports. Two hundred and fifty-one (65.9%) were married, 52 (13.6%) were single, 31 (8.1%) were living with a partner, 20 (5.2%) were divorced and 3 (0.8%) were widowed. Two hundred and forty six (64.6%) of the respondents had children, with the mean number of children being 1.4. On average, participants had 15.8 co-workers, 7.9 of whom were women.

Procedure

Most of the participants were recruited directly through their employers. Researchers contacted various employers in Ontario and Nova Scotia, explained the purpose of the study and asked for permission to sample their employees. The remainder of the sample was recruited via snowball sampling, where study participants recruited additional participants on behalf of the researchers. All participants completed an online questionnaire. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete and all data were sent anonymously via encrypted software to the researchers. All participants who wished to be entered into a draw for a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate.

Measures

Co-worker reactions to work-family balance. Co-worker support for and co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance were measured with our newly created Co-worker Reactions to Work-Family Balance (CRWFB) Scale. Scale construction took place in five steps. The first of these was directed at construct definition and item generation. Our prior focus group data (Korabik et al., 2007; Warner & Korabik, 2007) had shown that, in support of Voydanoff's (2008) theory, co-workers could simultaneously be both resentful and supportive of their colleagues' efforts to achieve W-F balance. We developed initial scale items based on the results of our focus group data, other social support measures and a review of the workplace support and antagonism literatures. The second phase consisted of establishing content validity via evaluations by subject matter experts. In the next two phases exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were carried out. Finally, we did an assessment of convergent and divergent validity. The final 32 item CRWFB Scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency reliability and good convergent and discriminant validity. Confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the co-worker support and co-worker antagonism

subscales were distinct factors rather than being opposite ends of a single continuum.

Participants were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each of the 32 items on the CRWFB Scale (19 reflecting support and 13 reflecting antagonism) by rating them on a scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*). An example of a co-worker support item is: "It would not bother my co-workers if I took time off work to be with my family." An example of a co-worker antagonism item is: "My co-workers think that people with kids don't work as hard at work."

W-F policy use. W-F policy use was measured using questions developed by a research team for a multinational study (Project 3535) on work and family (Korabik et al., 2003). Participants were asked if they had ever used ten W-F policies provided by their employers (i.e., flexible work schedule, emergency absence, reduced work schedule, telecommuting, maternity/parental leave beyond legislation, leave to care for sick family members, childcare facilities/referral services, health insurance for dependants, health facilities and welfare activities). Consistent with the approach used by others (e.g., Breaugh & Frye, 2008; Thompson et al., 1999) responses were coded as 0 (*Not Used*) or 1 (*Used*) and a total sum score was generated per participant to reflect policy use. Sums ranged from 0 to 10.

Work-to-family conflict. Work-to-family conflict was measured using the nine item work interference with family subscale from Carlson et al.'s (2000) W-F conflict measure. It assesses three dimensions of work interference with family (time-, strain-, and behaviour-based) on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

Work-to-family enrichment. Work-to-family enrichment was measured using the nine item work-to-family enrichment subscale from Carlson et al.'s (2006) measure. The scale assesses three dimensions of work-to-family enrichment (work-to-family development, affect and capital) using a 5-point response scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). This measure has been shown to have high internal consistency reliability (work-to-family development $\alpha = 0.73$; work-to-family affect $\alpha = 0.91$; work-to-family capital $\alpha = 0.90$). In addition, the internal consistency reliability for all nine work items was found to be $\alpha = 0.92$ (Carlson et al., 2006).

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using a three item scale developed by Cammann et al. (1979, as cited in Cook et al. (1981). This measure assesses the degree to which respondents are satisfied with their job on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*). This measure has been found to have internal consistency reliabilities ranging between 0.77 (Cammann et al., 1979, as cited in Cook et al., 1981) and 0.91 (Carlson et al., 2006).

Intent to turnover. Intent to turnover was measured using a three item scale developed by Cammann et al. (1979, as cited in Cook et al., 1981). This measure assesses the degree to which respondents are thinking about or actively

engaging in behaviours to leave their current job on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). This measure has been found to have a coefficient alpha of 0.83 (Cammann et al., 1979, as cited in Cook et al., 1981).

Results

Preliminary analysis

Prior to the main analyses, the data were examined for accuracy of data entry and missing values. Maximum Likelihood Estimation using AMOS (Arbuckle, 1999) was used to account for missing data (Kline, 2005). The data were next assessed to determine if they met the assumptions of observed variable path analysis. Specifically, the data were assessed for univariate and multivariate outliers, skewness and kurtosis of the individual items and multivariate normality. Thirteen participants were found to be significant outliers on at least one of the variables of interest (based on a standardized residual under -3.25 or over 3.25 ; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) and these scores were removed from the dataset. However, the cases themselves were not deleted because: (1) removing 13 cases was seen as extreme to address univariate outliers and (2) conservative methods of missing data replacement were being used in the analyses. Multivariate outliers were assessed using Mahalanobis Distance calculations. Based on the conservative cut off of $\chi^2 = 16.26$, $p < 0.001$ recommended for this sample size (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), seven participants were identified as having multivariate outliers and their entire cases were removed from the dataset, for a total remaining sample size of 374.

Main analyses

Descriptive statistics, internal consistency coefficients and intercorrelations of all study variables are reported in Table 12.1. In addition to the hypothesized model portrayed in Figure 12.1, we tested two more parsimonious nested models. The paths to and from W-F policy use were set to zero in each of these alternative models. The first model (Alternative Model 1) specified the direct relationships between: (1) co-worker support and work-to-family-enrichment, (2) co-worker antagonism and work-to-family conflict and (3) work-to-family conflict and enrichment and outcomes. The second alternative model (Alternative Model 2) added paths between: (1) co-worker support and work-to-family conflict and (2) co-worker antagonism and work-to-family enrichment. For both of these models all parameter estimates were significant in the hypothesized direction.

Several fit indices were examined. The *generalized likelihood ratio* (χ^2) is a test of significance of the difference between that model and a just-identified version of the model. Although a model with good fit should be characterized by a low, non-significant χ^2 , a significant value is often obtained with

Table 12.1 Descriptive statistics, internal consistency coefficients and intercorrelations of study variables

| Variable | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--|------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Co-worker support for W-F balance | 5.05 | 1.06 | 0.98 | 0–68* | 0.04 | 0–42* | 0.36* | 0.44* | 0–40* |
| 2. Co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance | 3.22 | 1.25 | | 0.97 | 0–17* | 0.45* | 0–33* | 0–43* | 0.42* |
| 3. W-F policy use | 3.77 | 1.56 | | | 0.62 | 0.11* | 0.16* | 0.08 | 0–14* |
| 4. Work-to-family conflict | 2.79 | .76 | | | | 0.89 | 0–43* | 0–49* | 0.43* |
| 5. Work-to-family enrichment | 3.40 | .65 | | | | | 0.92 | 0.58* | 0–49* |
| 6. Job satisfaction | 3.95 | .76 | | | | | | 0.93 | 0–77* |
| 7. Intent to turnover | 2.24 | 1.05 | | | | | | | 0.92 |

Notes. Coefficient alphas in bold in diagonal; * $p < 0.05$.

Table 12.2 Fit of the hypothesized and alternative path models

| Model description | χ^2 | Degrees of freedom | N | TLI | CFI | RMSEA | $\Delta\chi^2$ | Δdf |
|---------------------|----------|--------------------|-----|------|------|-------|----------------|-------------|
| Alternative Model 1 | 111.93* | 14 | 375 | 0.82 | 0.91 | 0.14 | | |
| Alternative Model 2 | 82.63* | 12 | 375 | 0.85 | 0.94 | 0.13 | 29.30* | 2 |
| Hypothesized Model | 30.21* | 8 | 375 | 0.93 | 0.98 | 0.09 | 52.41* | 4 |
| Modified Model | 16.52* | 6 | 374 | 0.97 | 0.99 | 0.07 | 13.69* | 2 |

* $p < 0.05$.

large sample sizes (Kelloway, 1998). For the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis coefficient (TLI), both of which range from 0 to 1, values closer to 1 indicate better fit of the model to the data. The root mean square error of approximation index (RMSEA) ideally should be below 0.05, although values below 0.10 are considered to be acceptable. The differences between nested models can be evaluated with the $\Delta\chi^2$; a significant value indicates that the models differ significantly in fit. A comparison of the fit indices between the hypothesized model and the two alternative models can be found in Table 12.2.

Model 2 fit the data significantly better than Model 1 and the hypothesized model fit the data significantly better than Model 2. The hypothesized model provided very good fit to the data (see Figure 12.2 for parameter

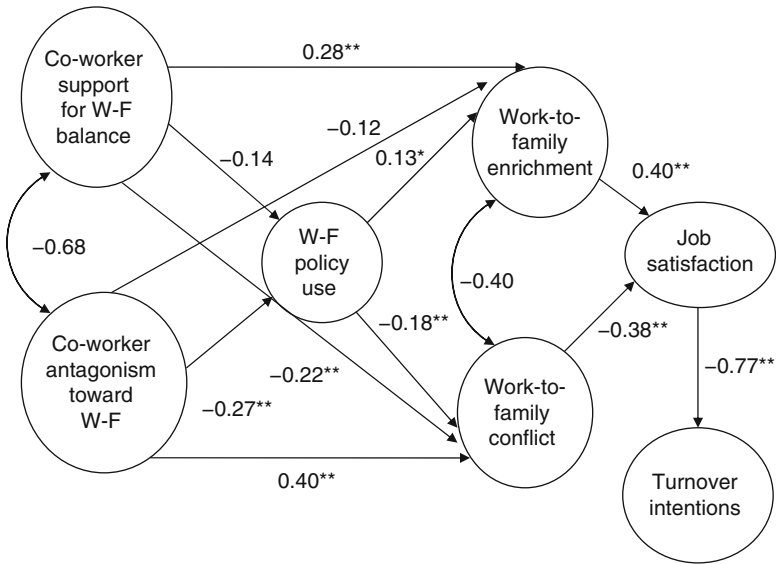


Figure 12.2 Standardized parameter estimates for the hypothesized model
Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

estimates). However, since the fit of the hypothesized model was not excellent, modifications were made to it and the model fit was reassessed. Modifications were based on: (1) the modification indices proposed by AMOS and (2) what was consistent with the theoretical and empirical findings in the research literature relevant to the variables of interest. Specifically, the following paths were added to the model: (1) a path from co-worker antagonism to intent to turnover and (2) a path from W-F policy use to intent to turnover. The modified model provided better fit to the data than the originally proposed model (see Table 12.2). Specifically, all of the fit indices for the modified model were better than those for the hypothesized model and within the acceptable limits of model fit (Kline, 2005). Therefore, the modified model was retained as the final model best representing the relationships among co-worker support for and antagonism to W-F balance, W-F policy use, work-to-family conflict and enrichment, and the outcome variables.

Parameter estimates for the modified model (see Figure 12.3) were examined to determine if each path was predicting the endogenous variables as hypothesized. Twelve of the 13 estimated parameters were significant at $p < 0.05$ and of those ten were in the hypothesized direction. Specifically, as expected, higher levels of co-worker support for W-F balance predicted lower amounts of work-to-family conflict (H1) and higher amounts of work-to-family enrichment (H2). Furthermore, as hypothesized, higher levels of

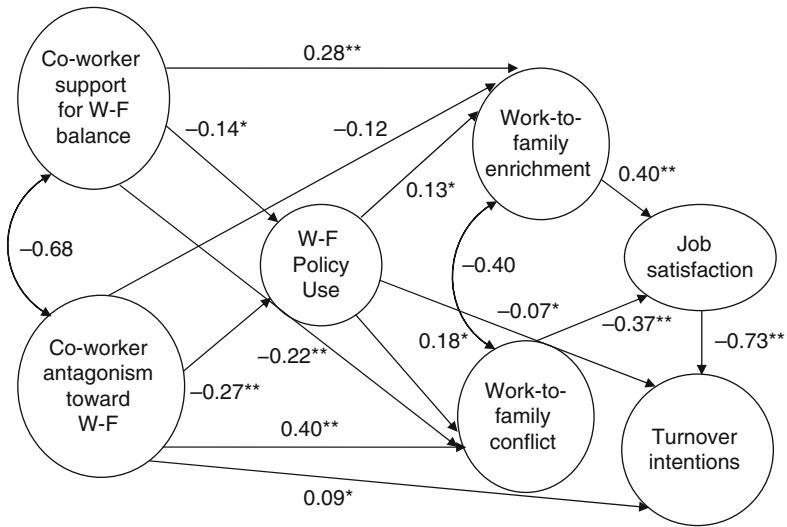


Figure 12.3 Standardized parameter estimates for the modified model

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance predicted higher levels of work-to-family conflict (H3a). However, higher levels of co-worker antagonism were not significantly related to lower levels of work-to-family enrichment as had been hypothesized (H3b).

Hypotheses 4a–d specified that W-F policy use would mediate the relationships between co-worker support and work-to-family conflict or enrichment, and co-worker antagonism and work-to-family conflict or enrichment, respectively. Except for the direct path between co-worker antagonism and work-to-family enrichment all of the parameter estimates for both the direct paths and the indirect paths (via policy use) were significant, indicating partial mediation. Hypothesis 4d was supported in that co-worker antagonism was associated with lower policy use, which in turn resulted in lower work-to-family enrichment. However, for hypotheses 4a–c the form of the mediation was not as expected. In terms of H4a and b, although W-F policy use was negatively associated with work-to-family conflict and positively associated with work-to-family enrichment as had been predicted, the relationship between co-worker support and policy use was not in the expected direction. That is, co-worker support was related to less, rather than more, policy use. Moreover, inconsistent with H4a and c, higher levels of W-F policy use were related to higher, instead of lower, levels of work-to-family conflict.

In terms of outcome variables, higher co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance predicted higher levels of intent to turnover. Lower policy use was also found to predict higher levels of turnover intentions. As hypothesized,

higher work-to-family conflict predicted lower levels of job satisfaction (H5a), whereas higher work-to-family enrichment predicted higher levels of job satisfaction (H5b). Finally, as predicted (H5c), higher job satisfaction predicted lower levels of intent to turnover.

Discussion

The present research demonstrated that perceptions about co-workers' reactions toward W-F balance play an important role in workers' W-F facilitation, job attitudes and behaviours. Overall, we found that co-workers can: (1) be a significant source of support for and antagonism toward W-F balance, (2) facilitate or inhibit W-F integration, (3) significantly influence the use of W-F policies, and (4) ultimately impact job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

The impact of co-worker reactions on the W-F interface

As predicted, the more co-worker support for W-F balance that workers perceived, the less they reported experiencing conflict from work interference with family. This finding, along with our earlier qualitative research (Warner & Korabik, 2007), shows that previous research demonstrating negative relationships between W-F conflict and both work-related support (Ayman & Antani, 2008) and general perceived co-worker support (Major et al., 2005) generalizes to co-worker support specifically for W-F balance. We also found, as predicted, that the more that workers felt their colleagues supported their efforts to balance their work and family roles, the more work-to-family enrichment they reported. This finding extends earlier research showing that both job support (Demerouti et al., 2004; Karatepe & Bekteshi, 2008) and general co-worker support (Hill, 2005; Wadsworth & Owens, 2007) are positively related to W-F enrichment.

In addition to finding that co-workers are a valuable source of support that can facilitate W-F balance, the results of this study supported those of our previous focus group research (Korabik et al., 2007) by demonstrating that co-workers can also seriously debilitate workers' efforts to harmonize their work and family roles. Thus, we found that the more that workers perceived their co-workers to be antagonistic toward W-F balance, the more they reported conflict due to work interference with family. This is consistent with previous research suggesting that perceptions of negative co-worker reactions can have a significant impact on workers' life experiences (Grover & Crooker, 1995) and organizational outcomes (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). We expected to find that the more workers perceived their co-workers to be antagonistic to their efforts to attain W-F balance, the less work-to-family enrichment they would report. However, this relationship was not significant. Because there has been no previous research on this topic, we feel that further exploration is warranted.

The impact of co-worker reactions on W-F policy use

We found that including W-F policy use as a mediator variable led to a significant improvement in our model fit. Despite this, W-F policy use did not mediate the relationships between co-worker support for W-F balance and work-to-family conflict or enrichment, or between co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance and work-to-family conflict in the manner we had predicted. We did find that, as expected, more W-F policy use was related to greater work-to-family enrichment. However, surprisingly, we found greater policy use to be associated with higher, rather than lower, work-to-family conflict. Previous research (Kirby & Krone, 2002; Kossek & Van Dyne, 2008; Thompson et al., 1999) has indicated that negative co-worker reactions can inhibit policy use. Consistent with this, we found that the more that workers perceived their co-workers to be antagonistic toward W-F balance, the less they used W-F policies. However, contrary to our predictions, we found that co-worker support was associated with lower, rather than higher policy use. This is contrary to the findings of prior research (e.g., Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004; Thompson et al., 1999), showing that co-worker support for W-F balance facilitates the use of W-F policies. Also not predicted, but found in the modified model, was the direct negative relationship between W-F policy use and intention to turnover. This corroborates previous research findings (see Lero et al., 2009 for a review) and illustrates that employers who invest in W-F policies may benefit by lowering their turnover costs.

The impact of co-worker reactions and the W-F interface on job-related outcomes

We found support for our expectations that while higher levels of work-to-family conflict would predict lower levels of job satisfaction, higher levels of work-to-family enrichment would predict higher levels of job satisfaction. Similarly, higher levels of job satisfaction predicted lower turnover intentions. These findings are consistent with the literature on the outcomes of W-F conflict (Dorio et al., 2008) and W-F facilitation (Poelmans et al., 2008) and provide further evidence that work-to-family conflict and enrichment can have a substantial impact both on workers' affective reactions to their jobs and their behavioural intentions. What was not hypothesized, but was found to be significant in the modified model, was that the perception that one's co-workers were antagonistic toward W-F balance was directly predictive of higher intentions to leave the organization. This suggests that co-workers' reactions can have an even larger impact on employees' perceptions and intended actions than previously thought.

Study contributions

Most previous W-F research has focused on organizational and managerial support, with very little having been directed at the role of co-workers

(Ayman & Antani, 2008). The results of this study highlight the considerable influence that co-workers' reactions have on workers who are trying to achieve W-F balance. Our findings suggest that co-workers can have a substantial impact on both the positive and negative sides of the W-F interface. Specifically, if workers perceive their co-workers to be providing assistance, guidance and/or encouragement for their efforts to balance their work and family roles, they are likely to experience less work-to-family conflict and more work-to-family enrichment. Ultimately, an atmosphere of co-worker support will result in workers having greater job satisfaction and less desire to leave their jobs. By contrast, if workers feel a sense of resentment or antagonism toward W-F balance from their co-workers, they will be less likely to use W-F policies, experience more conflict due to work interference with family, be less satisfied with their jobs and be more likely to want to quit.

In this study we considered co-worker support and co-worker antagonism to be distinct constructs and we examined their independent impacts. Voydanoff's (2008) theory, a recent meta-analysis on co-worker reactions (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008) and our previous focus group research (Korabik et al., 2007) all led us to believe that co-workers could be both supportive and resentful of their fellow workers' attempts to balance work and family at the same time. This was corroborated by the confirmatory factor analyses of our CRWFB scale, where co-worker support and antagonism loaded on separate factors.

The results of the present study give further credence to this argument. Sometimes support and antagonism were related to other variables in the same manner, but in opposite directions. For example, co-worker support was negatively related, but co-worker antagonism was positively related, to work-to-family conflict. At other times, however, the relationships of support and antagonism to other variables were not mirror images of one another. For example, co-worker support directly predicted work-to-family enrichment, whereas co-worker antagonism was related to work-to-family enrichment only via policy use. Moreover, although co-worker antagonism was indirectly related to turnover intentions through paths to work-to-family conflict and enrichment and job satisfaction, it also directly predicted turnover intentions. By contrast, co-worker support was related to turnover intentions only indirectly via relationships with work-to-family conflict and enrichment and job satisfaction.

Additional evidence for the proposition that co-worker support and co-worker antagonism should be considered to be separate constructs comes from the difference in the magnitude of their relationships with other constructs. Overall, we found the level of co-worker antagonism to be lower than the level of co-worker support. However, despite this, co-worker antagonism had stronger relationships with work-to-family conflict and policy use than did co-worker support. These findings may indicate a tendency for people to be more impacted by the negative, rather than the positive,

reactions of their co-workers. This is aligned with the social perception literature, which shows that individuals often weight negative information more heavily than positive information (Rozin & Royzman, 2001). The exception was in the case of work-to-family enrichment, which was more strongly related to co-worker support than to co-worker antagonism. We hope that by examining both co-worker support and antagonism, considering them to be discrete constructs, developing a validated instrument to assess them, and looking at their impact on the W-F interface, W-F policy use and work-related outcomes, our research will help to integrate the fragmented literature that currently exists on co-worker support and co-worker antagonism.

Very little previous research has examined the effects of W-F conflict and W-F facilitation within the same study. Our study not only did so, but it also looked at both antecedents (i.e., co-worker reactions) and outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction and turnover intentions) of both work-to-family conflict and enrichment, as well as the mediating effect of W-F policy use. We know of no previous research on the impact of co-workers on W-F facilitation. We found that when workers perceived their co-workers to be more supportive of W-F balance, they reported more work-to-family enrichment, which in turn resulted in greater job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions. These results highlight the importance of the positive side of the W-F interface for both individual well-being and the organizational bottom line. Furthermore, they verify that there can be powerful crossover effects between the work and family domains.

Limitations and future research

The present research is not without limitations. First, the data from this study are cross-sectional. Future research using predictive or longitudinal designs is necessary before causal conclusions can be made. Second, the focus of this study was on work-to-family conflict and enrichment, rather than on family-to-work conflict and enrichment. A recent meta-analysis examining the role of stressors, involvement and support on the work and family domains found that a considerable amount of variability in family satisfaction was explained by work-related variables (Ford et al., 2007). Future studies should examine the influence that co-worker reactions have on family-to-work conflict and enrichment and family-related outcomes. Third, our analyses focused on overall co-worker support, work-to-family conflict and work-to-family enrichment rather than on their sub-dimensions. Unfortunately, there was an insufficient sample size to allow for these additional variables to be included in the present study. It would be interesting, however, to examine the effects of different facets of co-worker support (i.e., emotional, informational and instrumental) on the occurrence of different facets of W-F conflict (i.e., time-, strain- and behaviour-based) and W-F enrichment (work-to-family development, affect and capital; and family-to-work development, affect and efficiency).

Conclusion

This study makes several contributions to the literature on W-F facilitation. We know from previous research that W-F conflict can lead to a multitude of negative outcomes such as lower job satisfaction, and higher stress and turnover (Dorio et al., 2008). Although not as extensively researched, we also know that W-F facilitation affects workers' attitudes and can have positive outcomes. However, there has been a lack of empirical investigation into the role of co-workers in reducing or increasing W-F conflict, and even less exploration into how co-workers may foster or inhibit W-F facilitation. Moreover, almost no previous studies have examined both the antecedents and the outcomes associated with both W-F conflict and facilitation. There has also been no past research on the joint impact of co-worker support for and antagonism towards W-F balance on workers' W-F facilitation, policy use or work-related outcomes.

Our findings have practical implications for both workers and organizations. Currently, companies tend to focus their W-F balance strategies at the management and organizational levels (Brough et al., 2005). Our results suggest that more attention needs to be paid to the role of co-workers. Organizations need to ensure that co-worker antagonism toward W-F balance doesn't keep workers from taking advantage of W-F policies, as this will ultimately result in higher turnover. Not only is it expensive for organizations to supply workers with W-F policies that go unused, but turnover costs can be extensive. Therefore, finding ways to increase co-worker support and decrease co-worker antagonism regarding W-F issues will not only facilitate workers' attempts to achieve W-F balance and enhance their satisfaction and well-being, but it should also have a direct positive impact on the financial viability of the organizations for which they work.

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Part VII

Special Section

13

Times are Changing: Gender and Generation at Work and at Home in the USA

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Families and Work Institute

2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce

Introduction

Times are changing for Americans in the workplace and at home. The US workforce not only *looks* different today than it did three decades ago as a result of increased participation by women – but it is also different in more subtle, less visible ways. In this chapter, we identify emerging trends showing that women are, for the first time, on a par with men in their desire to advance to jobs with more responsibility, while converging gender roles at work and at home have left men experiencing more work–family conflict than women.

Drawing on three decades of US data from Families and Work Institute's National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW), its antecedent, the 1977 US Department of Labor's Quality of Employment Survey (QES) and other nationally representative data, we explore the implications of long-term demographic changes in the American labour force on how men and women experience their roles at work and at home. We discuss how the demographic, attitudinal and behavioural changes highlighted in this chapter might present challenges for men and women, families and employers in the USA. We conclude by identifying opportunities for future research.

Labour force participation of women – especially of mothers with children under age 18 – has increased substantially

Data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey, depicted in Figure 13.1, indicate that labour force participation (i.e., all people who are currently employed, or unemployed but looking for jobs) of women aged 18 and older has increased very substantially since 1950, while participation by men has decreased. In recent years, labour force participation by women has also declined slightly, but less so than by men.

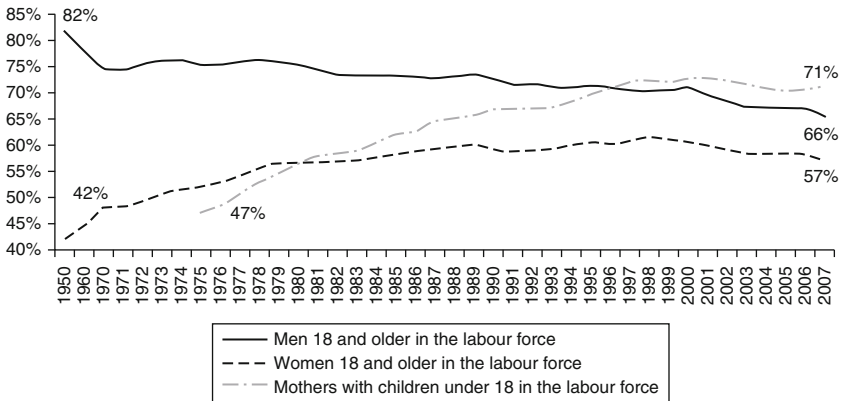


Figure 13.1 Labour force participation by men, women and women with children under 18 (1950–2007)

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009).

For both genders, declining labour force participation is likely related to increasing numbers of men and women pursuing higher education.

An even more striking trend shown in Figure 13.1 is the substantial and significant increase in labour force participation by mothers in the USA (Cohany & Sok, 2007). [Note: Published data about the labour force participation by women with children are only available from the Census beginning in 1975.] In fact, labour force participation by women with children is higher than that of all women and all men aged 18 and older combined. One reason for this may be that the average age of women with children is higher than the average ages of women and men in general in the labour force. Another reason may be that many employed women (and men) with children have already completed their educational careers. People who are older and more educated are more likely to participate in the labour force.

Women's level of education has increased relative to men's

In every year from 1940 through 2007, men aged 25 years and older were at least somewhat more likely (in absolute terms) than women of the same ages to have completed four years of college or more in the USA (Figure 13.2). All data are drawn from the US Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey, which surveys approximately 60,000 households and provides the most reliable estimates of population characteristics available. There are data for every year between 1970 and 2007, but prior to that data were not collected annually. Thus, we have included data for 1940, 1950 and 1962 to provide important historical reference points.

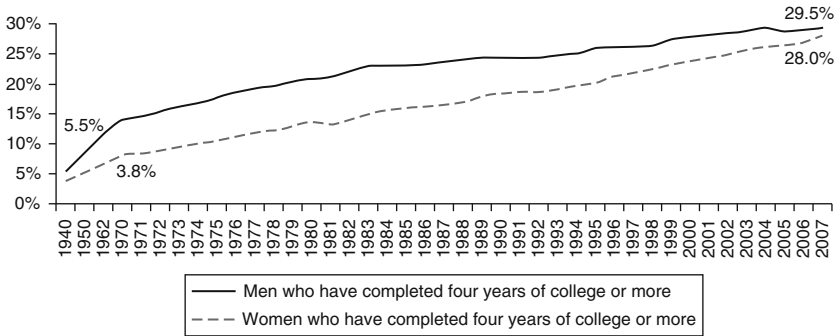


Figure 13.2 Completion of four or more years of college by men and women aged 25 years and older in the USA (1940–2007)

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

A major inflection point marking men's increasing college graduation rates occurred between 1940 and 1970. This is probably related to the post-World War II GI Bill, which provided veterans with financial support to attend college. Between the late 1950s and the mid-1990s, men had an advantage over women in college graduation of about six to seven percentage points.

Subsequently, however, women have steadily gained ground in the USA, surpassing men's educational attainment in several areas. Women have been earning more bachelor's degrees than men since 1982 and more master's degrees than men since 1981 (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). In the 2007/08 academic year, women earned 57% of all bachelor's degrees and 61% of master's degrees. By 2016, women are projected to earn 60% of bachelor's, 63% of master's and 54% of doctorate and professional degrees. This trend is likely due to a combination of factors, including the women's movement, the reliance of families on women's earnings, general cultural change and the growing availability of government grants/loans.

The gender gap in earnings is slowly narrowing

The wage gap between women and men in the USA has narrowed since the early 1990s, largely as a function of a decline in men's wages (see Figure 13.3). In 1979, the average full-time employed woman earned 62% of what men earned on a weekly basis. By 2007, however, the average full-time employed woman earned 80% of what men earned on a weekly basis, a big increase, but still a large gap. Data from the Current Population Survey show a similar trend for hourly wages of employees working in hourly (i.e., non-salaried) jobs. In 1979, the hourly pay of women was 58% of the hourly pay of men. In 2007, the hourly pay of women was 82% of the hourly pay of men.

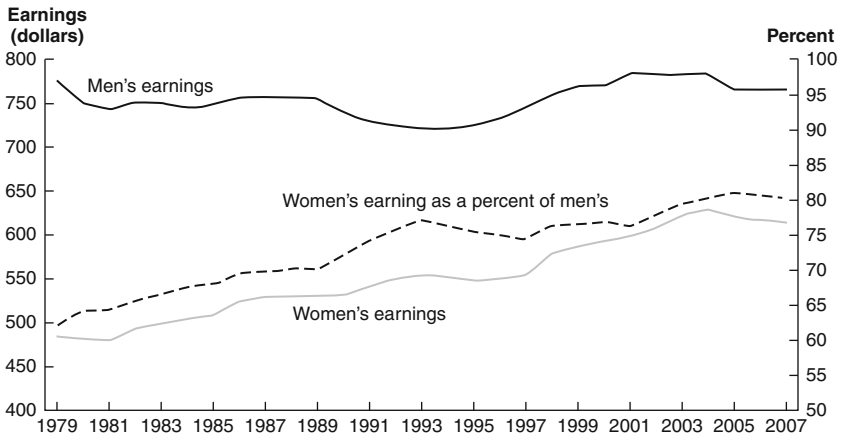


Figure 13.3 Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salaried employees in 2007, by sex (1979–2007 annual averages)¹

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

With more women in the labour force, the percentage of dual-earner couples has increased significantly over the past three decades. According to the 2008 NSCW 80% of married/partnered employees live in dual-earner couples (86% of women and 75% of men) in the USA, up from 66% of all married/partnered employees in 1977 (91% of women and 53% of men). As women have made strides in educational attainment and work experience, their earnings potential has also grown. In dual-earner couples, women's earnings have increased compared with the earnings of their spouses or partners over the past 15 years. As a result, women in dual-earner couples are contributing significantly more to their family's annual income than they did in the past – an average of 45% in 2008 compared with 39% in 1997.

Implications of long-term demographic changes in the US workforce

There is no doubt that men's and women's lives at work have changed. In the following sections, we explore the implications of the long-term demographic trends discussed above on how men and women view their roles both in the workplace and at home. We propose that along with changing workforce demographics, there have been important changes in employees' attitudes and behaviour related to career advancement and appropriate gender roles, as well as in their experience of work–life conflict.

Traditionally, men have reported greater desire to advance to jobs with more responsibility (Families and Work Institute, 2004; Galinsky *et al.*,

2009). This is undoubtedly a function of traditional gender roles and stereotypes of men as career-oriented “breadwinners”. However, the influx of women into the labour force, combined with higher levels of educational attainment and a narrowing pay gap, is likely not only to increase women’s desire for jobs with more responsibility, but also to challenge employees’ ideas about proper gender roles more generally. The impact of these changes, in turn, extends to employees’ work and personal lives, as well as the interaction between the two. Thus, in this chapter we explore how men and women’s attitudes, behaviour and work–life conflict have changed over time.

Method

Samples

Our research is based on data from the Families and Work Institute 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2008 NSCW surveys, as well as the 1977 QES conducted by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan with funding from the US Department of Labor. The NSCW builds directly upon the 1977 QES, which was discontinued after the 1977 round of data collection. Both the NSCW and QES are based on random samples of the US workforce.

Sample eligibility for all NSCWs was limited to people who (1) worked at a paid job or operated an income-producing business, (2) were 18 or more years old, (3) were in the civilian labour force, (4) resided in the contiguous 48 states, and (5) lived in a non-institutional residence – i.e., household – with a telephone. In households with more than one eligible person, one was randomly selected to be interviewed. For the 1977 QES, sample eligibility was limited to one person per household who (1) worked for pay or other monetary gain for at least 20 hours per week, (2) was 16 or more years old, and (3) could be interviewed in English.

NSCW total samples for each year average about 3500 people, including wage and salaried employees who work for someone else, independent self-employed workers who do not employ anyone else, and small business owners who do employ others. The response rates for all NSCW surveys are above 50%, applying the conservative method of calculation recommended by the American Association for Public Opinion Research. In 2008, the response rate was 54.6%. The estimated maximum sampling error for the total wage and salaried sample is approximately $\pm 1\%$. All NSCW samples are adjusted to reflect (i.e., weighted to) recent US Bureau of the Census statistics on the total US population to adjust for any sampling bias that might have occurred. Specifically, samples are weighted according to number of eligible respondents in a household, respondent gender, education level, race/ethnicity, and age.

Table 13.1 NSCW and QES sample descriptives

| | | 2008 | 2002 | 1997 | 1992 | 1977 |
|--|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | NSCW | NSCW | NSCW | NSCW | QES |
| <i>Wage and salaried employees sample size</i> | | <i>n</i> = 2769 | <i>n</i> = 2810 | <i>n</i> = 2877 | <i>n</i> = 2958 | <i>n</i> = 1298 |
| Sex | Men | 52% | 51% | 52% | 51% | 58% |
| | Women | 48% | 49% | 48% | 49% | 42% |
| Age in years | Mean standard deviation | 41% 13 | 41 13 | 37 16 | 38 11 | 37 13 |
| | Age groups | | | | | |
| | Under age 29 | 22% | 22% | 23% | 24% | 35% |
| | Age 29–42 | 36% | 32% | 41% | 43% | 31% |
| | Age 43–62 | 38% | 42% | 35% | 33% | 31% |
| | Age 63 plus | 4% | 4% | >1% | 1% | 3% |
| Marital status | Living with spouse/partner | 66% | 66% | 65% | 67% | 68% |
| Dual income household | % of all employees living with employed spouse/partner | 53% | 51% | 51% | 49% | 44% |
| Parental status | % of all employees living with child under age 18 | 45% | 43% | 46% | 42% | 48% |

For the purposes of this research, analyses are based on wage and salaried employees only. Sample sizes and descriptive statistics are summarized in Table 13.1.

Procedures

All NSCW surveys were conducted as telephone interviews using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system. Calls were made to a regionally stratified unclustered random probability sample generated by random-digit-dial methods. Interviews were conducted with a questionnaire developed by the Families and Work Institute and averaged 50 minutes in length. Interviewers were initially offered cash honoraria of \$25 as incentives. In order to convert refusals, a higher amount (\$50) was offered.

The 1977 QES was conducted by the Survey Research Center of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. For the cross-sectional sample, a multistage-area probability design was used to select 2850 households in 74 different geographic areas of the contiguous 48

states. A total of 1515 face-to-face interviews were conducted in respondents' homes in the fall of 1977.

Analyses

Various statistical tests for significance were used for this research: Pearson Chi square for comparing nominal scale variables, Mantel-Haenszel Chi square for comparing ordinal scale variables and logistic regression for evaluating relationships between ordinal scale variables. When we speak of "differences" between groups over time or "relationships between variables", these differences/relationships always represent statistical significance at the $p < 0.05$ level or (typically) better.

All cross-year comparisons of independent random samples made adjustments for the design effects associated with each sample. These adjustments reduce the "effective size" of the samples for purposes of statistical tests, making it more difficult to find statistically significant differences. When sample sizes are reported, we use the original sample weightings without adjustments for design effects.

Findings

In this section, we highlight key findings from the 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2008 NSCWs and the 1977 QES about employees' desire for jobs with more responsibility, attitudes about gender roles at home and at work, and work-life conflict.

For the first time, young women and young men do not differ in their desire for jobs with more responsibility

Since 1992, the NSCW has asked employees whether they want a job with more, about the same or less responsibility as part of their plans for the future. In comparing data from the 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2008 NSCWs, we find two striking trends.

First, among the generation called Millennials in the USA (employees under 29 years old), women are just as likely as men to want jobs with greater responsibility. This was not the case among employees under age 29 as recently as a decade ago. The desire to advance to jobs with greater responsibility has generally declined among young workers between 1992 and 2008, reaching its lowest point in 1997 (see Figure 13.4). The reasons for this decline are unclear because the 1992–2002 NSCWs did not ask employees *why* they did not want to move to jobs with greater responsibility. It is likely, however, that increasing job pressure, a prevalent issue in the 1990s, contributed to this decline. In fact, data from the 2008 NSCW, which for the first time asked about reasons for not wanting more responsibility, found that 31% of respondents cited concerns about the increased job pressures that go along with greater responsibilities at work.

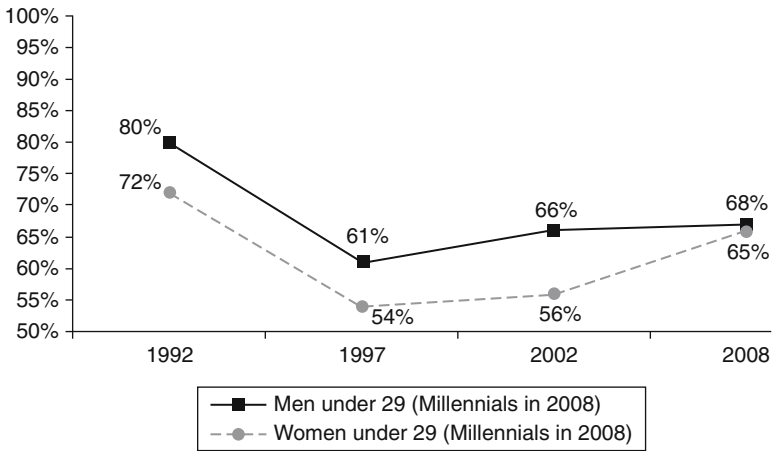


Figure 13.4 Young men's and women's desire to have jobs with greater responsibility (1992–2008)

Note: Statistically significant differences between men and women: 1992 – $p < 0.01$; 1997 – $p < 0.05$; 2002 – $p < 0.01$; 2008 – not significant;

Sample size: 1992 – $n = 686$; 1997 – $n = 657$; 2002 – $n = 590$; 2008 – $n = 598$.

Source: Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2008.

Since 1997, the desire among young workers to move to jobs with more responsibility has rebounded. Interestingly, the increase has been stronger among women than men. This pattern of change has erased the difference between young women and men in wanting jobs with greater responsibility to the point where they are virtually the same.

The second notable trend is that today, there is no difference between young women with and without children in their desire to move to jobs with more responsibility. This was not the case in 1992, when young women with children were substantially and significantly less likely to want to move to jobs with greater responsibility than women without children (see Figure 13.5).

Taken together, these trends suggest that Millennial women in the USA are on a similar footing with their male colleagues when it comes to career ambitions and expectations. As women are more likely to invest substantial amounts of time and energy working outside the home, gender roles need to be reconfigured both at work and at home.

Attitudes about women's and men's work and family roles have changed

Next, we turn to see whether employees' attitudes about the proper roles of men and women have changed. We compared responses to the question "How much do you agree or disagree that it is much better for everyone

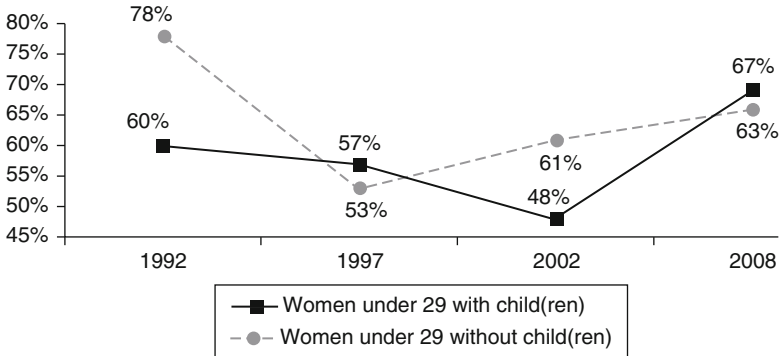


Figure 13.5 Desire to move to jobs with more responsibility among young women with and without children (1992–2008)

Note: Statistically significant differences between young women with and without children: 1992 – $p < 0.001$; 1997 – not significant; 2002 – $p < 0.05$; 2008 – not significant.

Sample size: 1992 – $n = 339$; 1997 – $n = 296$; 2002 – $n = 269$; 2008 – $n = 271$.

Source: Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2008.

involved if the man earns the money and the woman takes care of the home and children? Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?” from the 1977 QES and the 2008 NSCW.

As depicted in Figure 13.6, we find that both men and women are less likely to agree in 2008 that men should earn the money and women should take care of the children and family than they were in 1977. This change has been more dramatic among men than women. For the first time in 2008, men’s and women’s views about appropriate work and family roles have converged to a point where they are virtually identical. Thus, while the attitudes of men and women were significantly and substantially different in 1977, the gender difference was inconsequential and not significantly different in 2008 – a striking and seminal change in attitudes over the past three decades.

Although employees in both single- and dual-earner couples are significantly less likely to endorse traditional gender roles today than they were three decades ago, the attitudes of men in dual-earner couples have changed the most. In 1977, 70% of men in dual-earner couples thought it was better for men to earn the money and for women to care for the home and children. By 2008, only 36% of men in dual-earner couples felt this way, perhaps in part reflecting the fact that family income has become increasingly dependent on women’s earnings.

Attitudes about employed women and mothering have shifted as well, though not as much as attitudes about gender roles. We compared responses to the question “How much do you agree or disagree that a mother who

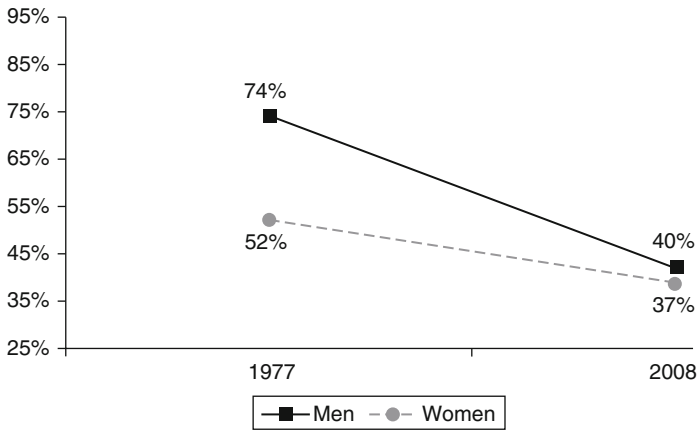


Figure 13.6 Attitudes about gender roles among men and women in the USA (1977–2008)

Note: Statistically significant differences between men and women: 1977 – ***, 2008 – not significant (1977 – $n = 1193$; 2008 – $n = 2730$).

Sources: US Department of Labor, Quality of Employment Survey (1977) and Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce (2008).

works outside the home can have just as good a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work? Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?” from the 1977 QES and the 2008 NSCW. Our findings indicate that employees in 2008 are more likely than in 1977 to agree that employed women can be good mothers. The percentage of employees who agree (strongly or somewhat) that “a mother who works outside the home can have just as good a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work” has increased significantly over the past three decades from 58% in 1977 to 74% in 2008.

As shown in Figure 13.7, men’s views have shifted more than women’s. Nonetheless, men in 2008 were still significantly less likely than women to believe that mothers who work outside the home can have relationships with their children that are just as good as those of mothers who are not employed. When it comes to the impact of maternal employment on children, men in the USA remain more traditional than women.

In addition to attitudinal changes, our research finds that men’s roles and behaviours at home are changing as well. Fathers report spending more time with their children today than they did three decades ago. Employed fathers spend significantly more time per workday with their children under 13 today than three decades ago, while the amount of time employed mothers spend with their children under 13 per workday has not changed significantly (see Figure 13.8). Mothers still spend more time on workdays caring for their children than fathers, but fathers are catching up!

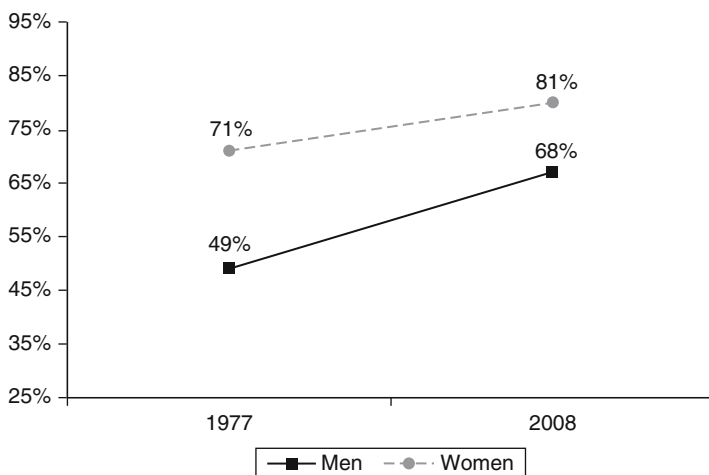


Figure 13.7 Attitudes about women's roles as mothers (1977–2008)

Note: Statistically significant differences between men and women: 1977 – $p < 0.001$; 2008 – $p < 0.001$.

Sample size: 1977 – $n = 1231$; 2008 – $n = 2746$.

Sources: US Department of Labor, Quality of Employment Survey (1977) and Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce (2008).

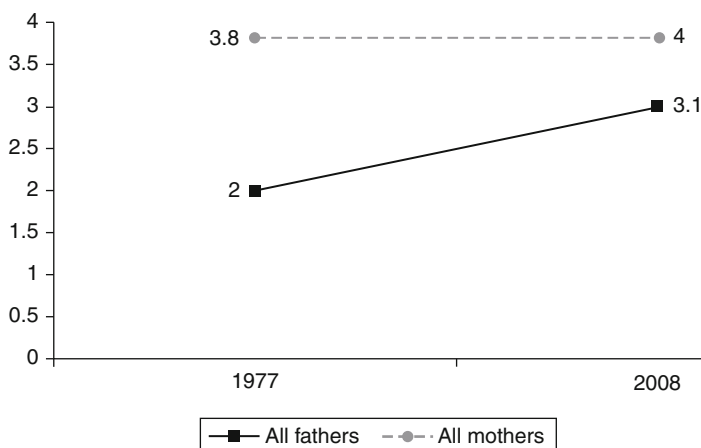


Figure 13.8 Mothers' and fathers' average time (in hours) spent with their children under 13 years on workdays (1977–2008)

Note: Statistically significant differences between fathers and mothers: 1977 – ***; 2008 – *** (1977 – $n = 455$; 2008 – $n = 512$).

Sources: US Department of Labor, Quality of Employment Survey (1977) and Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce (2008).

As work and family roles are converging, levels of work–life conflict for fathers and mothers are diverging

These changes in gender role expectations and behaviour appear to have increased the level of work–life conflict experienced by men. Men’s reported level of work–life conflict (as indicated by a bi-directional measure, reflecting both work interfering with life off the job and life off the job interfering with work) has risen significantly over the past three decades, while the level of conflict reported by women has not changed significantly. In 1977, women were more likely to report experiencing some or a lot of work–life conflict than men but that has now switched. Men’s work–life conflict has increased significantly from 34% in 1977 to 49% in 2008, while women’s work–life conflict has increased less dramatically and not significantly from 34% in 1977 to 43% in 2008.

The level of work–life conflict has become especially acute among fathers in dual-earner families, while that of mothers in dual-earner families has not changed over the past three decades (see Figure 13.9).

Not surprisingly, fathers in dual-earner couples in 2008 experienced more work–life conflict than fathers in single-earner families (59% versus 49%). In past studies, we found no significant difference between fathers in dual- and single-earner couples. This increase reflects our finding that fathers in



Figure 13.9 Percentage of fathers and mothers in dual-earner couples reporting work–life conflict (1977–2008)

Note: Statistically significant differences between men and women in dual-earner couples with children under 18: 1977 – not significant; 2008 – $p < 0.001$.

Sample size: 1977 – $n = 339$; 2008 – $n = 391$.

Sources: US Department of Labor, Quality of Employment Survey (1977) and Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce (2008).

dual-earner couples are taking more responsibility for family work today than in the past (Galinsky et al., 2009).

We were able to identify a number of factors that predict (i.e., are significantly associated with) work–life conflict among employed fathers and mothers, summarized in Table 13.2.

Factors uniquely predicting work–life conflict among fathers include family characteristics, that is, being in a dual-earner couple and having the parents take most of the responsibility for childcare (as opposed to paid caregivers or other family members). In addition, job characteristics matter, such as having supportive supervisors and autonomy at work. Managing both family and work responsibilities, as more men are doing today, seems to present a challenge for men – possibly because men are relatively new

Table 13.2 What factors predict work–life conflict among fathers and mothers?

| Predictor | Effect | Fathers sig. | Mothers sig. |
|---|---|--------------|--------------|
| All hours worked/week in all jobs | Each additional hour worked per week increases the probability of experiencing some degree of work–life conflict | * | *** |
| Time/week spent on self | Each additional hour spent doing things for oneself decreases the probability of work–life conflict | * | ** |
| Dual-earner couple | Having a spouse/partner who works for pay increases the probability of experiencing work–life conflict | * | n.s. |
| Work–life centrism (see discussion in text) | Fathers who are family centric or dual centric are less likely to experience work–life conflict than those who are work centric | *** | *** |
| Who takes most responsibility for childcare | The probability of experiencing work–life conflict is less for fathers in families where someone other than the parents takes most responsibility for childcare | * | n.s. |
| Supervisor support | Greater support from one’s supervisor decreases the probability of work–life conflict | *** | n.s. |
| Autonomy at work | Greater autonomy on the job decreases the probability of work–life conflict | ** | n.s. |
| Job pressure | Greater job pressure increases the probability of work–life conflict | ** | *** |
| Job satisfaction | Greater job satisfaction decreases the probability of work–life conflict | n.s. | *** |

Note: Statistical significance: * $-p < 0.05$; ** $-p < 0.01$; *** $-p < 0.001$; n.s. = not significant. Sample sizes: men $-n = 367$; women $-n = 517$.

Source: Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce (2008).

to the experience of juggling these roles. Our findings suggest that specific strategies, including helping families with childcare as well as increasing supervisor support and autonomy at work, may help in alleviating work–life conflict for fathers.

There are fewer factors that predict work–life conflict among mothers than among fathers (see Table 13.2). For mothers, overall job satisfaction – rather than specific job characteristics – reduces work–life conflict. It is possible that an overall positive experience at work makes up for certain trade-offs, thereby decreasing perceptions of work–life conflict. Women may be more affected by the “big picture” than men (who are more affected by specific job characteristics) when it comes to managing work and family life.

Taken together, these findings suggest that men and women have different needs when it comes to reducing work–life conflict. Men appear to need tools and strategies that target specific work issues – for example, being allowed to have job autonomy – whereas women may be looking for a generalized satisfying experience at work.

Mothers and fathers also share a number of predictors of work–life conflict (see Table 13.2). Not surprisingly, more time and pressure at work increase the probability of work–life conflict for both mothers and fathers – presumably because they leave parents with less time and energy for family responsibilities. Time spent on oneself, however, reduces the probability of work–life conflict for both genders. Taking care of oneself, for example, by taking the time to exercise or do something else that is renewing, might increase an individual’s stamina and energy for important tasks at home and at work. A fourth factor shared by both genders is work–life centrism – the degree to which employees prioritize work over family (work centric), family over work (family centric) or both more or less equivalently (dual centric). Our findings indicate that one’s attitudes about work and family roles affect how torn one feels between these two roles. Both men and women who place greater or equivalent priority on personal and family life (family centric and dual centric) experience less work–life conflict than men and women who place greater priority on their work lives (work centric).

Overall discussion and conclusions

There is no question that the US workforce has changed. Women, and particularly mothers of children under 18, have reached a critical mass in American workplaces. Women are earning the majority of bachelor’s and advanced degrees. In light of these changes, it is not surprising that young women today are equally likely as young men in wanting to move to jobs with more responsibility. Young mothers appear to feel less compelled or pressured to reduce their career aspirations than they may have in the past. Attitudes about working mothers are also more favourable today than ever before. In addition, husbands are more likely to be involved in family work, providing much-needed support for working mothers. Change, however, is

never simple and our data indicate some downsides of the trend toward converging gender roles.

Challenges for men and women in today's workforce

Men's expanding involvement at home implies greater complexity and potential for conflict between work and family roles. While men may be embracing greater responsibility at home, they have not necessarily diminished or relinquished their traditional role as the breadwinners. Competing roles are challenging, both psychologically and practically in terms of the time and energy they have to get everything done.

When it comes to managing work and family responsibilities, some men face challenges in moving beyond gender stereotypes of the traditional male breadwinner. Taking advantage of workplace flexibility is sometimes perceived as a career-limiting or even damaging move both for women and for men. It remains to be seen if the trend of increasing involvement of men in their family lives will change these perceptions and make workplace flexibility a more integral part of American workplace cultures.

Women also continue to face challenges grounded in traditional gender stereotypes, in spite of recent shifts in attitudes about gender roles. The glass ceiling may be showing some cracks, but for many women it often presents a real barrier to greater levels of responsibility. In addition, the reality for many women still includes taking most of the responsibility for managing the household and caregiving. In fact, only 30% of women report that their partners share about equally or take on most of the family responsibilities. This is likely to make it more difficult to find the time and energy necessary for advancement at work. Over time, however, workplaces may change to offer greater support as women's educational advantages become more accepted.

Needless to say, greater demands and challenges at work and at home are likely to lead to increased stress and strain on employees' health and relationships. Self-care is critical to stress management, but finding time to take care of oneself amidst all those demands of time and energy is a challenge unto itself. However, our data offer hope. Those employees who are dual-centric or family centric seem to fare better both at work and at home than those who are work centric. It is clear that paying attention to one's job does not necessarily mean paying less attention to one's personal and/or family life. Achieving some semblance of the right fit may simply involve allocating time and energy differently from day to day, which is the customary strategy of dual-centric people who place equivalent priority on their jobs and their personal/family lives.

Challenges for families

As noted above, the allocation of time and energy to work and family responsibilities presents an ongoing challenge for families – particularly those with both partners employed. A critical issue for families with young children and both parents in the workforce, as well as those with elder care

responsibilities, is finding affordable help, including high quality care and other household help to manage work, self-care and family time. Unfortunately, economic pressures make it difficult for many families to rely on paid help. Turning to extended family and friendship networks for help can also be difficult, as friends and other family members are likely experiencing many of the same challenges.

The current economic downturn has added to the pressures that families feel. As men have lost jobs in disproportionate numbers in the recession and as women's earnings have become more essential to family economic security, the pace of change in gender roles that was already underway may have been accelerated in the USA.

In tackling work–life challenges at the family level, it is useful to take a systemic perspective. As one element of the family system changes, be it due to a change at work (e.g., a promotion, change in hours, loss of a job) or within the family (e.g., an illness), the entire system has to reconfigure and adjust to achieve a new state of equilibrium. Partners have to work together to achieve a degree of fit between work and family needs. This may involve taking turns in who gets to spend more time at work or at home. The family might prioritize one partner's job over the other partner's for a period of time, then switch roles. Needless to say, this kind of flexibility requires a great deal of communication and planning within the family to ensure needs are met at the individual and family levels, but it is important to note that managing work and family responsibilities are family, rather than individual, solutions.

Challenges for employers

Employers can no longer assume traditional gender roles in developing their talent management and work–life programmes and policies. They should design jobs and work environments that allow both *women* and men to succeed at work and that help both *men* and women to succeed at home. If workplaces and employee needs are mismatched, employees are likely to be less effective at their jobs and at home.

Employers may need to do some research within the organization's workforce to identify the needs and values of specific groups of employees (e.g., women, Millennials, parents, etc.), as well as to perform a thorough review of current practices, policies and programmes to ensure that jobs and working conditions meet important employee needs. In addition, our research suggests that certain job characteristics – supervisor support and autonomy – and overall job satisfaction can reduce work–life conflict. Thus, employers might want to consider these findings when thinking about job design within their organizations.

Ideally, shifting attitudes about appropriate roles of men and women at work and at home will translate into changes in workplace policies and practice. The result might be profound changes in the way we think about managing work and family life. Ultimately, nothing short of a cultural

change – a paradigm shift – is required to ensure that employees not only have access to work–life management tools and strategies, but also feel authorized and comfortable making use of these tools.

Directions for future research

Future research would benefit from a work–life fit perspective. Work–life fit refers to the degree to which characteristics of the job meet an individual's needs with respect to the ability to successfully manage both work and personal responsibilities. This implies that work–life fit works for *both* the employer and the employee. Grounded in person–environment fit theory (e.g., Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996), work–life fit focuses on the interaction between person and environment factors in shaping outcomes for employee and employer. Work–life fit should be conceptualized as a dynamic construct – a change in one factor will likely impact the degree of fit with another, thereby impacting outcomes. When work–life fit is poor, we can expect individuals either to take action or to want to take action – for example, by leaving their job, reducing their work hours or asking for flexible work arrangements – or adjust their values, needs and attitudes to better fit their current circumstances at work and at home.

Taking a work–life fit perspective, future research should investigate both individual and environmental variables and, especially, their interaction with respect to outcomes of interest to both employees and employers (e.g., job, life and marital satisfaction, employee health, stress, task and contextual performance at work, turnover). The role of workplace flexibility in facilitating work–life fit and related outcomes would be of particular interest. We believe that researchers should take a comprehensive view of workplace flexibility that includes contextual variables, such as cultural and supervisor support for flexibility, rather than looking at various flexibility practices in isolation.

A changing workforce implies that employees' needs for career development are changing as well. Traditionally, career paths have been conceptualized in terms of a linear, lock-step model with a progression of jobs with more responsibility as employees climb up the “ladder” (Moen & Roehling, 2005). This, however, no longer fits the reality of today's workforce and workplaces. As both men and women are increasingly on a par with respect to their desire for jobs with more responsibility – sharing economic and family responsibilities – more flexible models of career development (e.g., Benko & Weisberg, 2007) need to be developed and evaluated empirically.

Importantly, future research should be inclusive – focusing on the needs and outcomes of both genders. It is clear from our findings that work–life issues are not a women's issue, nor is career advancement a man's issue. In fact, our findings indicate some potentially problematic trends for men – who increasingly seem to be faring worse than women in some areas, including education and work–life conflict. This suggests that both men and

women deserve attention in both research and practice when it comes to efforts at building a more satisfying and effective life at work and at home.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, our findings suggest that there is no “one size fits all” solution to addressing work–life issues. Our findings suggest that men and women differ in how work–life conflict might be reduced. Research, however, should look beyond gender as a predictor and include other dimensions of diversity. For example, the needs of singles or individuals living in non-traditional family arrangements are likely to differ from those living in traditional families. More work is needed to ensure that we can design effective workplaces that allow men and women from a diverse range of backgrounds and situations to succeed in managing their lives on and off the jobs in ways that benefit them, their families and their workplaces.

Note

1. The comparability of historical labour force data has been affected at various times by methodological and conceptual changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS). For an explanation, see the Historical Comparability section of the Household Data technical documentation provided at http://www.bls.gov/cps/eetech_methods.pdf.

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14

Elucidating the Positive Side of the Work–Family Interface on International Assignments: A Model of Expatriate Work and Family Performance

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International assignments are a catalyst for changes in both the family and work lives of expatriates. This is especially true for the majority of expatriates who are married or in a committed relationship (Copeland & Norell, 2002; Harvey, 1985; Tung, 1987, 1999). Before the assignment, both partners have full lives intertwined with those of relatives, friends, colleagues, and community contacts. Upon arriving in the new country, however, they only have each other and, for some, their children. It is not uncommon that both partners work and share household responsibilities before a posting abroad (Harvey, 1995; Harvey & Wiese, 1998a; Reynolds & Bennett, 1991). The assignment often disturbs this balance as the expatriate becomes the sole earner and provider for the family and the expatriate partner becomes a household caretaker and a stay-at-home parent, having not only lost a job but also foregone a career, financial independence, and extended family support. Partners, even those who have not been employed before the move, find themselves faced with new tasks and

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expectations (e.g., Linehan & Scullion, 2001; Pellico & Stroh, 1997; Punnett, 1997; Reynolds & Bennett, 1991; Riusala & Suutari, 2000). In cases where the expatriate couple has children, additional challenges arise, such as children's anguish and uncertainty related to identity formation, break-up of friendships, and disruption of schooling (Borstorff, Harris, Feild & Giles, 1997; De Leon & McPartlin, 1995; Harvey, 1985). Meanwhile, the expatriate is often burdened by more job responsibilities or excessive travel and has less time to spend with family members (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001; Tung, 1986). Consequently, in addition to facing the challenges of new work colleagues and contexts, expatriates need to adjust to new family roles and responsibilities, including the changing dynamics of relationships within the family unit (Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi & Bross, 1998; Harris, 2002; van der Zee, Ali & Salomé, 2005).

Further, on international assignments, boundaries between the work and home contexts become more permeable (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2005). Not only do organizations assume more responsibility for the expatriate family, family members are often more dependent on each other for support and companionship (Caligiuri et al., 1998; Copeland & Norell, 2002). From an identity theory perspective (see Stryker & Burke, 2000), this enhanced permeability strengthens the salience of the expatriate's identity as an employee and as a partner/parent. According to Thoits (1991), salient roles provide the strongest meaning or purpose. The more meaning that is derived from a role, the greater the behavioural guidance that ultimately leads to the enactment of behaviours associated with the role. Thus, for expatriates, performance related to both the work and family roles is important.

In this paper we contend that experiences within both the work and family contexts contribute to "expatriate success" and expand traditional conceptualizations of expatriate adjustment and performance to include both work-role and family-role forms. In addition to expanding the content of adjustment and performance, we also explicitly consider the relationship between adjustment and performance in both the work and family domains. Since early expatriation research, adjustment has been assumed to be a critical antecedent of performance. So pervasive is this assumption that some authors use adjustment as a proxy for performance, without much elaboration on the theoretical grounds regarding the exact nature of the relationship between the two constructs (for a review, see Thomas & Lazarova, 2006). As a consequence, only a limited body of literature has examined the relationship between adjustment and performance empirically. Recent meta-analyses (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer & Luk, 2005; Hechanova, Beehr & Christiansen, 2003) concluded that the relationship typically ranges from non-existent to what can only be considered moderate, suggesting that it may be mediated by other constructs. We propose that the motivational construct of engagement (Kahn, 1990) plays an intervening role in this process. That is, well-adjusted expatriates will

have more energy that they can invest in fulfilling their work and family role expectations.

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the process by which expatriates perform their roles as employees and as spouses/partners. Specifically, our model examines the work/family interface that underpins both work-role and family-role performance on assignment. In developing our model, we integrate the domestic work–family and expatriate literatures to (1) provide a theoretically-grounded conceptualization of cognitive, affective and conative influences on expatriate behaviours in the work and family contexts; (2) clarify the concept of adjustment to capture family-role adjustment and to map the relationships among context-specific dimensions of adjustment; (3) highlight the critical mediating role of engagement for understanding role performance, and, (4) consider spillover effects from the family to the work contexts and crossover effects between expatriates and partners.

Because of the complexity of integrating dual roles (i.e., work and family) and dual actors (i.e., expatriate and partner), we consciously chose several delimiters that allowed us to manage more effectively the development and presentation of the model. The first delimiter involves our unit of analysis. We focus on the experiences of individual expatriates and partners, although we recognize that the model could easily be expanded to one with a multi-level (e.g., family cohesion or dyadic communication) perspective. A second delimiter is that our model is best applied to what can be called a traditional expatriate situation: an extended international posting that requires physical relocation and residence in the foreign country where one of the partners (the expatriate) works and the other one is unemployed. Our emphasis is on the expatriate as the focal target of investigation. Although we take into consideration issues associated with changes in the partner's life, we do not explicitly develop a model for partners. Such a model would parallel the one we propose for expatriates, but some constructs may not be relevant depending on the employment status and the relocation status of the partners. A third delimiter is that our inclusion of partners accompanying the expatriate on assignment restricts the relevance of the model to intact families. We note here that for simplicity of presentation, we refer to two committed partners as a “family” and we use the term “partner” to refer to both spouses and significant others. Those who are not with a partner on the assignment, either because they are not in a committed relationship or because they are separated geographically, are likely to have different experiences. That is not to say, however, that some aspects of the model are not relevant to them.

A model of expatriate performance

We construe expatriate performance as a four-stage process consisting of cognitive, affective, conative and behavioural components. Using abstract

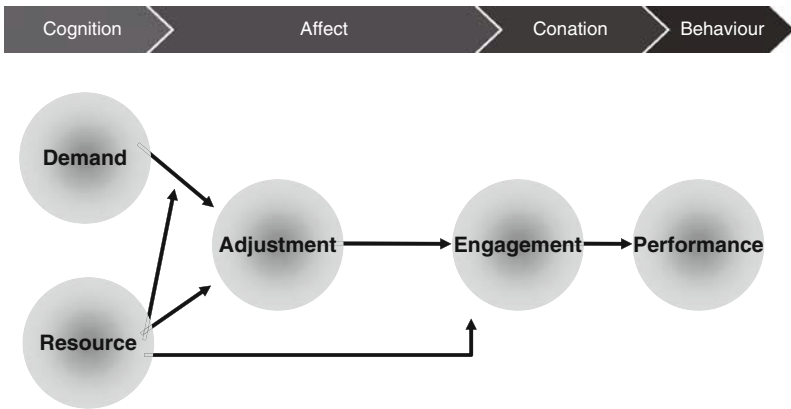


Figure 14.1 Model of core constructs

constructs, Figure 14.1 presents a simplified version of our proposed model of expatriate performance. In this section, we briefly present definitions of our key constructs and provide the theoretical bases for our framework. Subsequent sections describe the stages of the expatriate performance model, elaborating on the specific constructs of interest and the complex relationships among them.

Model components

Cognition is a process of acquiring knowledge and understanding about an event or experience (Huitt, 1999). In our model, it refers to the conditions describing circumstances of the international assignment and is represented by the demands and resources associated with the individual as well as various features of the assignment, including the job, the family and the foreign environment in general. Demands are formally defined as stressors such as physical, psychological, social or situational conditions that require sustained physical or mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs (Karasek, 1979). In contrast, resources refer to physical, psychological, social or situational conditions that are functional in achieving goals, reducing demands and/or stimulating personal growth and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001b; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). *Affect* is the emotional response to an individual's cognitions (Huitt, 1999). We conceptualize it through expatriate adjustment that has been most commonly defined as the "degree of a person's psychological comfort with various aspects of a new setting" (Black & Gregersen, 1991a, p. 498). We include three forms of adjustment in line with the most salient contexts of the expatriate experience: foreign culture, work-role and family-role adjustment. *Conation* is the striving element of motivation and connects cognitions and affect to behaviour (Bandura, 1997; Huitt, 1999). In our model, it

is represented by the motivational constructs work-role and family-role engagement. Engagement is a broad concept that encompasses high involvement, energy and self-presence in various roles (Sonnetag, 2003). We adopt Kahn's definition of engagement as the willing employment and expression of oneself in a particular role and the investment of one's physical, emotional and cognitive energies into role performance (Kahn, 1990).

As depicted in Figure 14.1, our main focus is on explaining the ultimate *behavioural* component which we construe in terms of role performance in the work and family domains. According to ecological systems theory, both work and family are microsystems that entail patterns of activities and roles (Voydanoff, 2007). We broadly define performance in terms of an array of behaviours that reflect participation in a particular role (Welbourne, Johnson & Erez, 1998). Just as work-role performance refers to the attainment of work-related obligations and expectations, family-role performance refers to the attainment of family-related obligations and expectations (Voydanoff, 2007).

Theoretical bases for the model

To explain the inputs to expatriate performance, we draw upon two main theoretical frameworks. Our overarching theory is provided by the Job Demands and Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti et al., 2001b; Llorens, Bakker, Schaufeli & Salanova, 2006), which we integrate with key propositions from contagion theory. The JD-R model provides a parsimonious and integrative theory that explains psychological health impairment (or burnout) in terms of job demands and motivation (or work engagement) in terms of job resources. This model is an extension of earlier work in which job strain is conceptualized as the result of a disturbance of the equilibrium between the demands to which employees are exposed and the resources they have at their disposal. For example, the Demand–Control model (Karasek, 1979) indicates that strain is caused by a combination of high job demands and low decision latitude. The Effort–Reward Imbalance model (Siegrist, 1966) proposes that strain is caused by the imbalance between effort (extrinsic job demands and intrinsic motivation to meet these demands) and rewards (resources such as salary and esteem). In contrast with this earlier work, the JD-R model considers both negative and positive outcomes and recognizes that demands and resources may be unique to certain situations.

First introduced in the study of burnout, in recent years the JD-R model has been applied to the study of the work–family interface and to gain a better understanding of how job characteristics are linked to performance (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004). The key rationale behind such investigations has been that environments characterized by many resources and fewer demands are likely to foster readiness to dedicate one's efforts and abilities to one's task (Llorens, Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2007). The JD-R model has direct implications for two critical components of our

model. First, in the expatriation context, the demands-resources classification can be particularly useful in providing a systematic examination of the various conditions describing the circumstances of the international assignment, as discussed in the subsequent section. Second, based on the schema of relationships proposed by the JD-R model, we argue that a motivational component needs to be included as a link between adjustment and performance.

Another key feature of our proposed framework has to do with previously unexamined aspects of the work/family interface that are likely to affect performance. Kanter (1977) claimed that work and home are the most important domains in a person's life and that experiences in the two domains are interconnected. To capture this dynamic interplay between contexts (i.e., work and family) and actors (i.e., expatriate and partner), we consider the contagion processes of spillover and crossover. Spillover theory conceives of a process by which affect, attitudes and behaviour carry over from one role to another for the same individual (Crouter, 1984; Piotrkowski, 1989; Zedeck, 1992). Spillover is used to describe the transference of moods, skills, values and behaviours from one role to another (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne & Grzywacz, 2006). The crossover model adds another level of complexity by considering this interplay between individuals. Crossover occurs when experiences of one member of a dyad are transferred to another member; and, like spillover, these experiences may be either positive or negative (Westman, 2001). Thus, spillover is an *intra-individual* contagion process that occurs across contexts and crossover is a dyadic, *inter-individual* contagion process that occurs within or across contexts but generates similar reactions in another individual (Westman, 2001).

Proposed relationships

In this section we provide further specificity regarding our key constructs and consider the dynamic interplay between expatriates and partners and between work and family contexts on international assignments. Insofar as our focus is on understanding expatriate performance, we begin with a consideration of this construct. As noted earlier, our model includes both work-and family-role performance, with role performance referring to the participation in a role and the attainment of obligations and expectations stemming from that particular role (Voydanoff, 2007; Welbourne et al., 1998). Our conceptualization of dual forms of performance is consistent with existing efforts to expand the domain of individual performance in general and expatriate performance in particular. Historically, organizational researchers have primarily emphasized employee task performance. However, during the last two decades, theory about performance has evolved to include contextual (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993) and role-based (Welbourne et al., 1998) forms. Similarly, expatriate researchers have conceptualized

expatriate performance in terms of task and contextual forms, as well as developing and maintaining relationships with host country nationals (HCNs) (e.g., Arthur & Bennett, 1997; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1997; Ronen, 1989; Tung, 1981).

Expanding the criterion space to include family-role performance, we draw on the sociology and marriage/family literatures. Researchers in these areas have conceptualized family role performance in various forms, including the performance of household chores (Anderson & Robson, 2006; Devreux, 2007; Gupta, 2006), parental or childcare activities (Devreux, 2007; Gorman & Kmec, 2007), quality of partner and parent-child interactions (Carlson & McLanahan, 2006), and family functioning, such as family cohesion, flexibility and communication (Olson, 1993). As participation within the work context refers to task or contextual performance, performance within the home/family includes task (e.g., completing household chores) and contextual (e.g., helping family members) forms of performance (Voydanoff, 2007). Performance in the family domain is especially relevant to expatriates. In addition to facing the challenges of new work conditions and culture, expatriates need to adjust to new family roles and responsibilities, including the changing dynamics of relationships within the family.

The proposed influences on performance are depicted in Figure 14.2. We offer general propositions that portray expatriate performance as a sequential process involving cognitive, affective and conative stages. While our purpose is to put forward an overarching theoretical framework that elucidates the relationships within and between these stages, in addition to

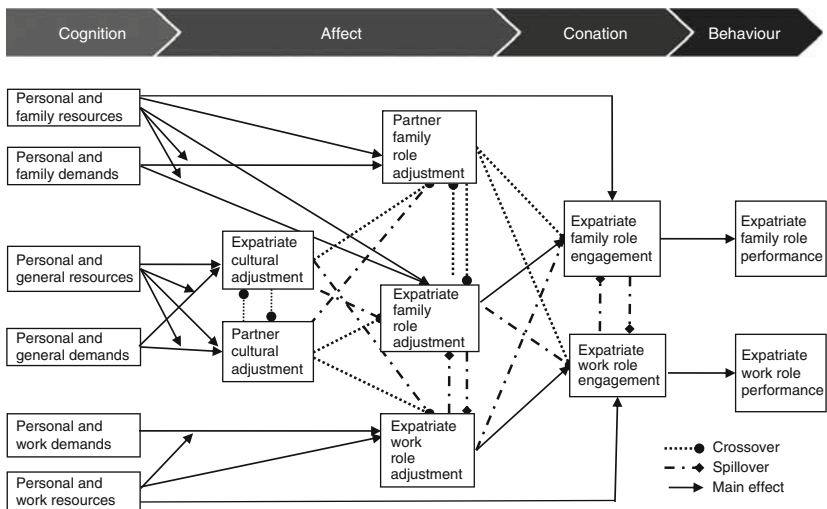


Figure 14.2 A model of the work-family interface on international assignments

Table 14.1 General propositions and specific hypotheses following the model

| | |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Proposition 1: Demands are negatively related to adjustment</i></p> | <p>1a. Personal and family demands are negatively related to expatriate family-role adjustment. 1b. Personal and family demands are negatively related to partner family-role adjustment. 1c. Personal and general demands are negatively related to expatriate cultural adjustment. 1d. Personal and general demands are negatively related to partner cultural adjustment. 1e. Personal and work demands are negatively related to expatriate work-role adjustment.</p> |
| <p><i>Proposition 2: Resources are positively related to adjustment and mitigate the negative relationship between demands and adjustment</i></p> | <p>2a, b. Personal and family resources are positively related to family-role adjustment of (a) expatriates and (b) partners 2c, d. Personal and family resources moderate the negative relationship between family demands and family-role adjustment of (c) expatriates and (d) partners. 2e, f. Personal and general resources are positively related to cultural adjustment of (e) expatriates and (f) partners. 2g, h. Personal and general resources moderate the negative relationship between general demands and cultural adjustment of (g) expatriates and (h) partners. 2i. Personal and work resources are positively related to expatriate work-role adjustment. 2j. Personal and work resources moderate the negative relationship between work demands and expatriate work-role adjustment.</p> |
| <p><i>Proposition 3: Resources are positively related to engagement</i></p> | <p>3a. Personal and family resources are positively related to expatriate family-role engagement. 3b. Personal and work resources are positively related to expatriate work-role engagement.</p> |
| <p><i>Proposition 4: Cultural adjustment is positively related to work-role and family-role adjustment, with spillover occurring across contexts and crossover occurring between expatriates and partners</i></p> | <p>4a, b. Expatriate cultural adjustment spills over to his/her (a) family-role adjustment and (b) work-role adjustment. 4c, d. Expatriate family-role adjustment spills over to his/her work-role adjustment and (d) vice versa. 4e. Partner cultural adjustment spills over to his/her family-role adjustment. 4f, g. Expatriate cultural adjustment crosses over to (f) partner cultural adjustment and (g) vice versa. 4h, i. Expatriate family-role adjustment crosses over to (h) partner family-role adjustment and (i) vice versa. 4j. Expatriate cultural adjustment crosses over to partner family-role adjustment. 4k, l. Partner cultural adjustment crosses over to (k) expatriate family-role adjustment and (l) expatriate work-role adjustment.</p> |

Proposition 5: Adjustment and engagement are positively related, both within and across work and family contexts

5a. There is a positive relationship between expatriate work-role adjustment and his/her work-role engagement.

5b. There is a positive relationship between expatriate family-role adjustment and his/her family-role engagement.

5c. Expatriate work-role adjustment spills over to expatriate family-role engagement.

5d. Expatriate family-role adjustment spills over to expatriate work-role engagement.

5e. Partner family-role adjustment crosses over to expatriate work-role engagement.

5f. Partner family-role adjustment crosses over to expatriate family-role engagement.

Proposition 6: There is a spillover between work-role and family-role engagement

6a, b. Expatriate work-role engagement spills over to (a) his/her family-role engagement and (b) vice versa.

Proposition 7: Engagement has a positive effect on performance and mediates the relationship between adjustment and performance

7a. Expatriate work-role engagement is positively related to his/her work-role performance.

7b. Expatriate's family-role engagement is positively related to his/her family-role performance.

7c. Expatriate work- and family-role engagement mediate the effects of work- and family-role adjustment on expatriate work- and family-role performance.

our general propositions, we outline specific hypotheses in Table 14.1. These hypotheses are more explicit statements of the general propositions and can be used to test the proposed framework. A core assumption of our model is that conative (i.e., engagement) elements are mediators in the proposed process.

Cognition stage

Cognitions are construed as distal influences that indirectly determine expatriate performance in work and family contexts through their effect on expatriate affect and conation. While cognitions refer to the perceptions and interpretations of what is occurring, they are based on objective reality (Hobfoll, 2002). As noted above, for expatriates, cognitive influences include demands and resources that represent conditions of the international assignment. In this section, we first describe the content of these demands and resources and then we detail their complex relationships with adjustment and engagement.

The content of demands and resources. Our blueprint on the cognitive stage is provided by research on adjustment antecedents (notably, but not exclusively, work by Black and colleagues, Black, 1990; Black & Gregersen,

1991a, 1991b; Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985; Shaffer, Harrison, Luk & Gilley, 2000; Shaffer, Harrison & Gilley, 1999; Takeuchi, Yun & Tesluk, 2002; Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward & Kennedy, 2001). The literature offers a plethora of adjustment predictors that can be loosely classified in several groups (for recent reviews, see Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Harrison, Shaffer & Bhaskar-Shrinivas, 2004; Hechanova et al., 2003): general attributes of the local host environment, personal attributes of the expatriate, work attributes, including characteristics of the larger organization, the job and the assignment, and family attributes. To reduce the complexity reflected in current research, we use the framework provided by the JD-R model (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, de Jonge, Janssen & Schaufeli, 2001a) to classify these attributes as general, personal, work and family demands or resources (see Table 14.2). Attributes associated with negative expatriate experiences are considered demands; those associated with positive experiences are considered resources.

The influence of demands and resources on adjustment and engagement. Applying the JD-R model not only allows us to make sense of the multitude of individual and contextual predictors but also provides a theoretical grounding for the relationship between these predictors and performance, via their influence on adjustment and engagement. According to the JD-R model, demands deplete employees' energy, ultimately culminating in strain or negative affect. For example, Bakker et al. (2004) found strong support that work pressure and emotional demands predicted the exhaustion component of burnout (see also Demerouti et al., 2001a; Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006; Llorens et al., 2006). Applying this to the case of expatriation, we anticipate that excessive demands, emanating from the work or family domains as well as the general foreign environment, will have an adverse impact on expatriate and partner affect. For example, expatriates and partners who are overwhelmed by the novelty of the foreign culture, have ethnocentric attitudes and have extensive work or family demands have difficulty adjusting (Shaffer & Harrison, 2001; Shaffer et al., 1999). If these demands are not offset by appropriate resources, they may be especially detrimental to the adjustment of the expatriate and his/her partner.

Proposition 1: Demands are negatively related to adjustment.

From a JD-R perspective, resources either contribute to expatriate adjustment directly or indirectly, by buffering the effects of demands on adjustment (see Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema, 2005). In contrast with the energy-depleting role of demands, resources trigger a process that enables individuals to achieve their goals, leading directly to positive affective outcomes such as organizational commitment (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). For example, employees with positive self-evaluations (a personal resource) are more likely to strive to fulfill goals and, in the process, experience greater job satisfaction (Judge, Bono & Locke, 2000). According to the JD-R model, resources also function to offset the adverse effects of demands. In other words, individuals can draw upon resources to buffer the adverse effects

Table 14.2 Expatriate demands and resources

| Attributes | Demand | Resource |
|--|--------|----------|
| General attributes | | |
| Comparable standard of living in host location | | X |
| Urban location of assignment | | X |
| Comparable quality of living conditions | | X |
| Availability of domestic help (driver, gardener, household help) | | X |
| Culture toughness/novelty/distance | X | |
| Personal attributes | | |
| <i>Demographic characteristics</i> | | |
| Gender (Male) | | X |
| Marital status (Married) | | X |
| Number and ages of children | X | |
| Education | | X |
| Income | | X |
| Tenure | | X |
| Organizational level/Position | | X |
| Number of previous assignments | | X |
| <i>Individual differences</i> | | |
| Self-efficacy | | X |
| Flexibility/adaptability | | X |
| Openness | | X |
| Empathy | | X |
| Tolerance for ambiguity | | X |
| Emotional sensitivity | | X |
| Positive affectivity | | X |
| Extroversion | | X |
| Self-monitoring | | X |
| Optimism | | X |
| Emotional resilience | | X |
| External locus of control | X | |
| Ethnocentrism | X | |
| Career salience/career proactivity | | X |
| <i>Knowledge, skills, abilities</i> | | |
| Pre-departure knowledge | | X |
| Host country language ability | | X |
| Relational skills | | X |
| Coping/Stress management skills | | X |
| Willingness to go on assignment | | X |
| Willingness to relocate to culturally dissimilar countries | | X |
| Work attributes | | |
| <i>Organizational factors</i> | | |
| Cross-cultural training | | X |
| Logistical support and relocation assistance | | X |
| Parent company perceived organizational support (POS) | | X |
| Large organizational size | | X |
| Supportive organizational culture | | X |

Table 14.2 (Continued)

| Attributes | Demand | Resource |
|---|--------|----------|
| <i>Job/Assignment factors</i> | | |
| Senior position level on assignment | | X |
| Generous assignment compensation package (incl. cost of living adjustments) | | X |
| Length of assignment | | X |
| Communication with head office | | X |
| Host location POS | | X |
| Company support on assignment location (e.g., spouse job-seeking assistance, schooling for children) | | X |
| Social support from /interaction with HCNs | | X |
| Social support from /interaction with other expatriates | | X |
| Supervisor support | | X |
| LMX | | X |
| Role clarity | | X |
| Role discretion/autonomy | | X |
| Role conflict | X | |
| Role ambiguity | X | |
| Role overload | X | |
| Demands for frequent travel | X | |
| Regional responsibility | X | |
| High work pressure | X | |
| Unfavourable physical environment | X | |
| Emotionally demanding interactions with clients | X | |
| <i>Family attributes</i> | | |
| Adjusted accompanying spouse | | X |
| Spouse/partner support | | X |
| Spouse/partner satisfaction | | X |
| Relationship satisfaction | | X |
| Family communication | | X |
| Partner willingness to go/partner attitude to host location | | X |
| Dual career couple | X | |
| Loss of partner career/job/income | X | |
| Family responsibilities (incl. childcare and/or elderly care responsibilities in country of assignment or home country) | X | |

Notes:

1. This list of attributes considers the most commonly used factors in expatriate research but is not exhaustive.
2. Attributes associated in the literature with negative expatriate experiences are listed as demands; those associated with positive expatriate experiences are listed as resources.
3. Table entries are based on frameworks proposed by Aycan, 1997b; Black et al., 1991; Parker and McEvoy, 1993; Shaffer et al., 1999; Ward and Kennedy, 1994 and recent meta-analyses by Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005, and Hechanova et al., 2003.

of demanding conditions (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2005). Within the expatriate context, resources have been found to have both direct and moderating influences on adjustment. For example, perceived organizational support and supervisor support positively contribute to expatriate adjustment (Guzzo, Noonan & Elron, 1994; Kraimer, Wayne & Jaworski, 2001; Shaffer et al., 1999). Such support may also play a buffering role, alleviating the negative impact of work overload on adjustment (Shaffer et al., 1999). Indeed, social support and other resources play a key role in moderating stressor-strain relationships (Cranford, 2004; Hobfoll, 2002). In particular, given the ubiquitous nature of personal resources (e.g., personality and interpersonal skills), they will likely be involved in numerous direct and moderating relationships as detailed in Table 14.1 and illustrated in Figure 14.2.

Proposition 2: Resources are positively related to adjustment and mitigate the negative relationship between demands and adjustment.

Resources can also stimulate employee motivation to participate fully in one's various roles and dedicate one's efforts and abilities to a particular task (Llorens et al., 2006). Indeed, recent research has been amassing evidence for the positive relationship between resources and engagement (Christian & Slaughter, 2007; Hakanen et al., 2006; Salanova, Agut & Peiró, 2005). The idea that resources can increase levels of engagement is consistent with a variety of theoretical approaches focusing on the motivational role of job resources. One approach is Hackman and Oldham's (1980) job characteristics theory which considers the motivational potential of a job as a function of various work resources such as job significance, job identity, skill utilization, job autonomy/perceived control, job significance and job feedback. Another relevant theoretical framework is the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989), according to which resources lead to the acquisition of new resources, with accumulated resources motivating employees to invest those resources towards improving their performance (see also Hobfoll, 2002).

Numerous studies based on the JD-R model have demonstrated that work resources such as feedback, job control, supervisory support, social climate, participation, job security and perceived management quality predict work-role engagement (see e.g., Bakker et al., 2004; Demerouti et al., 2001b; Hakanen et al., 2006; Mauno, Kinnunen & Ruokolainen, 2007). Personal resources such as individual differences (e.g., extraversion or self-efficacy beliefs, Langelaan, van Doornen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006; Salanova, Bakker & Llorens, 2006) have also been found to predict work-role engagement. We anticipate that comparable family resources (e.g., spouse support, family communication) as well as personal resources (such as optimism and tolerance for ambiguity) will induce expatriates to become more engaged in their family roles.

Proposition 3: Resources are positively related to engagement.

Affect stage

This stage of the model is represented by adjustment, which is the central affective construct in the expatriate literature. In line with this literature, we conceptualize adjustment as a multidimensional set of affective responses (Shaffer et al., 1999) to demands and resources emanating from the family and work contexts and the foreign environment. However, we critically examine past research and argue for a revised conceptualization of the dimensionality of adjustment. We then map relationships among the revised facets of this construct, specifying both crossover and spillover effects. Finally, we consider the influence of adjustment on engagement.

The content of adjustment. Grounded in the stress literature, the definition and conceptualization of adjustment most widely adopted by expatriate research has been suggested by Black and colleagues (Black, 1988; Black & Gregersen, 1991a, 1991b; Black & Stephens, 1989). According to them, expatriate in-country adjustment is comprised of three aspects: adjustment to various cultural factors (such as living conditions and local food), adjustment to interacting with HCNs and adjustment to the assignment's work responsibilities. Further, spouse adjustment includes cultural and interaction adjustment. Nearly two decades of research have accumulated sizeable, though not entirely internally consistent, evidence for the fact that adjustment is a multi-faceted construct (i.e., work, interaction and cultural/general), and for specific links between adjustment facets and their antecedents and outcomes (e.g., Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Harrison et al., 2004; Shaffer et al., 1999; Thomas, 1998). All in all, the model has held up well under empirical scrutiny and has been extremely useful in unraveling many aspects of the expatriate adjustment experience.

While the idea of multidimensionality of the adjustment construct has been widely embraced by researchers, concerns have been raised about the theoretical basis of the specific facets of Black et al.'s model (Hippler, 2000; see also Suutari & Brewster, 1998; Thomas & Lazarova, 2006). Furthermore, a large number of researchers have used the model selectively, choosing to test some of its propositions at the expense of others. While some authors (Kraimer et al., 2001; Shaffer et al., 1999) adopt all three facets, the majority focus on the cultural and work facets, especially in research that combines work on expatriation and work/family balance (Aycan, 1997a, 1997b; Caligiuri et al., 1998; Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun & Lepak, 2005a; Takeuchi, Wang & Marinova, 2005b; Takeuchi et al., 2002). According to these researchers, there are two broad contexts to which expatriates need to adjust, work and non-work (Takeuchi et al., 2005b).

While cultural adjustment is primarily non-work related, and work adjustment is work-related, interaction adjustment spans the work and the non-work environments (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998). Interactions with HCNs are implicit in both – and necessary for both. As measured by the Black scale

(1988, 1990), the dimension of interaction adjustment is ambiguous as it refers to interactions with HCNs both within the workplace and within the general environment. In addition to what appears to be a conceptual redundancy, recent empirical research that utilizes the three dimensions has reported very high levels of association between interaction adjustment and cultural adjustment (Cerdin, 1999; Stahl & Caligiuri, 2005). To better clarify the content and nuances of adjustment facets and to avoid such redundancy, we draw upon role theory (Katz & Kahn, 1978) to suggest that interaction adjustment be subsumed under the respective contexts where social interactions occur. That is, interactions with HCNs within the work context can be incorporated within the work adjustment construct and interactions with HCNs in the non-work environment fall into cultural adjustment.

Research has also suggested that existing models of adjustment (Aycan, 1997b; Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Searle & Ward, 1990) may have failed to account for all aspects of adjustment. In a study on the adjustment of expatriate spouses, Shaffer and Harrison (2001) discuss “personal” adjustment which they define as “identity reformation”. Attachments and routines established in one’s home country are broken, personal and social roles are redefined, relationships are viewed differently. Similarly, Mohr and Klein (2004) talk about “role adjustment”, or the adjustment to the substantial change in their roles. Similar sentiments are echoed in anecdotal accounts of the expatriate experience. In one example, an author described her overnight identity transformation from a journalist with a promising television career to “a single parent without dating privileges” (Pascoe, 2003). Although past research has discussed these issues primarily with respect to the non-working partner, we believe the same arguments are applicable in the case of the expatriate whose identity as a partner/parent also undergoes major changes. In sum, we expand the concept of adjustment to include a new facet, *family-role adjustment*, to account for changes within the family context for both partners.

Relationships among the forms of adjustment. Having (re)defined adjustment in terms of comfort within specific contexts, we draw on theoretical perspectives from spillover research to map the relationships among the three facets of cultural adjustment, work-role adjustment and family-role adjustment. Whereas most spillover studies have investigated job and marital satisfaction (Judge & Ilies, 2004; Williams & Alliger, 1994), some expatriate studies have examined the spillover of adjustment. Takeuchi, Yun, and Tesluk (2002) found that expatriates’ cultural adjustment spilled over to their work context and affected job satisfaction. Specifically, expatriates’ cultural adjustment and work adjustment were positively related to job satisfaction. Similarly, Van der Zee, Ali and Salome (2005) found negative spillover of expatriates’ home demands to their work roles. Given this support for the spillover of affect across salient contexts, we anticipate that

expatriate adjustment within one context will affect other contexts. In particular, we expect the more general construct of cultural adjustment to influence the more specific work-role and family-role forms of adjustment. This ordering of affective reactions is consistent with Aycan's (1997a) model of work adjustment. Specifically, if expatriates are culturally adjusted, their positive feelings will spill over to the family and to their work. Similarly, if expatriates are well adjusted to their work, one can expect a spillover of adjustment to their family context; if they experience family-role adjustment, it will spill over to the work context, thus creating a positive spiral (Hobfoll, 1989).

In addition to spillover effects within the affective space, we also contend that expatriates and partners will experience crossover effects of adjustment to various contexts. Within the expatriate literature, some researchers have examined positive crossover between expatriates and spouses. Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi and Bross (1998) found that spouses' family cross-cultural adjustment positively influenced expatriates' overall cross-cultural adjustment. Similarly, Shaffer and Harrison (1998) found a crossover of satisfaction between expatriates and spouses. Specifically, they found that spouses' overall satisfaction with the foreign environment was positively related to expatriates' non-work satisfaction. In the same vein, Van der Zee et al. (2005) found crossover of stressors from the expatriate to the spouse's subjective well-being and emotional distress of expatriates crossed over to contribute to their spouse's distress. Likewise, Black and Stephens (1989) found that a spouse's general adjustment was positively related to all forms of the expatriate's adjustment.

Insofar as international relocation causes loss of support from extended family and friends, expatriates and accompanying family members become more dependent on one another. This is a precondition for strong crossover as frequent interactions and good relationships are the basis for crossover to occur (Westman, 2001). However, researchers have tended to investigate only unidirectional crossover from spouses to expatriates, ignoring the possibility of bi-directional crossover. To the best of our knowledge, Takeuchi et al. (2002) were the first to look for bi-directional crossover of adjustment. Moreover, they have suggested that there is a possibility of both negative and positive synergy between spouses and expatriates in terms of the cross-cultural adjustment process. Accordingly, the failure of one partner to adjust affects the other's adjustment, causing a downward spiral of losses resulting in premature termination of the assignment. Although Takeuchi et al. (2002) suggested that potential exists for synergy between spouses and expatriates, they did not elaborate how this process occurs. Possibly, expatriates find the features of the job challenging and therefore adjust quickly, experience growth and thus affect their partners' cultural adjustment. From this perspective, there is potential for positive synergy between partners and expatriates as the adjustment of one partner crosses over to

the other. To that end, recent research has provided evidence of crossover of satisfaction and happiness between spouses (Demerouti, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2005; Powsthavee, 2007; Prince, Manolis & Minetor, 2007). Consequently, we offer the following proposition, with specific relationships detailed in Table 14.1 and illustrated in Figure 14.2:

Proposition 4: Cultural adjustment is positively related to work-role and family-role adjustment, with spillover occurring across contexts and crossover occurring between expatriates and partners.

The influence of adjustment on engagement. As previously noted, adjustment is the degree of comfort with various aspects of the assignment. Engagement refers to willingly employing and expressing oneself in a particular role and involves the investment of one's energies into role performance. We argue here that adjustment is an affective psychological state that enables expatriates to put more effort into their roles both as employees and as partners, thus becoming more engaged in their work and family roles.

Adjustment implies that the individual has overcome symptoms such as stress, anxiety, irritability and helplessness normally associated with the transition to a new environment (Church, 1982; Oberg, 1960) and is experiencing a sense of psychological and emotional wellbeing (Searle & Ward, 1990). By definition, an engaged individual is one that is attentive, connected, integrated and focused and channels one's personal energies in physical, cognitive and emotional labors (Kahn, 1992). To be fully attentive one has to be open to others and free from anxiety. To be connected, one has to be able to experience empathy towards others, make oneself available to people or tasks, and be a part of mutuality of connections. To be integrated one has to experience a sense of wholeness in a situation. To be focused means staying within the boundaries of one's respective role, situation and/or relationship (Kahn, 1992). Individuals that are not adjusted are highly unlikely to be able to experience any of these states. In contrast, adjustment allows expatriates to achieve attentiveness, sense of connection, integration and focus by diminishing (or completely freeing them from) stress, eliminating distractions and giving them the energy they need to employ and express themselves in their roles as workers and family members.

Kahn's model of engagement (Kahn, 1990, 1992) provides further support for our argument. The model posits that three conditions are necessary for an individual to become engaged: psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability. Achieving all three can be facilitated by adjustment. Psychological meaningfulness refers to elements that create incentives or disincentives for investment of the self. It is present when an individual feels worthwhile, valued and valuable, and feels able to give and receive from engaging in a role. Expatriates who are not adjusted are still uncertain about how to interpret and respond to their new environment. Thus, it is highly unlikely that they can experience meaningful

participation in their roles. Psychological safety involves the sense of being able to show and employ oneself without fear of negative consequences to self-image or status. Individuals who feel psychological safety feel that situations are trustworthy, secure, predictable and clear in terms of behavioural consequences. Expatriates who are not adjusted are unsure of the appropriate ways to behave in the foreign environment and lack a sense of security and/or predictability. Any action (or inaction) that clashes with the appropriate norms may lead to potentially negative consequences. In other words, low levels of adjustment will likely be reflected by decreased perceptions of psychological safety. Psychological availability refers to possessing the physical, emotional and psychological resources necessary for investing oneself in role performances. Psychological availability is associated with minimum distractions, confidence in one's abilities and status and certainty about one's fit with the social systems that allow more room for investment of self in role performances. Only expatriates that are well adjusted will feel they have sufficient available resources. Poorly adjusted expatriates will need to conserve resources to help them achieve an acceptable level of comfort with the foreign environment, thus reducing the sense of psychological availability that is necessary for role engagement.

The influence of adjustment on engagement is consistent with Kahn's idea that psychological states mediate the relationship between the environment and engagement (Kahn, 1990, Kahn, 1992). Related to this, he notes that psychological presence in a role (an important attribute of engagement) is a function of how people experience themselves and their situations (Kahn, 1992). Additional support to our proposition is provided by new developments in motivation theory which have suggested that affective experiences have a critical role in determining motivation (e.g., Seo, Barrett & Bartunek, 2004). A recent review maintained that evidence for the importance of affect is increasing (Latham & Pinder, 2005). Similarly, Huitt (1999) points out that affect is an essential element for the energizing component of conation. Based on these perspectives, we posit that adjusted expatriates are emotionally equipped to effectively engage in all their life domains. Given that both adjustment and engagement occur within specific contexts such as work and family, we propose a direct relationship between adjustment and engagement within one's work and family roles.

Based on contagion theory, we also expect positive spillover of adjustment to engagement from one context to another (work to family and family to work) and crossover across contexts between partners. Spillover occurs when expatriates who are adjusted to their new work roles have more time and energy to put into the family context. Similarly, family-role adjustment reduces the uncertainties emanating from the family context and enables expatriates to become more absorbed in their work roles. This is consistent with Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) work-family enrichment model that posits experiences in one role improve the quality of life in another

role. We also expect a crossover effect to occur between the partner's family-role adjustment and the expatriate's family-role engagement (for a review, see Westman, 2001). In this case, partners who experience high family-role adjustment will provide a comfort zone for the expatriate and thus, the partner's family-role adjustment will cross over to the expatriate and affect his/her work-role and family-role engagement. Formally, we offer the following:

Proposition 5: Adjustment and engagement are positively related, both within and across work and family contexts.

Conation Stage

As noted above, conation is the striving element of motivation and it connects cognition and affect to the behavioural (i.e., performance) stage (Huitt, 1999). This stage of our model is represented by engagement. After discussing the content of this construct, we consider reciprocal influences between work- and family-role forms of engagement as well as the direct and mediating influences of engagement on performance.

The content of engagement. As previously noted, in this paper we adopt Kahn's earlier definition (Kahn, 1990) according to which engagement refers to willingly employing and expressing oneself in a particular role and involves the investment of one's physical, emotional and cognitive energies into role performance. We do so for several reasons. Kahn's landmark model is the first to apply the concept of engagement to the world of work (Avery, McKay & Wilson, 2007) and it is at the core of much subsequent engagement research (Christian & Slaughter, 2007; Rothbard, 2001; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Most importantly, Kahn's definition emphasizes the motivational component of engagement; as such, it best represents a conative component of the mind (Huitt, 1999).

Reciprocal influences of engagement. Consistent with our emphasis on both the family and work contexts, we consider here two corresponding forms of engagement: work- and family-role. From a spillover perspective (Salanova et al., 2005), we contend that work-role and family-role engagement will have reciprocal spillover effects. Determining whether spillover will be positive or negative, however, is problematic. The extensive body of work/life balance literature contains a myriad of theoretical perspectives that can support a positive, a negative, or a non-existent, relationship between the two forms of engagement (Bailyn, 1993; Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Fredriksen-Goldsen & Scharlach, 2001; Lambert, 1990; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1997; Randall, 1988; Rothbard, 2001; Zedeck, 1992). While a detailed review of the literature is beyond the scope of this paper, we present the two central perspectives in the field. By far the more dominant argument in the literature, the conflict/depletion perspective implies an inverse relationship between work-role and family-role engagement. Given the (assumed) inherent and inevitable tradeoffs

between the family and work domains, high engagement in one role will necessarily be associated with lower engagement in the other role (e.g., Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Hochschild, 1997). Less prevalent but gaining increasing popularity, the facilitation/enrichment perspective suggests that a positive spillover is possible (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Marks, 1977; Rothbard, 2001). In line with tenets of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), the argument centers on the possibility that engagement in one context (e.g., family) can generate feelings of well-being that may spill over to the other context (e.g., work). For example, expatriates who are energized by and dedicated to (i.e., engaged in) the family role can obtain more personal resources to allocate to the work role. Similarly, those who are engaged in the work role will likely have more energy and commitment to the family role.

Perhaps not surprisingly, empirical evidence regarding the spillover between the two forms of engagement is mixed. Most notably, Rothbard (2001) found support for both depletion (negative spillover) and enrichment (positive spillover) between work-role and family-role engagement in a single study. She further examined the central role of a person's positive or negative emotional response to a role and the importance of gender as a moderator. In light of existing research, our model will be incomplete if we fail to acknowledge that a spillover between work-role and family-role engagement exists. However, given the focus of our paper (building a process model of expatriate performance), we are wary of veering too far off course by examining all possible influences on the apparently complex relationship between the two constructs. Thus, we put forward a spillover proposition without specifying whether the relationship will be positive or negative.

Proposition 6: There is a spillover between work-role and family-role engagement.

The direct and mediating roles of engagement. As depicted in Figure 14.2, engagement has a direct effect on performance. This is consistent with the JD-R perspective whereby engagement is a proximal antecedent of performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker et al., 2004; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). Recent studies based on the JD-R model have indeed indicated that work engagement is positively related to performance (for an overview, see Demerouti & Bakker, 2006). Related research has also shown that engaged workers exhibit personal initiative, proactive behaviour and learning motivation (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007; Sonnentag, 2003). Kahn's model also explicitly suggests that engagement is an important ingredient for effective role performance (Kahn, 1990, 1992). He maintains that the extent to which organization members are "psychologically present" and thus personally accessible at work shapes their productivity (Kahn, 1992). Studies have linked job engagement with a spectrum of performance-related behaviours, including task performance (Hakanen et al., 2006), performance rated by supervisor (Rich, 2007; Rich & LePine, 2007; Rothbard & Wilk, 2007), commitment (Hakanen, Schaufeli & Ahola, 2008), and organizational

citizenship behaviour (Rich, 2007; Rich & LePine, 2007). Schaufeli and Salanova (2007) recently summarized the positive outcomes of work engagement in terms of positive job-related attitudes, good physical and mental health, extra role behaviour and performance, satisfaction with the job, commitment and tendency to remain in the organization, better performance and loyalty to customers. Based on these theoretical arguments and growing empirical evidence, we anticipate that expatriate work-role engagement will have a direct effect on expatriate work-role performance. Similarly, family-role engagement will have a direct effect on expatriate family-role performance. Although no empirical studies have explored the latter relationship, the same theoretical argument holds: psychological presence in the family role is likely to lead to effective family-role performance (Kahn, 1990).

In addition to positing a direct effect of engagement on performance, we also maintain that engagement plays an intervening role in the relationship between adjustment and performance. The expatriate literature has traditionally assumed that increased performance is a direct outcome of cross-cultural adjustment. However, a careful review of research to-date reveals that the evidence for such an association is far from established. Not all studies have found support for a positive link between adjustment and performance and interpreting existing research is complicated by conceptualization and measurement issues, notably, the conceptual overlap between many "expatriate effectiveness" measures and facets of adjustment (Thomas & Lazarova, 2006). In line with results from two meta-analyses that conclude that adjustment exhibits stronger relationships with attitudinal variables such as job satisfaction rather than with performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Hechanova et al., 2003), Thomas and Lazarova (2006) encourage future research to consider the possibility that the adjustment-performance link is not direct but is mediated by other constructs.

As discussed in previous sections, evidence exists to suggest that adjustment is positively related to engagement and engagement is positively related to role performance. Based on this evidence and drawing on the cognition-affect-conation-behaviour framework (Bagozzi, 1992; Huit, 1999) and the JD-R model (Bakker & Geurts, 2004; Bakker et al., 2004), we propose that the relationship between adjustment and performance is mediated by engagement. According to Bagozzi (1992), attitudinal researchers have not been successful in predicting behaviour because they have omitted the construct of conation. Engagement represents this missing conative or motivational link that allows expatriates to transfer the positive state of adjustment into successful performance. Further, following the logic of the JD-R model, resources lead to positive emotions such as happiness and enthusiasm, better physical and psychological health, and the ability to create and mobilize more resources. Consequently, employees become engaged in their roles and engagement, in turn, contributes to effective role performance.

Applying this logic to the expatriate context, because adjusted expatriates enjoy an overall sense of well-being, better health and more confidence in their ability to live and work in a foreign environment, they are able to invest time and physical, emotional and cognitive energy (i.e., engage) in their work and family roles. The allocation of effort to these roles contributes to effective performance in both domains. These arguments are consistent with general theories of work motivation (e.g., Vroom's VIE theory, 1964; Naylor, Pritchard & Ilgen, 1980) that construe motivation as a process triggered by a need (in the case of expatriation, the need to adapt) which then activates drives to achieve a goal (Luthans, 1998). Adjustment provides expatriates with the volition to engage in work- and family-role activities; the result of this is the fulfillment of expected role behaviours. Thus, we predict that expatriates' adjustment has a direct impact on their engagement in specific, day-to-day work and family activities. Engagement, in turn, contributes to expatriates' job and family performance.

Proposition 7: Engagement has a positive effect on performance and mediates the relationship between adjustment and performance.

Discussion

In this paper, we consider how the dynamic interplay of work and family influences behaviours of expatriates in their roles as employees (i.e., work-role performance) and as partners (i.e., family-role performance). We offer a theoretically-grounded framework of the expatriate experience across four stages: cognitive, affective, conative, and behavioural and propose a motivational process that links demands and resources to work-role and family-role performance via adjustment and engagement. With the work-family interface as the core of our model, we explicitly recognize the importance of multiple actors (expatriates and partners) and multiple contexts (family and work).

We believe that we offer several important contributions that can enhance expatriate management theory and practice. First, we offer a model that takes into consideration the complex relationships and interdependencies of the work and family domains on international assignments. While extant research has acknowledged the importance of the expatriate family (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Black & Gregersen, 1991b; Black & Stephens, 1989; Hammer, Hart & Rogan, 1998; Harvey & Wiese, 1998b; Konopaske, Robie & Ivancevich, 2005; Punnett, 1997; Shaffer & Harrison, 1998), by and large it has not provided a comprehensive theoretical explication of how the work and family spheres interact and how the interplay between the two affects expatriates and their families. Assignments are frequently portrayed as disruptive and demanding on the expatriate family and the expatriate partner in particular. Indeed, partner inability to adjust is often invoked as the central reason for assignment failure. However, research has also pointed out

that expatriates with accompanying partners tend to adjust better (Thomas, 1998). In order to align such discordant findings, we consider not only spillover in the case of the expatriate but also crossover between partners (Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler & Wethington, 1989; Westman, 2001) as well as potentially positive interactions leading to optimal functioning of all family members (Sheldon & King, 2001). In constructing our model we take a balanced view of the role of the expatriate partner. Expatriates and partners influence each other via a crossover process and these influences could be but are not inherently negative; positive synergy is equally likely. Partner adjustment affects not only expatriate adjustment but can also cross-over to expatriate engagement in both the work and the family contexts. It can thus have a broader and potentially more positive influence that has been largely ignored by past studies.

Second, we focus on performance in both work and family contexts. Reviews of the broader work-/family-related research have concluded that the majority of work/family studies center on work-related outcomes (Allen, Herst, Bruck & Sutton, 2000; Glass & Finley, 2002). This has prompted recommendations that researchers consider dependent variables relevant for a broader group of stakeholders, particularly family processes and family functioning (Glass & Finley, 2002). This is especially relevant in the context of expatriate assignments where a family may be uprooted for the sake of the expatriate job thus blurring to some extent the boundary between work and family. Accordingly, we propose a model including dual performance outcomes to provide a better reflection of the web of complex relationships connecting the work and family domains.

Third, we examine the process through which adjustment, arguably the most studied construct in expatriate research, affects performance. In contrast with much research in the field, we place adjustment in a more distal role in the performance process and discuss the intervening role of engagement. Specifically, we posit that adjustment leads to increased performance by generating the motivational state of engagement that then facilitates performance within the work and the family domains (see Propositions 5 and 7 and related hypotheses). A focus on engagement is in line with emerging trends in positive psychology (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Expatriate research has traditionally originated from the stressor-stress-strain perspective (e.g., Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Black & Gregersen, 1991a; Harrison et al., 2004; see also Shaffer & Harrison, 1998; Shaffer et al., 1999). Drawing upon the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), we go beyond a stress-based framework and propose a motivational process whereby conditions on the assignment influence performance through their impact on both adjustment and engagement.

Finally, we revisit research on adjustment to address adaptation to changing family roles, to map relationships among the forms of adjustment and to offer a systematic way to group adjustment antecedents. Drawing on

role theory, we propose a new facet of adjustment (i.e., family-role adjustment) and argue that this is relevant to both expatriates and their partners. Our revised tripartite conceptualization of adjustment, comprising cultural, work- and family-role forms, offers two contributions to expatriate adjustment theory. The first refers to the mapping of relationships among the adjustment forms. Having proposed that the more general form of cultural adjustment is predictive of the more specific forms of work- and family-role adjustment, we explicitly recognize the complexities of the adjustment process (see Proposition 4 and related hypotheses). This is in contrast with much of the extant adjustment literature (for an exception, see Aycan, 1997b). Our second contribution is applying the JD-R model to classify the broad array of demands and resources that may be relevant to expatriate and partner adjustment. Although we recognize that the demands and resources listed in Table 14.2 are not exhaustive, the JD-R model provides a useful framework to systematize the various predictors of adjustment.

Implications for research and management

In conceptualizing the interdependencies of the work and family domains on international assignments, we identified several issues that provide a road map for future research. One issue that deserves further attention has to do with the JD-R framework. While we rely heavily on this framework, our model does not follow it exactly. According to the JD-R, demands predict burnout (a stress-related response) and resources predict engagement. These relationships are direct, with resources also moderating the link between demands and burnout. Our model departs from the JD-R in two ways. First, the stress-related response of adjustment is predicted by both demands and resources. Second, our model implies that engagement is linked to demands through adjustment. In addition to the fact that these additional links were strongly implied by the literature on expatriation, accumulating empirical evidence based on the JD-R theory suggests that more complex relationships among the key constructs may be occurring. Notably, in support of our first additional link (between resources and adjustment), studies have found that cross-relationships (between resources and burnout) are not uncommon (Christian & Slaughter, 2007; Hakanen et al., 2006; Llorens et al., 2006). In support of our second additional link (adjustment as a mediator of the relationship between demands and engagement), researchers have found evidence for mediation processes in the relationships between demands and resources on one end and burnout and engagement on the other (e.g., Hakanen et al., 2006). Furthermore, burnout and engagement have consistently been found to be moderately to highly negatively correlated (e.g., Bakker, van Emmerik & Euwema, 2006; Bakker et al., 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). In this context, we feel that sufficient justification exists to include additional links in our model. In terms of broader research implications, future studies may want to subject the JD-R framework

to a more critical examination and consider the viability of more complex relationships than those proposed by the JD-R model.

A second issue for future research has to do with time. Although we did not explicitly incorporate time into our model, we recognize its potential importance in the process. One example is that many of the demands and resources change during expatriation. One of the major assumptions of Hobfoll's (2002) COR theory is that different resources reinforce each other in the sense that possession of resources leads to possession of other resources. Resources are said to "co-travel in resource caravans" (p. 318); key resources facilitate the development and use of other resources. Drawing on these ideas, it is possible that over time resources enhance each other both within and across the work and the family domains and create a resource-gain spiral. For example, an expatriate who possesses positive affectivity may be able to learn the host country language faster. In combination, these two factors may help facilitate the formation of social relationships with HCNs on and off the job. In the same vein, there is a change in the demands in the various stages of the assignment.

Another example of the potential relevance of time has to do with reverse causal relationships. For the sake of parsimony, we did not include such relationships in our model. However, in line with Fredrickson's (1998) "broaden-and-build" framework, not only do resources contribute to increased engagement and performance but increased engagement and performance also contribute to the accumulation of additional resources (see also Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Salanova et al., 2006). An alternative possibility can also be considered. Whereas positive outcomes are likely to lead to more resources, they may also contribute to additional demands. For example, if the expatriate has excellent job performance, he or she may be given more tasks to accomplish; this may ultimately result in increased role overload. These examples underscore the importance of longitudinal studies with specific measurements before, at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the assignment.

A third issue that deserves future research attention is the relationship between work-role engagement and family-role engagement. According to the facilitation perspective of work/family interface, engagement in one role will spill over into another role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Rothbard, 2001). Such thinking is in line with positive psychology (Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005; Sheldon & King, 2001). However, depletion theories (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) of the effect of multiple-role obligations suggest that there is a limited amount of energy people possess. Thus, engagement in some roles may come at the expense of engagement in other roles (Rothbard, 2001). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) suggest that according to the enrichment model role accumulation can provide more extensive resources to be applied to the other roles as well as time constraints that produce conflict. Research is yet to examine the conditions

under which role accumulation promotes enrichment to a greater versus lesser extent than it promotes conflict (Byron, 2005). One viable possibility is drawing on identity theory and considering role salience, role centrality or role involvement as moderators of the relationships (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000; Greenhaus, Parasuraman & Collins, 2001; Lobel, 1991; Rothbard, 2001). Thus individuals for whom both the work role and the family role are salient, may experience a positive spillover between engagement in the two spheres, whereas those for whom one of the roles is more salient than the other may experience that enhanced engagement in one role leads to diminished engagement in another role. Personality variables may also play an interactive role in this process.

A final avenue for future research involves gender. Throughout the paper we relate to expatriates and their partners but we do not consider the possible effects of gender on their experiences beyond acknowledging gender as a predictor of adjustment, in line with existing research (see Table 14.2). The general work–family research has not established consistent gender differences in the work–family interface (Nelson & Burke, 2000). Expatriate research, however, has suggested that the experiences of female expatriates can be somewhat different, especially in terms of adjustment (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Caligiuri & Tung, 1999; Linehan & Walsh, 2000; Westwood & Leung, 1994). Specifically, the argument that female expatriates may have a harder time with regards to adjustment appears to have gained a lot of currency but findings are by no means consistent (e.g., compare findings in Caligiuri & Tung, 1999; Tung, 2004). Further, while the same demands and resources are relevant for both male and female expatriates, it is likely that they do not experience the same *levels* of these demands and resources. For example, women are more likely to experience demands such as dual career challenges, due to the lower willingness of their partners to put their careers on hold and accompany them on assignment, and greater familial responsibilities (Elron & Kark, 2000; Harris, 1993; Linehan & Walsh, 2000; Taylor & Napier, 1996). Also, female expatriates may have more limited access to resources such as company support or social support from HCNs, particularly in environments with more traditional gender role ideologies (e.g., Adler, 1984; Izraeli, Banai & Zeira, 1980; Taylor & Napier, 1996).

Although we believe that our proposed model will apply for both genders, we encourage future research to examine this question empirically. In addition to the impact of gender on adjustment and engagement, an important issue to investigate is whether the strength of some of the relationships proposed by the model differs for men and women, that is, whether gender acts as a moderator. For example, it is possible that the strength of the relationship between partner adjustment (cultural, family-role) and expatriate adjustment (cultural, family-role) is stronger for women than men. Similarly, the link between expatriate family-role adjustment and expatriate

work-role adjustment may be stronger, with the reverse relationship being weaker for female expatriates compared to male expatriates. Other relationships that may be moderated by gender are those that involve spillover from expatriate adjustment in one role to expatriate engagement in another role and the spillover between expatriate family-role engagement and work-role engagement.

While our model focuses on expatriate experiences, it could easily be modified to clarify the experiences of the trailing partner or to consider non-traditional types of assignments. Because most partners do not hold a job in the foreign country, a parallel model for them will probably focus only on family-role performance. In constructing a model for partners, it is important to consider experiences that may be unique to the partner. For example, the transition from paid employment (before the move) to unemployment could represent a demand for the partner. As we noted earlier, our model is best applied to an expatriate couple when the expatriate is accompanied by a partner on assignment. However, parts of the model will be broadly applicable to other types of assignments. For example, one can consider a long-term assignment in which the expatriate is not accompanied by family members. The expatriate will have to adjust to different types of demands, such as the changed role of an “absent” partner and parent. On the other hand, the partner will also experience a change in the family role brought about by the necessity to take over all domestic responsibilities or assume the responsibilities of the absent parent in cases where child-care is involved. The partner’s adjustment to a redefined family role is likely to play into the expatriate experience. Similar arguments can be made about expatriates on short-term or frequent traveler assignments. The demands and resources will be different but the basic logic of our model can be applied to these varied situations and a series of related models may be proposed to describe the work/family interface and its link to performance in various assignment types.

Before the model is theoretically refined or extended by future research, its veracity must be tested empirically. Given its complexity, we recognize the challenges involved, especially in testing the model in its entirety. However, researchers could focus on various parts of the model, such as clarifying the dimensionality of adjustment, assessing the mediating role of engagement, examining the spillover and crossover effects of adjustment, engagement and performance for expatriates and their partners, and specifying the content of work and family performance. One of the strengths of the model is that the work–family interface is conceived as a process that occurs across cognitive, affective, conative, and behavioural stages. Assessing this process can be done by focusing on just two or three stages, but it does require longitudinal research. This is especially challenging with such a mobile population. Our inclusion of spillover and crossover effects involving marital partners also requires collection of data from both partners. Obtaining data

from work colleagues or other family members would also help to mitigate potential problems with common method variance and provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the experiences of expatriates and their partners.

Our model portends several implications for management practice. For years organizations have been aware that families contribute to expatriate success, however, this has not translated into consistent consideration of family factors and adequate support for families on assignment (e.g., GMAC, 2008). Our research highlights a familiar theme but provides a better understanding of the complex processes within the expatriate family unit. It is important for organizations to be aware of the crossover between partners and the spiraling that occurs. To that end, expatriates and their partners should be forewarned about changes in family roles brought about by the assignment. We also emphasize the important role of resources provided by organizations as they not only contribute to enhanced adjustment and engagement but also mitigate the negative effect of demands on adjustment. Finally, increased attention to expatriate engagement above and beyond adjustment is also warranted.

Conclusion

International assignments entail uncertainty and stress – but they also offer the promise of new opportunities and challenges. In elucidating the process whereby work and family intertwine and result in effective performance in both contexts, we envision expatriates and their partners as individuals who have access to a wealth of personal, work and family resources that help them respond effectively to the demands entailed in the move to a foreign environment. The resultant adjustment of the expatriate and his/her partner to their new roles and responsibilities is a source of motivation for the expatriate. Energized to enact both family and work roles, the expatriate experience culminates in the achievement of goals in the context of both work and family. We believe our proposed model and related hypotheses provide an important foundation for future work in this area and hope that it will open up new avenues for expatriate and work–family interface research and inform management practice.

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15

Some Future Directions for Work–Family Research in a Global World

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Since 2005 the International Center for Work and Family (ICWF) has hosted a biennial conference that has brought together work and family scholars from across the globe. These conferences have produced a wellspring of ideas and nurtured the development of many productive research collaborations. The papers represented in this volume help demonstrate the diversity of ideas that have been fertilized through these conferences. Collectively they make an important contribution to the work–family literature.

Building from existing research paradigms, the purpose of the current chapter is to highlight directions for future work and family research. In doing so I first offer suggestions for research that are general in nature and can be applied universally within any cultural context. I then offer suggestions for ways in which we might advance our cross-national understanding of work and family.

Universalistic directions

Two general directions for work–family research suggested below are connecting the work–family literature with that of neuroscience and moving towards a more person-centric research focus. These suggestions are broad in scope rather than specific, and more along the lines of interpretive frameworks that can be used to generate new research questions. The commonality across these two directions is that they are both centred on the individual, and thus primarily culture or context free. These are suggestions that are intended to be applicable within any national context.

Connecting work–family research with neuroscience

Understanding the intersection of work and family has been a topic that has captured the attention of researchers across an array of disciplines

(Pitt-Catsouphes et al., 2005). However, for the most part the disciplines involved are those rooted within in the social sciences (e.g., psychology, management, sociology, family development, economics, demography). Greater incorporation of disciplinary work from outside of the social sciences could further our understanding of the work–family interface. For example, from a biological perspective, we know that work and family demands are associated with physiological changes such as elevated blood pressure (Brisson et al., 1999) and elevated noradrenalin (Lundberg & Frankenhaeuser, 1999). Recent research has also shown that employees whose managers are less family-supportive sleep less and are at greater risk for cardiovascular disease (Berkman et al., 2010). However, the influence of neuroanatomy has yet to be addressed within the work–family literature.

Several recent articles have proposed the development of *Organizational Neuroscience* and have encouraged organizational scholars to consider a neuroscientific perspective in their work (Becker & Cropanzano, 2010; Becker et al., 2011). Organizational neuroscience is defined as “a deliberate and judicious approach to spanning the divide between neuroscience and organizational science” (Becker & Cropanzano, 2010: 1055). Such a perspective could be helpful towards the advancement of work–family research.

The prefrontal cortex (PFC) is the area within the brain that regulates behaviour, attention and affect (Brennan & Arnsten, 2008). Of key relevance to the study of work and family is that one function attributed to the anterior PFC is multitasking. Specifically, the PFC is involved in the selection of higher order internal goals while other sub-goals are being executed (Becker & Cropanzano, 2010; Roca et al., 2011). The amygdala is involved in the appraisal of threat-related stimuli and the processing of emotional reactions (Shin et al., 2006). When a stressful event occurs, such as a conflict between work and family, the amygdala induces catecholamine release in the PFC, which results in cognitive dysfunction (Arnsten, 1998). Working memory is impaired and thoughts become disorganized. Research that investigates the brain’s response to work–family conflicts may provide insight into the processes that involve the regulation of multiple role demands, and subsequently help generate recommendations for alleviating work–family-related strain.

Along these lines, inquiry into the specific topic of mindfulness may reveal new avenues for optimizing balance between work and family roles. Mindfulness has been defined as “intentionally paying attention to present-moment experience (physical sensations, perceptions, affective states, thoughts, and imagery) in a nonjudgmental way, thereby cultivating a stable and nonreactive awareness” (Carmody et al., 2008). Two streams of mindfulness research exist. One focus is on trait-like mindfulness as a stable individual difference (e.g., Brown & Ryan, 2003). Another focus is on mindfulness-based training as a therapeutic intervention, often incorporating meditation (e.g., Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Both types of studies reveal a wide variety of positive outcomes associated with mindfulness that include

improvements in stress, depression, anxiety, sleep quality, physical health symptoms and interpersonal relationship quality (see Brown et al., 2007 and Glomb et al., 2011 for reviews). Further, functional magnetic resonance imaging studies support the notion that mindfulness-based training alters brain processes in a way that reflects more consistent attentional focus, enhanced sensory processing and reflective awareness of sensory experience (e.g., Kilpatrick et al., 2011). Moreover, the practice of mindfulness has been found to strengthen rather than inhibit working memory (Jha et al., 2010). Mindfulness practice involves verbally labelling affective stimuli, which has been shown to activate the right ventrolateral PFC and reduce responses in the amygdala (Creswell et al., 2007). Thus, mindfulness is associated with enhancements in neural affect regulation pathways.

Recent research has begun to investigate the links between dispositional mindfulness and work–family constructs. Specifically, Allen and Kiburz (2012) found that trait mindfulness was positively associated with work–family balance as mediated by greater vitality and sleep quality. Kiburz and Allen (2012) reported that trait mindfulness was associated with less work–family conflict after controlling for Big 5 personality variables. These studies suggest that the cultivation of mindfulness practice may be one tool that can help regulate affect and promote healthy work–family connections.

One final way in which neuroscience could be incorporated into work–family research is by investigating implicit processes related to gender, parenthood and differential work–family outcomes. Implicit processes as compared to explicit processes transpire more automatically, occur in the deep brain structures of the temporal lobe, and are less likely to be within the conscious awareness of the individual (Becker et al., 2011). In a study of implicit and explicit processes, Park et al. (2010) reported that the concepts of mom and parent were more readily kept concurrently in mind than were mom and professional. The opposite was found for the concept of dad. In addition, implicit assumptions were associated with recommendations for how to best navigate work–family conflict such that participants with the strongest traditional implicit role associations were more likely to recommend solutions that had women putting family first and men putting work first. These findings are important in that they may offer insight into why behavioural expectations with regard to men and women have been difficult to change. Because implicit and explicit attitudes develop from different parts of the brain, implicit attitudes take priority and therefore they can short-circuit subsequent beneficial cognitive processing (Becker et al., 2011). Additional research that investigates the implicit attitudes held with regard to career, family and gender could help further reveal biases associated with both men and women.

A person-centred approach

Recently, Weiss and Rupp (2011) advocated for a person-centric approach to the study of working and the worker. The person-centric approach is one

that focuses on what work means to people. Weiss and Rupp contrast this to what they refer to as the current paradigm within psychology, which tends to treat people as objects reduced to a list of abstractions. They further note that research is limited by being tied to a collective purpose. The collective purpose framework has a focus on aligning individual behaviour with the collective interests of the organizations for whom individuals work. This state of affairs characterizes a great deal of work–family research. For example, work–family conflict is conceptualized as a property of people. Participant A is reported to experience more work–family conflict, while Participant B is reported to experience less work–family conflict. Such a focus limits our understanding of the more fundamental aspects of work–family conflict phenomena. Service to the collective agenda issue is illustrated in a recent article that bemoans the lack of impact that work–family research has had on organizations (Kossek et al., 2011). This is also reflected in efforts to “make the business case” for work–family policies and practices within organizations. I do not mean to suggest that such efforts are not worthy of pursuit, but rather that we also need attention anchored on research that hones in on the human experience of creating a meaningful work and family life.

Several recent trends help set the stage for a more person-centric approach. In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the number of studies that have investigated work–family issues based on experience sampling methods (e.g., Ilies et al., 2007; Judge et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2010). Within-persons research has increased our understanding of issues such as how daily changes in mood are associated with daily changes in work–family conflict, but our knowledge of basic processes – such as the feeling and emotion experienced in the moment of competing work and family demands – remains limited. For example, what is the immediate impact on the self when realizing that a child’s baseball game will be missed due to unexpected travel for work? How does this event change the way the employee feels about the self as a parent or as an employee? How does it influence relationships with family members and co-workers? These are the types of questions that remain unanswered.

Recent work suggesting that episodic approaches to the study of work and family are needed also builds a bridge toward a more person-centric work and family research stream (Maertz & Boyar, 2011). Processes in chapters within this volume, including decision making (Poelmans, Greenhaus & Stepanova) and coping (Major, Lauzun & Jones), seem particularly well suited for an episodic, person-centred focus. Take, for example, what transpires between an employee and a manager at the moment of a request for flexible work hours in order to better accommodate family life. Each participant in this exchange has his or her own goals (e.g., the employee wants to be a good father; the manager desires employees who are available for late afternoon customer calls) and the request itself can be considered

from an episodic perspective. Within the current research paradigm such situations may be captured between persons through research on family-supportive supervision, with managers more likely to grant requests labelled as family supportive than those labelled as less family supportive. A person-centred approach would focus on gaining insight into the manager's subjective experience of receiving such a request and the thought process involved in deciding a response. It is not enough to know what the decision is; we need to know about the subjective experience of making the decision for that manager. A reframing of work-family research from a person-centric approach may lead to new and theoretically meaningful questions.

Cross-national directions

Thanks in part to the efforts associated with the ICWF, and the publication of *Work and Family: An International Research Perspective* (Poelmans, 2005), interest and collaboration with regard to cross-national work-family research has soared. In the following section, several suggestions for ways in which we might extend our understanding of the way society helps to shape work-family interactions are identified.

Building on existing research

A thorough review of existing cross-national research is beyond the scope of this chapter. Rather, the following is intended to review the common approaches taken to this kind of research and offer extensions. In conducting work-family research from a cross-national perspective, two kinds of questions have been examined. The first concerns mean levels or prevalence rates of phenomena. For example, researchers may be interested in comparing the prevalence rate of work-family conflict across countries. Along these lines, Spector et al. (2005) investigated pressures emanating from work that spilled over into the family among a sample of managers from 18 countries. They found that individuals from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Portugal reported the greatest work-family pressure while individuals from the USA, the UK and Australia reported the least. Researchers have also compared prevalence rates by grouping countries into clusters according to region or according to assumed cultural values such as individualism-collectivism. For example, Spector et al. (2007) grouped 5270 managers from 20 countries into four clusters: Anglo, Asian, East-European and Latin American, and compared time- and strain-based work-to-family conflict means across clusters. Based on data from over 20,000 managers across 50 countries employed by a large multinational firm, Allen et al. (2010) investigated mean differences in work-life effectiveness (i.e., the absence of based work-to-family conflict) across countries clustered into high, medium and low bands with regard

to the cultural values of gender egalitarianism, collectivism, humane orientation and performance orientation. Gender egalitarianism was associated with the greatest variation in work–life effectiveness, with individuals in medium gender egalitarian (GE) societies reporting the greatest work–life effectiveness, followed by those in high GE societies.

At this juncture, making comparative inferences with regard to the prevalence of work–family conflict that claim work–family conflict is higher in one country versus another country is premature, in that the research to date has not been based on a representative sampling strategy. Even in studies that attempt to control for factors such as occupation, a sample of several hundred employees is unlikely to be representative of that occupation within any given country. Comparative research based on representative sampling would be a contribution to the literature. In addition, no consistent trend in terms of high versus low scores with regard to work–family conflict across countries has emerged. However, one consistent finding across countries is that work interference with family demonstrates higher mean scores than does family interference with work. Thus, at least based on the research to date, one universalism is that the family boundary is more likely to be encroached than is the work boundary. Another concern in considering the literature as a whole is that we have no way to ensure that constructs such as work–family conflict have the same conceptual meaning across societies (Powell et al., 2009). Research is needed to determine whether situational differences across countries give rise to unique conditions that may enhance or mitigate the occurrence of work–family conflict, or whether cultural differences potentially change the perception of demands across domains. For example, Lee et al. (2011) suggest that those who are less likely to consider work and family as independent domains will be more immune to feeling conflict when there are demands from both work and family. Developing objective and subjective ways to assess constructs of interest is needed to begin to elucidate these potential conceptual differences.

The second issue of interest concerns relationships between variables. Here the researcher investigates whether relationships such as that between work–family conflict and job satisfaction vary across country context (see Spector et al., 2007; Yang et al., 2000 as examples). Again, both countries, as well as clusters of countries along some dimension, may be the chosen foci of comparison. Much of this work has been on identifying unique relationships theorized to be due to cultural differences in collectivism. The general finding is that relations between work–family conflict and predictors, and between work–family conflict and outcomes, are weaker in more collectivistic than in less collectivistic societies. These findings are thought to occur because in more collectivistic societies work is viewed as something done for the family, while in less collectivistic societies work is viewed as something done for the self. However, not all research comparing relationships across countries finds differences. For example, Hill et al. (2004) demonstrated that

a model that linked work demands to WIF held universally across four country clusters created from 48 countries. Lallukka et al. (2010) investigated relationships between bi-directional reports of work–family conflict and health behaviours across samples of British, Finnish and Japanese employees, and found similar relationships across the three cohorts.

Work–family conflict has not been the only construct of interest. Several studies have investigated issues associated with workplace flexibility and culture. For example, Raghuram et al. (2001) examined the amount of variance accounted for in telework use by culture versus country, concluding that differences in use were explained by country differences rather than by culture differences. Masuda et al. (2011) investigated the relationship between flexible work arrangement availability and WIF across Latin American, Anglo and Asian country clusters. A variety of significant differences in relationships emerged.

To date the focus of comparative work has been on work–family conflict, with findings suggesting that many of the same predictors and outcomes may generalize across various national contexts, but that the strength of these relationships differs. A great deal of this research has been based on comparing results found in non-Western contexts to those found in the West. The development of *emic* (what is culture specific) as well as *etic* (what is universal) approaches could yield a more clear understanding of how individuals from various cultural contexts experience combining work and family. In addition, expansion of research beyond work–family conflict is needed. For example, to date there has been little work investigating the positive aspects of combining work and family roles across cultural contexts, or on constructs such as work–family balance. Another interesting avenue to explore is examining the variance in our constructs in addition to mean levels. For example, in some contexts there may be more variance across individuals within countries with regard to constructs such as work–family conflict than in others. This may be meaningful in itself and lead to greater insights with regard to how phenomena vary across societies.

Extending the study of cross-cultural value dimensions

Cultural values have been defined as “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that results from common experiences of members of collectives that are transmitted over generations” (House & Javidan, 2004: 15).

As discussed above, to date cultural values have been the most common theoretical framework for comparative work–family research, and scholars have encouraged more of a cross-country perspective on work–family interaction, focusing on using existing cultural dimensions as a lens (Powell et al., 2009).

Although work done to date mapping cultural values onto the work–family interface has yielded important insights, such values tend to account

for a limited amount of variance. One direction for future research is to develop cultural dimensions that are native to work and family. We may account for more variance if we develop values that more closely approximate the differing ways by which people view the intersection of work and family roles. That is, we need development of cultural values that may be more proximal to, and have greater fidelity with, the work–family interface. One such value may be integration versus segmentation of work and family roles. Similar to individualism–collectivism, segmentation and integration are thought to reside at opposite ends of the same continuum (Kreiner, 2006). From an individual perspective, those who fall more on the segmentation end prefer to keep work and family separate while those who fall more on the integration end prefer to remove boundaries and merge work and family roles. Theory suggests that individuals develop these preferences in an attempt to manage work and family roles (Ashforth et al., 2000).

The concept could seemingly be readily extended to the country level, with some societies leaning towards segmentation and others leaning towards integration. Lee et al. (2011) suggest that culture influences the degree that one's job is defined as clearly separate from the family, and propose that individuals in individualist societies may be more likely to segregate work and family roles as a function of prioritizing individualist career pursuits. They also propose that role identity separation between work and family roles is not as salient in collectivist societies as it is in Western individualist societies. Basically, they align individualism with a separation between work and family roles, and collectivism with integration.

However, there is some data to suggest that integration–segmentation should be considered distinct from individualism–collectivism. Based on a sample of 2316 managers employed in different organizations drawn from 11 different countries (China, Mexico, Singapore, Brazil, Switzerland, Poland, Russia, Japan, Germany, UK and United States), Shockley et al. (2012) found that scores on a measure of preferences for segmentation ranged from a high of 4.03 (China) to a low of 3.44 (UK) (based on a 5-point scale). The USA, which is considered a highly individualist society, scored in the middle of the group of countries at 3.65. Shockley et al. also examined correlations between individualism–collectivism scores based on imputed values from the GLOBE study (House & Javidan, 2004). They found a small, but positive, relationship between the two ($r=0.19$), indicating that greater collectivism was slightly associated with greater preference for segmentation. Thus, overall initial data suggest that segmentation–integration reflects a value different from individualism–collectivism.

There may be a greater degree of overlap between societal level segmentation–integration with the known cultural dimension referred to as specificity–diffusion. Powell et al. (2009) discuss the specificity–diffusion dimension of culture, and they too relate it to the concept of segmentation–integration. Specifically, they liken countries that are more specific (e.g.,

UK, Australia, Switzerland) as more segmenting of the work and family spheres, and countries that are more diffuse (e.g., Venezuela, China, Spain) as more likely to blend work and family relationships. However, this particular cultural dimension primarily describes inter-person relationships rather than intra-person preferences. Moreover, based on the Shockley et al. (2012) data, there is no indication that individuals living in countries considered higher in specificity demonstrate a greater preference for segmentation. Thus, again integration–segmentation appears to capture something unique from existing values.

Research on individual differences in integration–segmentation and its relationship with work–family conflict to date have been based on US samples. Results thus far appear to suggest that preferences for segmentation–integration have little relationship to work–family conflict (Shockley & Allen, 2010; Kossek et al., 2006), but that actual segmentation of work and family roles may be beneficial in terms of preventing work–family conflict (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). Interestingly, Powell and Greenhaus (2010) also found that actual segmentation was associated with *less* affective positive work-to-family spillover. Given that the research to date is based on US samples, and the US is tentatively indicated to be in the middle (Shockley et al., 2012) with regard to segmentation–integration preferences, it could be that different findings emerge with data from employees from other countries that are more at the ends of the segmentation–integration continuum. For example, there may be more spillover between work and family that is both positive and negative in societies that encourage integration of work and family roles. The societal value of integration–segmentation may also be useful in terms of predicting the establishment and take up of family-supportive policies by organizations. For example, in countries that espouse segmentation, fewer family-supportive benefits may be offered or supported in organizations.

In sum, scholars have suggested that the segmentation versus integration of work–family roles is an important way in which societies differ, but have likened the difference to existing cultural values. However, segmentation–integration may merit its own focus. Thus, cross-national efforts to develop a cultural value index based on the extent that a society espouses the segmentation versus integration of work and family roles may be a valuable addition to international work–family research. Integration–segmentation of work and family roles is just one example of societal values that may be useful to work–family research. There are likely other dimensions that can also be considered that will further open up new avenues to cross-national work–family scholarship.

Bridging divides

Work–family discourse has focused considerable attention on the existence (or lack) of policies such as paid leave following the birth or adoption of

a child. Work–family researchers have been advocates for greater family-related government social supports as a way to address the needs of working parents (e.g., Neal & Hammer, 2007). The case for greater governmental family supports, such as paid maternity leave, are predicated on the notion that the availability of such supports will result in less work–family conflict for employees. However, there is little data to support this relationship, as comparative studies show little evidence that individuals who reside in countries with more generous supports report less work–family pressure than do those who reside in countries with less generous supports (e.g., Spector et al., 2005).

Along these lines, recent qualitative research based in the UK and in the Netherlands questioned the connection between policy and the day-to-day working lives of women (Yerkes et al., 2010). The conclusion drawn by women interviewed in the study was that national policy had not impacted their lives in any tangible way. Policies were viewed as lacking power, and day-to-day issues still needed to be solved at the individual level. Policies are essentially static while work and family demands are dynamic.

The (dis)connect between national policy and the “way things really are” is one example of the way in which our current research paradigms are ill equipped to bridge different levels of analysis and understand the space in between. For some time now, it has been recognized that family-supportive policies within organizations are unlikely to be beneficial to employees unless accompanied by an overall climate or culture within the organization that acknowledges and values employees’ non-work lives (Allen, 2001; Rapoport et al., 2002; Thompson et al., 1999). A similar case might be made with regard to national policy. These examples help illustrate that advancements in cross-national research require a more integrated understanding of phenomena as they unfold across levels and across time, from national policy down to the day-to-day experiences of individuals.

Closing the gap between organizational and societal level structures, and the realities of the individuals that work and reside within them, requires a better understanding of the intersections between individual, organization and national policy, referred to by some as the micro, meso and macro levels of analysis. The suggestion to incorporate multi-level research into the study of work and family is not new. Indeed, several multi-level models of the work–family interface have been developed (e.g., Korabik et al., 2003; Poelmans & Beham, 2008; Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004; Swody & Powell, 2007; Van Dyne et al., 2007) that together present a rich array of research propositions to be tested, but few cross-level studies have been published (for example exceptions see Jahn et al., 2006; Lyness & Kropf, 2005; Major et al., 2008).

This is not surprising considering that the challenges associated with this type of research are numerous. In addition to concerns with regard to the interpretation of measures across cultural contexts, measures need to be

developed that appropriately capture system-level constructs lest an ecological fallacy be committed (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). Bottom-up research, which looks at how lower level properties aggregate to form collective phenomena, is needed in addition to top-down research, which investigates the influence of higher level contextual factors on lower levels of the system. A review of current research within the work–family domain suggests that greater focus has been placed on the latter, with researchers typically framing studies in terms of understanding how societal values or organizational policies influence individual phenomena such as work–family conflict and/or enrichment (e.g., Spector et al., 2007). Research on the former with regard to work–family issues is also needed. The value of such research is illustrated by a recent study that showed that sexism, a lower level phenomenon, predicted increases in gender inequality at the societal level based on representative data from 57 societies (Brandt, 2011). Another challenge is that scholarship focused on specific levels tends to come from different disciplines. For example, psychologists tend to study individuals, economists tend to study organizations, and sociologists tend to study societies, each with their own language and standards of methodology (Molloy et al., 2011).

Another factor inhibiting our complete understanding of the impact of context is a lack of research that recognizes differences within countries that involve features such as regional and/or urban versus rural differences, which represent another potential level of analysis. That is, regions are nested within countries (e.g., Catalonia, Basque Country, Andalusia, etc. are nested within Spain). Such differences were recognized to some extent in the GLOBE study (e.g., the separation of German-speaking versus French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland), but for the most part these have been neglected in work–family research. As noted by Kozlowski and Klein (2000) it is important to “understand the whole and keep an eye on the parts” (2000: 54). This issue ties in with that of sampling raised earlier and can contribute to conflicting findings across studies. For example, the choice of data from a Turkish sample based on individuals in Istanbul versus individuals from the rural areas of Central Anatolia has considerable implications in terms of the interpretation of results.

In sum, there are a great many opportunities that exist for better connecting the space in between the day-to-day realities of individuals managing work and family roles with the contexts in which they are embedded. Programmatic studies that transverse time and discipline are needed. It is an exciting challenge for work–family scholarship.

Conclusion

As the chapters that compose this volume illustrate, great strides in work–family research have been made over the last decade alone. However, just as the theme tracks that are part of the ICWF have evolved over the years,

continued innovation and pushing of boundaries are needed. It is hoped that the ideas included in this final chapter will serve to stimulate such efforts.

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