

WORK-FAMILY ROLE STRAIN AMONG EMPLOYED MOTHERS OF PRESCHOOLERS:
THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE SUPPORT

by

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of work demands and workplace support on perceived work-family role strain of employed mothers with preschool age children in group daycare. Structural and psychological work demands were investigated. Components of workplace support included organizational culture, supervisor support, and family-oriented benefits offered by the workplace. The relationship between available family-oriented benefits and the use of family-oriented benefits was also assessed. In addition, moderating effects of supervisor support were investigated.

The sample was recruited through licensed group daycare centers in Vancouver. Questionnaires were left at 45 daycare centers and participants were asked to return their completed questionnaires to the School of Family and Nutritional Sciences in the stamped, self addressed envelope provided. Eligible participants were mothers who were employed outside the home in a position where they had an immediate supervisor, manager or boss. The respondents were 116 women who met the eligibility requirements and completed the questionnaire.

The major findings of this study were that work-family role strain was associated with psychological work demands, work environment support, supervisor flexibility, and the desire to use family-oriented benefits. The results also showed that the number and percentage of family-oriented benefits used were related to the number of available family-oriented benefits. In

addition, respondents were more likely to use family-oriented benefits under nonsupportive conditions. Although it was expected that supervisor support would moderate the relationship between work demands and work-family role strain, and the relationship between use of benefits and work-family role strain, the results of this study did not provide support for either prediction.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Until relatively recently, employment and family were believed to be distinct domains operating independently of one another (Voydanoff, 1987). According to Kanter (1977), this belief was based on a traditional sex role ideology and the Protestant Work Ethic. Men worked outside the home performing the breadwinner role and women performed household and childcare tasks within the home. When performing the work role, outside the home, individuals were expected to "act as though" they did not have any other commitments or interests such as family responsibilities.

Recent demographic changes affecting employment and family life, however, have challenged this "myth of separate worlds" (Kanter, 1977) and have made it increasingly clear that the two domains are interdependent. One of the most significant demographic changes has been the increasing labour force participation of women. According to Statistics Canada (1990), more than half (55.9%) of all Canadian women work outside the home, and the majority (60.6%) of all women with children living at home are in the labour force. While the participation rates of women with children under 16 years has risen steadily, the increase has been dramatic for mothers with preschool age children (Ontario Women's Directorate, 1991). Among women with husband/partners present, the participation rates of those with only preschool age children increased from 36.5% in 1976 to

62.1% in 1986 (Statistics Canada, 1990). The participation rates of women in lone-parent families with only preschool age children rose from 48.5% in 1976 to 59.2% in 1986 (Statistics Canada, 1990).

Although an increasing number of women are taking on the "non-traditional role" of provider, they continue to be primarily responsible for household and childcare tasks. Several studies have found that married women spend a great deal more time performing housework and taking care of children than married men (Hochschild, 1989; Kome, 1982; Michelson, 1985).

The recognition that women are combining paid employment with raising a family has in part led to a fervour of research activity directed at the impact of multiple role demands on work-family outcomes. Research in this area has demonstrated that a significant proportion of employed individuals are experiencing some or a great deal of difficulty in managing work and family life (see review by Friedman, 1987, p.40-41). Employed parents report higher stress levels and greater work-family interference than non-parents (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988), and parents of two earner households and single-parent female earners report higher levels of work-family role strain than two-parent single earner families (Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985). When compared to employed fathers and employed mothers of older children, employed mothers of preschool age children are more likely to report spillover between work and family (Crouter, 1984) and greater work-family role strain (Greenberger,

Goldberg, Hamill, O'Neil, & Payne, 1989; Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985). Thus, while an increasing number of women with preschool age children are in the labour force, this group also appears to be the most susceptible to work-family difficulties.

Research attention has been directed to ways of coping with difficulties associated with combining employment and family responsibilities (see reviews by Hansen, 1991; Menaghan & Parcel, 1990). Research in this area typically focuses on how individuals manipulate employment and family demands in an attempt to create patterns of relationships and activities that are manageable (Elman & Gilbert, 1984; Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987; Piotrkowski, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1987; Presser, 1987).

Although individual level coping strategies may be effective in helping the employed parent balance employment and family roles, such solutions have been considered "unsatisfying" as they fail to fully address the nature of the difficulties (Menaghan & Parcel, 1990, p.1089). It has been argued that the individual approach is based on traditional values and attitudes about employment and family that expect the employed parent to develop idiosyncratic ways of coping with problems. In conforming to the traditional work model, which has been considered "plainly out of synchronization with the family lives of many workers" (Kamerman & Kahn, 1987, p.59), prevailing work values are perpetuated and family needs are ignored (Duffy, Mandell, & Pupo, 1989; Menaghan & Parcel, 1990).

In an attempt to find a more satisfying solution to

difficulties associated with combining employment and family life, increasing attention is being directed to the role of the workplace (Menaghan & Parcel, 1990). Thus, instead of focusing on what individuals can do to cope with employment and family difficulties, this course of study seeks to answer the question, "What can the workplace do to facilitate the integration of employment and family life?"

Purpose

This study examines the relationship between the work environment and work-family role strain perceived by employed mothers with preschool age children. In this thesis, it is hypothesized that feelings of strain may be enhanced by the demands of the job and reduced by a workplace that is supportive of employees' family responsibilities.

The objective of this study is to address five questions. First, what is the impact of work demands on work-family role strain? Second, what is the impact of workplace support on work-family role strain? Third, what is the relationship between available family-oriented benefits and use of family-oriented benefits? Fourth, does the perception of supervisor support moderate the impact of work demands on work-family role strain? Finally, does the perception of supervisor support moderate the impact of use of family-oriented benefits on work-family role strain?

While it is recognized that the performance of household and childcare tasks within the home is considered work,

references made to "work" throughout this thesis refer solely to paid employment performed outside the home. The term "family" refers to parenting as opposed to elder care responsibilities.

Conceptual Framework

Although no integrated theory of work-family relationships exists, theoretical grounding for research in this area generally reflects role strain and role expansion theory (Voydanoff, 1989). The proposed research is guided by Goode's (1960) role strain theory.

According to Goode (1960), when engaging in role relationships, an individual is faced with a wide array of distracting and sometimes conflicting role obligations. Because the individual's total role obligations are overdemanding and it is impossible to fulfill all of one's role demands, some degree of role strain or dissensus occurs. This "felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations" (p.483) is considered normal and unavoidable when social structures are viewed as made up of roles. It is reasonable to assume that individuals performing the multiple roles of worker and parent simultaneously will perceive some degree of inadequacy or difficulty in meeting work and family role obligations because the cumulative demands are overdemanding.

Goode's role strain theory identifies two sets of techniques that can be used by the individual to reduce role strain: (1) those which determine whether or when the individual will enter or leave a role relationship; and (2) those which

have to do with the actual role bargain which the individual makes or carries out with another (1960, p. 486). These techniques are individual level coping mechanisms that require the individual to manipulate his or her role structure.

Although role strain theory focuses on coping mechanisms at the individual level, current work-family literature has addressed ways of reducing work-family role strain that are beyond the individual (Bowen, 1988; Hughes & Galinsky, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987). Thus, for this study, role strain theory provides the conceptual framework for examining work-family role strain and investigating ways of reducing role strain. Current work-family research provides the basis for expanding role strain theory to incorporate institutional level coping mechanisms, such as workplace support, as a means for reducing work-family role strain.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

In this section, research examining the impact of work demands and workplace support on work-family role strain is reviewed. Empirical investigations of the interaction between use of family-oriented benefits and supervisor support are also discussed.

Structural and Psychological Work Demands

While early studies of work-family linkages focused on the impact of employment status on family life, current empirical investigations have examined structural and psychological aspects of the work role for relationships with work-family outcomes (Voydanoff, 1989).

Structural work demands. Work-family research shows that structural work demands such as the amount of work time and the scheduling of the work week are related to difficulties associated with work-family coordination (Voydanoff, 1987). Individuals working long work weeks are more likely to report higher work-family role conflict (Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980) and role strain (Keith & Schafer, 1980; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984; Voydanoff, 1988). The number of hours one's spouse works per week also has implications for personal well-being. Keith and Schafer (1980) found that the number of hours the husband worked, the greater the wife's work-family role strain. Wife's employment hours, however, were not related to husband's role strain. Atypical work schedules may make it difficult to

coordinate work and family activities and thereby contribute to feelings of strain. Pleck et al. (1980) showed that employed parents working afternoon, evening, and irregular shifts experienced greater schedule incompatibility between work and family life. Staines and Pleck (1983) found that working non-day, weekend and variable shifts was associated with higher levels of work-family conflict.

Psychological work demands. In addition to structural characteristics of the work role, psychological aspects have been identified as predictors of work-family outcomes. Research has shown that psychological work demands such as heavy workloads and pressure for output are related to work-family role conflict (Voydanoff, 1988) and work-family role strain (Katz & Piotrkowski, 1983).

Workplace Support

It has been suggested that a work environment that is supportive of employees' family responsibilities may help to improve employed parents' ability to balance work and family life and reduce associated strain (Bowen, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987; McCroskey, 1982; Voydanoff, 1987). While research in this area is limited, two courses of study have been taken in the investigation of workplace support: (1) research examining formal family-oriented benefits; and (2) research examining supervisor support.

Family-oriented benefits. Family-oriented benefits refer to companies' formal benefits that are designed to help employees

coordinate work and family responsibilities (Raabe, 1990). Much of the research on family-oriented benefits has focused on the nature of these benefits, the extent to which they are available to employees (Paris, 1989; Raabe & Gessner, 1988), and the receptiveness of workplaces to their implementation (Axel, 1985; McNeely & Fogarty, 1988). Research examining the relationship between use of family-oriented benefits and work and family related outcomes, however, has been limited (Voydanoff, 1989). Two benefits that have received the most extensive research attention in this area are employer-sponsored child care and flextime.

National surveys and empirical studies of individual companies have investigated the impact of employer-sponsored child care on work-related outcomes. Results of these studies consistently support the positive effects of this type of care on measures of productivity. Employers and human resource managers generally report improvements in work outcomes such as employee morale, employee work satisfaction, retention, recruitment and reductions in tardiness, absenteeism, and turnover (Burud, Aschbacher, & McCroskey, 1984; Magid, 1983; Perry, 1982). Youngblood and Chambers-Cook (1984) also found that the implementation of an "in-house" day care centre was associated with greater overall job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and lower turnover intentions.

While studies of employer sponsored child care have generally focused on work-related outcomes, one study was

identified in the literature that investigated the effects of this benefit on the integration of work and family life. Goff, Mount, and Jamison (1990) examined the impact of on-site child care on work-family conflict for a sample of 253 parents who worked in a large midwestern United States' electronics and communications firm. Contrary to what was expected, the results showed that parents using on-site child care did not report lower levels of work-family conflict than parents who were not using this type of childcare arrangement.

Although working irregular shifts has been identified as a source of work-family role strain (Pleck et al., 1980), work-family literature considers flextime a family-oriented benefit because of its suggested positive effects on work-family outcomes. Investigations of flextime have addressed non-work outcomes such as work-family role interference and job-family stress (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981; Lee, 1983; Shinn, Wong, Simko, & Ortiz-Torres, 1989; Winett, Neale, & Williams, 1982).

Shinn et al. (1989) found no relationship between access to flextime and perceived work/family interference for their sample of 644 working parents (208 married fathers, 287 married mothers, 149 single mothers). Lee (1983) investigated the relationship between access to flextime and perceived stress associated with family activities using a sample of 100 married employees of a British research organization. Access to 2 hours of flextime per day was associated with reduced stress related to childcare activities and child socialization activities.

Winett et al. (1982) examined the impact of flextime on 71 working parents with children under the age of 13 years. Subjects were employed by two federal agencies in Washington, D.C. The use of flextime was associated with lower levels of perceived work/family interference.

Bohen and Viveros-Long (1981) examined the impact of flextime on perceived job-family stress for a sample of 393 federal agency employees (200 men, 193 women). Comparisons were made with a sample of 313 employees (172 men, 141 women) with similar background characteristics, working in a standard time federal agency (no access to flextime). Employed women and employed parents on flextime reported significantly lower levels of job-family stress than those on standard time. When the parent group was divided by sex, however, mothers on flextime did not report less stress than those on standard time. Contrary to the proposed hypothesis, flextime provided greater benefits to childless women and single adults than to employed parents or single mothers.

The studies cited above do not provide overwhelming support for either employer-sponsored child care or flextime as viable solutions to work-family problems. However, it has been argued that the inconclusive results of these studies may be due to methodological problems such as variations in the dependent measures and their definitions, inadequate statistical controls between samples, and differences resulting from studying the effects of access rather than use of benefits (Christensen &

Staines, 1990). It has also been suggested that the use of a single benefit may not make a measurable difference in reducing job-family stress for employed parents with a high level of family-related obligations (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981).

Instead of focusing on a particular family-oriented benefit, such as employer-sponsored child care or flextime, Greenberger et al., (1989) sought to examine the relationship between the number of family-oriented benefits used and work-family role strain. The sample consisted of 80 married men, 169 married women, and 72 single women who were employed and had a preschool age child. Respondents were asked to identify, from a list of 20 family-oriented benefits, those benefits which were offered by their employer and which they had used. The number of benefits used by the respondent was summed and respondents were categorized into one of three groups: those using no family-responsive benefits, those using a single family-responsive benefit, and those using more than one family-responsive benefit. The number of benefits used was a significant predictor of work-family role strain for both married and single women, but not for married men. While single women using more benefits reported lower levels of work-family role strain, the usage of benefits was associated with higher levels of work-family role strain for married women. The authors suggest that this may be due to the type of benefit used. Married women were more likely to report having used paid disability leave (maternity leave) than single women and therefore, were more

likely to have a young child at home.

Due to their focus on the use of multiple benefits rather than on a specific family-oriented benefit, Greenberger et al.'s (1989) research helps to provide a broader understanding of the relationship between family-oriented benefits and strain associated with combining work and family roles. Their measure of family-oriented benefits provides useful information regarding the number as well as the type of benefit used. A major limitation of this study, however, is that data were only collected on family-oriented benefits that had been used by the respondent. Respondents were not asked to provide information about current use of family-oriented benefits or their spouse's use of family-oriented benefits. Data could also be supplemented by asking respondents to indicate family-oriented benefits that they would consider using if they were available.

Supervisor support. In addition to formal benefits designed to ease the difficulties associated with combining work and family roles, supervisor support has been identified as a central component of workplace support.

Numerous studies on job stress have investigated the relationship between supervisor support and employees' well-being (see reviews by House, 1981; Vaux, 1988). Job stress research has demonstrated main effects between supervisor support and various measures of mental and physical health, as well as stress-buffering effects of supervisor support between job conditions and well-being (Holahan & Moos, 1981; Kobasa &

Puccetti, 1983; LaRocco, House, & French, 1980; Repetti, 1987).

Although supervisor support has not been the primary focus of work-family research (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988), the potential effects of such support on employees' perceived ability to combine work and family roles have been recognized (Fernandez, 1985; Galinsky & Stein, 1990; Greenglass, Pantony, & Burke, 1989).

In a study of 5,000 management and craft employees of five large technically oriented companies, Fernandez (1985) found a significant relationship between supportive supervisors and stress at work and at home. Respondents were asked the question, "To what extent does your supervisor support you and your child care needs?" A greater percentage of employees reported experiencing stress at work and at home when they believed that their supervisor was not supportive about their child care needs, than employees who believed that their supervisors were very supportive about their child care needs.

Galinsky and Stein's (1990) research on 71 Fortune 500 corporations found that one of the greatest predictors of work-family problems was the supervisor relationship. Employees' perceived ability to balance work and family roles was linked to supervisor's support of work-family obligations. A supportive supervisor was associated with lower levels of stress, while an unsupportive supervisor was related to increased levels of stress.

Using a sample of 556 male and female Canadian teachers,

Greenglass et al. (1989) investigated the impact of supervisor support on six types of role conflict: professional vs. self, professional vs. spouse, professional vs. parents, spouse vs. parent, parent vs. self, and spouse vs. self. Supervisor support was associated with lower levels of total role conflict for both men and women but especially for women. While supervisor support was only significantly related to total role conflict for men, it had the greatest impact on role conflict between professional vs. parental roles for women.

When investigating the impact of supervisor support on employees' perceived ability to combine work and family roles, it has been suggested that two dimensions of supervisor support need to be considered: sensitivity to employees' family responsibilities and flexibility when family needs arise (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988). Although a supervisor may act as a resource to the employee by providing emotional support for work role performance, if she/he is insensitive and inflexible regarding employee's work-family issues, difficulties associated with meeting work and family demands may be exacerbated. A few studies have assessed these dimensions of supervisor support (Goff et al., 1990; Greenberger et al., 1989; Hughes & Galinsky, 1988).

Goff et al. (1990) investigated the effect of supervisor support on work-family conflict. The sample consisted of 253 employed parents (161 male, 92 female) with children 5 years old or younger. Supervisor support was measured by a 6-item scale

asking respondents to report their supervisor's willingness to discuss family-related problems and flexibility when emergencies arose. Work-family conflict pertained to both spillover from the family role to the work role and from the work role to the family role. Supervisor support was found to be significantly related to the amount of work-family conflict experienced by the employed parent. As hypothesized, employees who perceived their supervisors as sensitive to their family needs and flexible when family emergencies arose, were more likely to report lower levels of work-family conflict.

Hughes and Galinsky (1988) examined the impact of supervisor sensitivity on work-family interference in a subsample of 285 employed parents (83 women and 202 men) who were married and had at least one child under 18. The sample was composed of managers, scientists, and clerical/technical workers in a large pharmaceutical company. Supervisor sensitivity was measured by eight items from the University of Michigan Quality of Employment Survey's measure of resource adequacy (Quinn & Staines, 1979) and three items developed by the Bank Street research team which were designed to tap supervisor flexibility regarding family demands. Although supervisor sensitivity was significantly related to stress (feeling overwhelmed and unable to control the important things in their lives) for both men and women, this type of support was only found to be significantly associated with work-family interference for fathers but not for mothers.

Greenberger et al. (1989) examined the relationship between supervisor support and work-family role strain for a sample of employed parents (80 married men, 169 married women, and 72 single women) with a preschool age child. Supervisor support was measured by a four item Overall Supervisor Support scale developed by Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, and Pinneau (1975) and a Supervisor Flexibility scale designed by the authors to provide information about the degree to which respondents perceived their supervisors as allowing scheduling flexibility and other latitude when family needs arose. Work-family role strain was measured by a 32-item scale developed by the authors to tap the spillover of pressures from one role into another, conflict between roles, strain within roles, and generalized role overload. Neither overall supervisor support nor supervisor flexibility were found to be significant predictors of work-family role strain among married men, married women, or single women.

The three studies reviewed above do not provide extensive support for the positive effects of perceived supervisor support on work-family coordination. The lack of significant findings may be due to low content validity of scales measuring perceived supervisor support and the failure to investigate possible indirect as well as direct effects of supervisor support on work-family outcomes.

The validity of the scales used to measure supervisor support is questionable because they may not be adequately

assessing perceived supervisor support for combining work and family roles. In Hughes and Galinsky's (1988) study, supervisor sensitivity for combining work and family roles was measured by an 11-item scale. Of the 11 items, three items measured perceived supervisor flexibility when family needs arose, and eight items assessed the degree to which respondents perceived their supervisors as resources for performing the work role. Thus, although supervisor sensitivity did not make a difference in reducing work-family interference for employed mothers, it may have been because the scale was primarily tapping perceived provision of resources by the supervisor for performing the work role rather than sensitivity for combining work and family roles. One of the two measures used by Greenberger et al. (1989) to assess supervisor support was a four item scale asking respondents to indicate how much their supervisor "made their work life easier, was easy to talk with, could be relied on, and was willing to listen to their personal problems" (p.765). This scale appears to tap emotional support from one's supervisor in a general sense rather than perceived support for combining employment with family responsibilities.

Family-Oriented Benefits and Supervisor Support

In the literature on family-oriented benefits, a link has been identified between family-oriented benefits and supervisor support (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987; Raabe & Gessner, 1988)

Through in-depth interviews with 30 New Orleans employers,

Raabe and Gessner (1988) found that while employers were often more accommodating regarding work-family issues than their formal policies suggested, formal policies were sometimes undermined by supervisory practices.

Based on their extensive research of corporate policies, Hughes and Galinsky (1988) conclude that although a company may have an innovative program, how or if employees make use of the program generally depends on the discretion of the supervisor.

In their case studies of a variety of corporations, Kamerman and Kahn (1987) found that employees were often not aware of available family-responsive benefits. In addition, a gap was often evident between formal and informal policies. Family-responsive programs were sometimes accompanied by pressure not to use available benefits, and inefficient and uncooperative administration.

It is apparent that the extent to which individuals perceive their supervisor as supportive of combining employment with family responsibilities may influence (1) whether available family-oriented benefits are used, and (2) whether benefits used are effective in facilitating work-family coordination. Investigations of the use of family-oriented benefits to date, however, have failed to consider possible indirect effects of perceived supervisor support. While Goff et al. (1990) and Greenberger et al. (1989) include both perceived supervisor support and family-oriented benefits in their investigations, neither study examines the relationship between the two

components of workplace support.

Hypotheses

Work-family research has identified structural and psychological aspects of the work role such as work hours, scheduling of work, and psychological work demands that are related to increased difficulty associated with coordinating work and family life (Katz & Piotrkowski, 1983; Keith & Schafer, 1980; Pleck et al., 1980; Staines & Pleck, 1983; Voydanoff, 1988; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984). Based on this literature, it is expected that:

H1: The greater the work demands, the greater the work-family role strain.

While structural and psychological dimensions of the work role may increase work-family role strain, components of the work environment may help to alleviate work-family difficulties. Although previous research examining the impact of workplace support on work-family role strain is limited, it has been suggested that a work environment that is supportive of employees' family responsibilities may facilitate the coordination of work-family roles (Bowen, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987; McCroskey, 1982; Voydanoff, 1987). Based on this argument, the following hypotheses are advanced:

H2: The more supportive the organizational culture, the less the work-family role strain.

H3: The greater the number of family-oriented benefits used, the less the work-family role strain.

H4: The greater the perceived supervisor support for combining employment with family responsibilities, the less the work-family role strain.

Due to the high family demands experienced by employed mothers of preschool age children, it is expected that benefits that are designed to assist employees in managing work and family responsibilities will be used if they are available. This relationship has been assumed but has not been empirically investigated. It is expected that:

H5: The more family-oriented benefits available, the more family-oriented benefits used.

While it is expected that greater work demands are associated with greater work-family role strain, this relationship may be moderated by perceived supervisor support for combining employment and family responsibilities. It is predicted that:

H6a: When work demands are high, individuals with high perceived supervisor support will have lower levels of work-family role strain than individuals with low perceived supervisor support.

H6b: When work demands are low, individuals with low perceived supervisor support will have higher levels of work-family role strain than individuals with high perceived supervisor support.

Perceived supervisor support may also interact with the use of family-oriented benefits to reduce work-family role strain.

Despite the use of available benefits, role strain may still be high if the individual perceives low supervisor support (Raabe & Gessner, 1988). It is expected that:

H7a: When use of family oriented benefits is high, individuals with high perceived supervisor support will have lower levels of work-family role strain than individuals with low perceived supervisor support.

H7b: When use of family oriented benefits is low, individuals with low perceived supervisor support will have higher levels of work-family role strain than individuals with high perceived supervisor support.

Perceiving one's supervisor as supportive of employees combining work and family roles may also influence whether available family-oriented benefits are used (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987). Regardless of the number of family-oriented benefits available, individuals may not use them if they do not perceive their supervisors as supportive. Thus, it is expected that:

H8: The relationship between available family-oriented benefits and use of family-oriented benefits will be stronger when perceived supervisor support is high than when perceived supervisor support is low.

Chapter III

Method

Recruitment of Subjects

The subjects were mothers who were employed outside the home in a position where they had an immediate supervisor, manager or boss. All mothers had at least one preschool age child. Subjects were recruited through Vancouver group daycare centers licensed by the Provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board. A current list of 66 group daycare centers for children aged 3 weeks to 5 years was obtained from the West Coast Child Care Resource Centre, Vancouver. Four of the centers provided care for children under 3 years of age, 52 centres provided care for children aged 3-5 years, and 10 centers provided care for children in both age groups. Of the 66 centers listed, nine centers were excluded from the target centers because of the special nature of the centers (5 centers for special needs children or integrated daycare, 1 center for children of teen mothers, 1 center providing only after school care and 2 centers that were "on site" facilities). It was believed that the characteristics of mothers with children in such centers would not be representative of the larger population of group daycare users.

Daycare directors or head supervisors of the remaining 57 group daycare centers were contacted in person or by telephone and asked (1) if any of the mothers with children at their center met the eligibility requirements and (2) if they were

willing to allow the researcher to recruit subjects through their center. Daycare directors/head supervisors from 45 centers agreed to participate and signed the permission form, required by the U.B.C. Ethics' Committee, for the recruitment of subjects through their daycare center (see Appendix A). The 12 centres that did not participate did so for the following reasons: (1) the English skills of the mothers were not strong enough to complete the questionnaire ($n = 7$), (2) the daycare center was no longer running ($n = 2$), and (3) the director/head supervisor was not interested or did not think that the mothers would be interested in participating ($n = 3$).

Data Collection Procedure

Over a one month period, questionnaires were distributed to the 45 daycare centers that were included in the recruitment process. From 2 to 15 questionnaires were initially left at each center depending on the number requested by the director/head supervisor. Recruitment notices, outlining the eligibility requirements for subjects, were posted in all 45 centers (see Appendix A). Volunteer participants picked up questionnaires at their daycare center and were asked to return their completed questionnaire to the School of Family and Nutritional Sciences in the stamped, self addressed envelope provided. A daycare code for each center was marked on the return envelope in order to monitor their return. A follow-up call was made to the daycare director/head supervisor 10 days after questionnaires were initially distributed to each center to see whether additional

questionnaires were required and to arrange a time for the researcher to return to the center to pick up any questionnaires that had not been taken. During the second and final visit to the daycare center (approximately 2 weeks after the initial visit), a reminder notice encouraging participants to return completed questionnaires was posted in each centre (see Appendix A).

Questionnaire

Participants were asked to complete an 11 page questionnaire (see Appendix B). The questionnaire included questions about psychological and structural demands of their paid work; perceptions about the supportiveness of their workplace and the supportiveness of their supervisor/manager or boss; difficulties in combining work and family responsibilities; and sociodemographic information. Questions were also included to ensure that the participants had met the eligibility requirements (e.g., "Do you have an immediate supervisor/manager or boss?", "Please list the ages of your child(ren) and the type of care arrangement(s) used.").

The questionnaire was pretested by a selected group of employed mothers of preschoolers ($n = 5$). In addition to completing the questionnaire, these mothers were asked to (1) provide the time it took them to complete it; (2) identify instructions they thought were unclear or items they felt were worded ambiguously; and (3) comment on any difficulties or concerns that other mothers might experience. As a result of

concerns raised by the pretesting sample, the wording of one item of the work-family role strain scale (item 8) was modified. "Does not" was removed from the item, "My time off from work does not match other family members' schedules well."

Measures

Work-Family Role Strain

The dependent variable was measured by Bohen and Viveros-Long's (1981) Job-Family Role Strain Scale. This 19-item Likert type scale was designed to assess worries about adequately fulfilling the demands (felt obligations) of both work and family roles. Scale items pertain to internalized values and emotions, such as self-doubt, guilt, and pressure associated with felt obligations about work and family roles. Unlike other scales designed to assess work and family arenas separately (how each role by itself affects individual's well-being such as job tension, family management), this scale focuses on the points at which individual's work and family roles connect or overlap and produce pressure or tension for individuals. As reported by Bohen and Viveros-Long (1981), Chronbach's alpha for this scale was .72 for their sample of male and female parents. When used with a Canadian sample of employed single mothers with preschoolers, Chronbach's alpha was .82 (see Campbell & Moen, 1992).

Using a 5-point Likert-type scale ('1' never, '5' always), respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they experienced the emotions expressed in the 19 statements. Typical

statements include, "I have a good balance between my job and family time." (reversed), and "I have more to do than I can handle comfortably."

Reversed items (3, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17) were recoded (1 = 5, 5 = 1) and individual items were summed and averaged to arrive at a value for the scale. High scores indicated high work-family role strain. Internal consistency, as measured by Chronbach's alpha, was .85 for this sample.

Work Demands

Two types of work demands were assessed: (1) structural work demands, and (2) psychological work demands.

Structural work demands. Structural work demands were assessed by asking respondents about the length of their work week and the scheduling of their work time. The length of the work week was measured by the average number of hours worked per week. Work scheduling was measured by a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent worked non-day shifts (coded 0, 1), and a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent worked on weekend days (coded 0, 1).

Psychological work demands. A 5-item scale was used to assess perceived workload and time pressure associated with the individual's paid work. This scale was comprised of 4 items from the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey (Quinn & Staines, 1979) and 1 item regarding tight deadlines, developed for this study. The item format was a 5-point Likert-type scale ('1' strongly disagree, '5' strongly agree), and respondents were asked to

indicate how much they agreed with 5 statements about their workload and time pressures to get their paid work done. Items were summed and averaged. High scores reflected high levels of psychological work demands. The reliability of the scale, established by Chronbach's alpha, was .76 for this sample of employed mothers.

Organizational Culture

For the purposes of this study, organizational culture refers to the philosophy or set of expectations/beliefs held by the business organization regarding combining work and family roles. Two measures were used to assess organizational culture: (1) available family-oriented benefits, and (2) work environment support.

Available family-oriented benefits. Family-oriented benefits refers to companies' formal policies and practices that have the potential to assist employees with the coordination of work and family responsibilities. Respondents were asked to check from a list of 13 family-oriented benefits (see Appendix C), those benefits that they knew were available to them in their current employment position. The list included benefits pertaining to (a) alternate work arrangements (6 items); (b) leave related policies (5 items); and (c) miscellaneous issues (2 items). Respondents marked a check next to "yes", "no", or "don't know" for each of the 13 benefits. Affirmative responses for each benefit were counted to achieve the total number of benefits respondents knew were available to them at the

workplace.

The 13 benefits included in this study were selected from a list, identified by the Conference Board of Canada (Paris, 1989), of family-related benefits offered by Canadian workplaces. Benefits were selected based on the following criteria: (1) relevance to combining paid employment with parenting responsibilities; and (2) applicability to a sample of group daycare users. Examples of excluded benefits include elder care and disabled relative related benefits, and child care related benefits such as resource and referral services.

The benefits included in this study have been cited in the literature on workplace support (Axel, 1985; Hughes & Galinsky, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987) and have been included in other empirical investigations (CARNET, unpublished questionnaire; Greenberger et al., 1989; Raabe & Gessner, 1988).

Work environment support. A single item was used to assess how supportive respondents perceived their work environment to be of employees with work-family difficulties. This item was developed for this study. Using a 5-point response scale ('1' not at all, '5' very supportive), respondents were asked to answer the question, "How supportive is your work environment of employees when they have difficulties coordinating work and family responsibilities?"

Use of Family-Oriented Benefits

Respondents were asked to check from the list of family-oriented benefits mentioned previously, those benefits that (a)

they were currently using or had used in the past year, and (b) they would consider using if they were available. The number of benefits that they were currently using or had used in the past year was summed to create a total "use" score. The number of benefits that they would use if available was summed to create a "future use" score.

Respondents were also asked to identify, from the list of benefits provided, those family-oriented benefits that were currently being used or had been used by their spouse in the past year. The number of benefits used by the respondent's spouse was summed to provide the total number of benefits used by the respondent's spouse/partner.

Perceived Supervisor Support

Perceived supervisor support was operationalized by three scales measuring (1) general supervisor support, (2) supervisor flexibility, and (3) supervisor sensitivity.

General supervisor support. Four items developed by Caplan et al. (1975) were used to measure the instrumental and emotional support an individual perceives she receives from her supervisor. When used by Greenberger et al. (1989), in their investigation of workplace support and parental well-being, Chronbach's alpha ranged from .79 to .85 for their sample of married men, married women and single women.

In order to establish consistency in response options, the wording of the 4 items was modified so that each item was in the form of a statement rather than a question. Respondents were

asked to indicate, using a 5-point Likert-type rating scale ('1' strongly disagree, '5' strongly agree), how much they felt their immediate supervisor, manager or boss made their work life easier, was easy to talk to, could be relied on, and was willing to listen to their personal problems. Items were summed and averaged with a high value reflecting high levels of general supervisor support. Chronbach's alpha for this sample was .83.

Although this general measure of supervisor support was not designed to tap supervisor support for combining work and family responsibilities, it was included in this study in order to compare the influence of general supervisor support with supervisor sensitivity and supervisor flexibility.

Supervisor flexibility. A 9-item Supervisor Flexibility Scale, developed by Greenberger et al. (1989), was used to measure the degree to which respondents perceived their immediate supervisor, manager or boss as allowing scheduling flexibility and other latitude when family needs arise. Chronbach's alpha was reported by the authors to be .88 for married mothers of preschool age children and .90 for single mothers of preschool age children.

In order to increase the number of response options, the original 3-point Likert-type response scale ('1' seldom or never, '2' sometimes, '3' usually or always) was expanded to create a 5-point Likert-type rating scale ('1' never, '2' seldom, '3' sometimes, '4' usually, '5' always). Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which each of nine

supervisory practices applied to their own work situation. An item typical of the scale is, "My supervisor/manager lets me come in late or leave early to accommodate my family needs." Scores for each item were summed and averaged such that the higher the score, the greater the perceived supervisor flexibility. Chronbach's alpha for this sample was .84.

Supervisor sensitivity. Due to the unavailability of an existing scale, an 8-item Supervisor Sensitivity Scale was developed to assess respondents' perceptions of their supervisor, manager or boss as aware and understanding of employees work-family responsibilities. Items included in the scale were based on definitions and characteristics of sensitive supervisors/managers identified in the research literature on workplace support (Bowen, 1988; Fernandez, 1985; Galinsky & Stein, 1990).

The validity of this scale was evaluated by 3 professors and 2 graduate students in the School of Family and Nutritional Sciences. Evaluators were asked to answer the following questions (1) Are the items stated in a clear and concise manner?; (2) How relevant is each item to perceived supervisor sensitivity for employees' family responsibilities and work difficulties?; (3) Are there other aspects of perceived supervisor sensitivity that need to be considered?; and (4) Are the supervisor sensitivity and supervisor flexibility scales tapping different dimensions of supervisor support? The number of items and the wording of the items was not altered, however,

the original 4-item Likert-type response scale was changed to a 5-item response scale in order to include a middle ground or neutral response category.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each of the 8 statements about their immediate supervisor/manager or boss using a 5-point Likert-type rating scale ('1' strongly disagree, '5' strongly agree). Reversed items (4, 6) were recoded ($1 = 5$, $5 = 1$). Individual items were summed and averaged such that the higher the score, the greater the perceived supervisor sensitivity. Chronbach's alpha for this sample was .88.

Control Variables

Occupational role commitment. Occupational role commitment was included as a control because women who are committed to their paid work role may take on more challenging tasks at work and may devote more time and energy to their work. As a result, they may perceive their work as more psychologically demanding and may also perceive greater difficulties in meeting all of their work and family obligations.

Occupational role commitment was evaluated using a 5-item scale developed by Amatea, Cross, Clark, and Bobby (1986). Commitment was defined by the authors as "the extent to which the person demonstrates a willingness to commit personal resources to assure success in the role or to develop the role" (p.832). Amatea et al. (1986), reported Chronbach's alpha to be .83 for their married couple sample.

Respondents indicated their agreement with the 5-items using a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. Reversed items (item 1) were recoded (1 = 5, 5 = 1) and individual items were summed and averaged to provide a total score for the scale. The reliability of the scale for this sample was .81 when one item was eliminated. The item "I want to work but I do not want to have a demanding job/career" was eliminated due to its very low correlations ($r < .15$) with other scale items and the resulting depressive effect it had on the alpha coefficient for the scale.

Family role commitment. Due to the emotional involvement and time devoted to family responsibilities, women who are committed to their family role may have difficulty fulfilling their work demands. Family role commitment may differentially affect psychological work demands and perceived work-family role strain. Thus, family role commitment was included as a control for this study.

Three items from the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey (Quinn & Staines, 1979) were used to measure commitment to the family role. Using a 5-point Likert-type response scale ('1' strongly disagree, '5' strongly agree), respondents indicated their agreement with three statements about how important their family is to them. Individual items were summed and an average score for the scale was computed. Chronbach's alpha was .77.

Outside help. The use of outside help was measured by a dummy variable indicating the presence or absence of outside help with household chores on a regular basis (coded 0,1). This

variable was included as a control because women who hire individuals to help with household chores may experience fewer family demands and thus may perceive lower levels of work-family role strain.

Occupation length. The length of time one is employed in an occupation position may influence the supervisor-supervisee relationship as well as access to and eligibility for family-oriented benefits. As a result, occupation length was controlled for in subsequent analyses.

This variable was measured by the number of months respondents had been employed in their current employment position with their present employer.

Difficulty finding alternate child care. Although previous research has not investigated difficulty finding alternate child care and work-family outcomes, this variable was included as a control because finding alternate care arrangements has been identified as problematic for parents of young children (Galinsky, 1986; Galinsky & Stein, 1990). Worrying about alternate care arrangements may influence perceived work-family role strain.

A single item was used to measure difficulty finding alternate child care. Using a 3-point Likert-type response scale ('1' not difficult, '2' somewhat difficult, '3' very difficult), respondents were asked to answer the question, "How difficult would it be for you to find alternate child care arrangements

when your regular arrangements break down?"

Satisfaction with child care. A single item was used to measure the respondent's satisfaction with her current child care arrangements. Respondents were asked to answer the question, "How satisfied are you with your current child care arrangements?" A 4-point Likert-type response scale ('1' very dissatisfied, '4' very satisfied) was used.

This variable was included as a control because women who are not satisfied with their child care arrangement may feel guilty about leaving their child at the daycare center and may worry about them while they are at work. These feelings may influence work-family role strain and may also override support offered by the workplace.

Sociodemographic Information

Respondents were also asked to provide information about personal, spouse/partner and family characteristics. Personal characteristics included type of occupation position, age, marital status, education, total personal income, and ethnicity. An occupational prestige score was constructed for each respondent by coding the type of occupation position according to the 1980 four-digit Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations and reconciling these codes to the 1981 Socioeconomic Index for Occupations in Canada (Blishen, Carroll, & Moore, 1987). Spouse/partner characteristics included questions about spouse/partner's employment status, type of occupation position, work hours and work schedule. Family

characteristics included number of children, ages of children, and total household income.

Chapter IV

Results

Response Rate

Two hundred and forty questionnaires were taken by employed mothers from the 45 daycare centers involved in the recruitment of subjects. Over a period of 2 months, 143 questionnaires were returned by mail to the School of Family and Nutritional Sciences (response rate = 60%). Of the 143 questionnaires returned, 20 were not eligible (e.g., did not have an immediate supervisor, did not have a preschool age child, were not working outside the home) and 7 were eligible but were excluded due to considerable missing data on the dependent and independent variables. The sample used for analysis consisted of 116 mothers.

Characteristics of the Sample

A summary of characteristics of the sample is presented here. For a detailed demographic profile see Appendix D, Table 1. The ages of the participants ranged from 23 to 46 years with most mothers in their 30's (72%). Forty-seven percent of the sample was married. The majority of women (67%) had only one child. Most mothers did not identify with an ethnic group other than Canadian. The majority of women had personal incomes of \$40,000 or less (80%) and reported household incomes of \$60,000 or less (62%). Almost all women (97%) had completed high school, 15% had completed a university undergraduate degree and 15% had completed a university post graduate degree. Eighty percent of

the sample worked in one of four occupation classifications (1) managerial, administrative and related ($n = 35$), (2) clerical and related ($n = 35$), (3) medicine and health ($n = 13$), and (4) teaching and related occupations ($n = 10$).

The majority of women (96%) who were married or living in common law had a spouse or partner who was employed. Thirty-three percent of the employed spouses/partners worked in managerial, administrative and related occupations, 14% worked in service occupations, and the remaining spouses/partners were employed in a range of occupations. The majority (85%) of employed spouses/partners worked full-time (30 or more hours per week), with almost half working atypical shifts.

Univariate Distributions

Before testing the proposed hypotheses, univariate distributions for the dependent, independent and control variables were examined.

Work-Family Role Strain

The average score on this 19-item Likert type scale was 2.94 ($SD = .50$), where the possible range was 1 to 5. There was variation in the distribution of scores around the mean. The distribution was not significantly skewed and approximated a normal distribution.

Work Demands

Work hours. The average length of the work week was 35.90 hours ($SD = 12.42$). The distribution was significantly skewed toward higher values. This distribution may be due to the

preselected characteristics of the sample. Because of the limited number of part-time spaces available, the majority of women in this sample would have their preschoolers in full-time daycare. As a result, these women are more likely to be working full-time.

Work schedule. The majority of mothers did not work an irregular work schedule. Ninety percent of the sample reported that they did not work evening or night shifts. Five percent reported that they did work evening or night shifts and five percent failed to answer this question. Eighty-two percent reported that they did not work weekend days, fifteen percent worked weekend days, and three percent failed to respond to this item.

Psychological work demands. The average score on psychological work demands was 3.55 (SD = .75), where the possible range was 1 to 5. The distribution of scores was not significantly skewed and approximated a normal distribution.

Organizational Culture

Available family-oriented benefits. The average number of available benefits was 4.12 (SD = 2.26), where the possible range was 0 to 13 available benefits. The distribution of scores on this summed index was significantly skewed to the right of the median, 4.00, with clustering around lower values. Since few family-oriented benefits are available in Canadian workplaces (see Paris, 1989), it was expected that the scores for this index would be distributed in such a manner.

Work environment support. The average score for work environment support was 3.66 ($SD = 1.06$), where the range was 1 to 5. This one item Likert-type scale was significantly skewed toward higher values, however, variation was evident in the distribution of scores. For example, 5 of the cases scored a value of one, 9 cases scored a value of two, and 34 cases scored a value of three. While skewness was significant, kurtosis was not significant.

Use of Family-Oriented Benefits

Respondent's use of family-oriented benefits. The average number of benefits that respondents had used in the past year or were currently using was 1.52 ($SD = 1.78$), where the possible range was 0 to 13 benefits. The distribution of scores for this summed index was significantly skewed to the right of the median, 1.00, with clustering around the values of 0 and 1. Due to the limited number of available benefits in Canadian workplaces, combined with eligibility requirements within companies, it was expected that the scores would be distributed in such a manner. See Table 1 for frequencies of use for each of the 13 family-oriented benefits.

Spouse's use of family-oriented benefits. Eighteen respondents had a spouse who had used family-oriented benefits in the past year or was currently using one of the 13 family-oriented benefits listed. The average number of benefits respondents said their spouses had or were currently using was 2.44 ($SD = 1.10$), where the minimum was 1 and the maximum was

Table 1**Frequencies of Use for Each of the 13 Family-Oriented Benefits**

Family-Oriented Benefit	Percent Using Each Benefit
Alternate Work Arrangements	
Flextime	31.0
Part-time (prorated benefits)	11.2
Part-time (no benefits)	9.5
Compressed work week	8.6
Job sharing	5.2
Work at home	2.6
Leaves	
Leave in lieu of overtime	23.3
Short term leave (personal/family)	21.6
Sick child days with pay	15.5
Personal days with pay	12.1
Extended leave (personal/family)	5.2
Miscellaneous	
Employee assistance programs	5.2
Workshops/seminars (work-family)	0.9

13. The scores fell between 1 and 4 benefits and the distribution was not significantly skewed.

Future use of family-oriented benefits. The average number of benefits that respondents said they would use if they were available was 4.80 ($SD = 3.29$), where the possible range was 0 to 13 benefits. The distribution of scores was not significantly skewed but kurtosis was significant. The distribution was flatter than that of a normal distribution with almost equal numbers of cases for each value. For example, 13 respondents would not use any of the family-oriented benefits if they were available, 9 respondents would use 1 benefit, 15 respondents reported they would use 2 benefits, 9 respondents said they would use 3 benefits, and 11 respondents said they would use 4 benefits.

The three most frequently reported benefits that respondents said they would use if they were available were sick child days with pay (61.2%), personal days with pay (53.4%), and workshops and seminars on balancing work and family responsibilities (49.1%).

Supervisor Support

General supervisor support. The average score for general supervisor support was 3.47 ($SD = .82$), where the possible range was 1 to 5. The distribution was not significantly skewed and approximated a normal distribution.

Supervisor sensitivity. The average score for supervisor sensitivity was 3.43 ($SD = .71$), where the possible range was 1

to 5. Skewness was significant with clustering of scores to the right of the median, 3.5, and most of the extreme values to the left of the median. Although the distribution was slightly skewed, there was variation in the distribution of scores. Kurtosis was not significant.

Supervisor flexibility. The average score for supervisor flexibility was 3.22 ($SD = .85$), where the range was 1 to 5. The distribution of scores was not significantly skewed and approximated a normal distribution.

Control Variables

Occupational role commitment. The average score for occupational role commitment was 2.97 ($SD = .79$), where the range was 1 to 5. Skewness was not significant and the distribution of scores approximated a normal distribution.

Family role commitment. The average score for family role commitment was 4.27 ($SD = .73$), where the range was 1 to 5. The distribution of scores was significantly skewed with more scores clustering around higher values. For example, 31 cases scored a 5 on this scale. Kurtosis was also significant. Because the sample consisted of mothers with at least one preschool age child, there was no reason to assume that scores would be normally distributed on this Likert-type 3-item scale.

Outside help. Ninety-eight cases (84.5%) did not hire anyone from outside their household to help with home chores on a regular basis. Eighteen cases (15.5%) did hire outside help.

Occupation length. The average number of months mothers had

been in their current employment position was 55.52 months ($SD = 58.89$). The distribution of scores was significantly skewed with most cases clustering around lower values. For example, 76 cases (66%) had been in their current employment position for 48 months (4 years) or less. This distribution of scores may be due to the fact that all women had at least one preschool age child and may have taken time off work after the child was born.

Satisfaction with child care arrangements. The average score for child care satisfaction was 3.36 ($SD = .86$), where the possible range was 1 to 4. Skewness was significant with clustering of scores around the median, 4.0, and most of the extreme values to the left of the median. Eighty-nine percent of the sample was satisfied or very satisfied with their present child care arrangements.

Difficulty finding alternate child care. The average score for this 1-item Likert type scale was 2.36 ($SD = .65$), where the range was 1 to 3. The distribution was significantly skewed toward higher values. For example, 45% of the sample thought it would be somewhat difficult and 45% of the sample thought it would be very difficult to find alternate child care should their regular child care arrangements break down. With only three response categories, it was not expected that the distribution of scores would follow the normal curve.

Preliminary Analyses

Because a significant proportion of the sample was not married or living in common law (40%), a t-test was run to check

for differences on role strain between mothers who were married or living in common law and mothers who were not married or living in a common law relationship. No significant differences were found between the two groups, $t(96) = -.09$, $p = .93$. As a group, the employed mothers in this sample experienced moderate levels of work-family role strain. As reported earlier, the mean score on the 5-point role strain scale was 2.94, where the range was 1 to 5.

Pearson's correlations were also run between the sociodemographic variables and the dependent variable to see whether any of these variables needed to be included as additional control variables in testing the hypotheses (see Table 2). Only number of children was significantly related to work-family role strain. Because the strength of this relationship was weak, $r = .197$, $n = 99$, $p = .03$, and most mothers had only one child (67%), number of children was not controlled in subsequent analyses.

Hypothesis Testing

Multiple regression was used to test Hypotheses 1 through 4. R square was initially examined for the sets of variables assessing work demands and components of workplace support. Depending on whether or not R square was significant for each set of variables, one of two procedures was followed. If R square was significant, the Beta coefficients for each variable within the set were examined for significance. The significance of R square change was also examined when the set of variables

Table 2

**Correlations Between Sociodemographic Variables and Work-Family
Role Strain**

	<u>n</u> ^a	Role Strain
Sociodemographic Variables		
Mother's age	99	-.041
Number of children	99	.197*
Age of child (1 child)	67	-.120
Age of child (2 children)		
Youngest	26	-.044
Oldest	30	-.106
Personal income	98	.009
Household income	94	.084
Occupational prestige	99	.048
Education (years)	98	-.006
Education (level)	99	.008
Spouse/partner employed	99	.011
Spouse/partner work hours	57	.203
Spouse/partner evening/ night shift	60	.142
Spouse/partner weekend shift	59	.090

a Number varies due to missing data and/or inapplicability.

* $p < .05$.

was entered into the regression equation after the six control variables (occupational role commitment, family role commitment, outside help, occupation length, child care satisfaction, and difficulty finding alternate child care).

If R square was not significant, separate regression analyses were run for each variable in the set, with the dependent variable. R square and Beta for each variable were then examined for significance. Multiple regression, rather than bivariate correlation analysis, was used so that the six control variables could be taken into account. For those variables that were significantly related to the dependent variable, the significance of R square change was examined when the variable was entered into the regression equation after the six control variables.

Correlation analysis was used to test Hypotheses 5 and 8. Interaction effects, proposed in Hypotheses 6 and 7, were tested with analysis of variance.

Hypothesis 1: The greater the work demands, the greater the work-family role strain.

Intercorrelations between the four work demand variables indicated that except for the two shift variables, the work demand variables were not significantly related to one another (see Table 3). The correlation between evening/night shifts and weekend shifts was too low to combine these variables and create a unidimensional measure. The four work demand variables were therefore treated as separate independent measures.

Table 3

Intercorrelations Between Work Demand Variables

	2	3	4
Work Demands			
1. Work hours	.01	.05	-.02
2. Evening/night shifts		.43*	-.05
3. Weekend shifts			-.05
4. Psychological work demands			

*p < .001.

Average weekly work hours, evening/night shifts, weekend shifts and psychological work demands were entered as a block into the regression equation with the dependent variable, work-family role strain. The set of work demand variables was not related to work-family role strain, $F(4, 86) = 2.06$, $R^2 = .09$, $p = .09$.

Multiple regression was then used to examine the relationship between each work demand variable and work-family role strain. Thus, four separate regression equations, one for each work demand variable, were examined. Of the four work demand variables, only the psychological work demand variable made a significant contribution to the variance in work-family role strain, $F(6, 87) = 7.68$, $R^2 = .075$, $p = .007$, and had a significant coefficient, $Beta = .274$, $p = .007$. The results showed that the greater the psychological work demands, the greater the work-family role strain.

When the psychological work demand variable was entered into the multiple regression equation after the six control variables, it no longer explained any variance in work-family role strain (R^2 change = .033, $p = .06$).

Although the results do not provide support for the hypothesized relationship between total work demands and work-family role strain, they do provide some support for the relationship between psychological work demands and role strain.

Hypothesis 2: The more supportive the organizational culture, the less the work-family role strain.

Available family-oriented benefits and work environment support were significantly correlated, $r = .25$, $n = 116$, $p = .003$. Because the strength of the relationship was weak, however, available benefits and work environment support were treated as independent measures of organizational support.

Available family-oriented benefits and work environment support were entered as a block into the multiple regression equation with the dependent variable, work-family role strain. This set of variables assessing organizational culture accounted for a significant proportion of variance in work-family role strain, $F(2, 96) = 3.23$, $R^2 = .063$, $p = .044$. Of the organizational culture variables, only work environment support had a significant coefficient, $Beta = -.228$, $p = .03$. Thus, the greater the work environment support, the less the work-family role strain.

As indicated by R square change, the set of organizational culture variables continued to make a significant contribution to work-family role strain when entered into the multiple regression equation after the six control variables (R^2 change = .07, $p = .02$).

The results provide support for the hypothesized relationship between organizational culture and work-family role strain.

Hypotheses 3: The greater the number of family-oriented benefits used, the less the work-family role strain.

The correlation between respondent's use of benefits and

spouse's use of benefits was not significant, $r = -.09$, $n = 18$, $p = .36$. Thus, the two variables were considered independent measures of total use of benefits.

Both the respondent's use of family-oriented benefits and spouse's use of family-oriented benefits were entered as a block into the regression equation with the dependent variable, work-family role strain, to assess the contribution of total use of family-oriented benefits. This set of variables did not account for any variance in work-family role strain, $F(2, 13) = 1.64$, $R^2 = .201$, $p = .23$.

Because this set of variables assessing use of benefits was not significantly related to work-family role strain, respondent's use and spouse's use of benefits were examined separately with work-family role strain. Thus, two multiple regression equations were examined. Neither respondent's use of family-oriented benefits nor spouse's use of family-oriented benefits were related to work-family role strain.

T-tests were also run to investigate possible differences on work-family role strain between (1) women who were not using any family-oriented benefits and women who were using one or more family-oriented benefits; and (2) women who were using one family-oriented benefit with women who were using more than one family-oriented benefit. No significant differences on work-family role strain were found between women who were not using any benefits and women using one or more benefits, $t(97) = .60$, $p = .55$; or between women using one benefit and women using more

than one benefit, $t(57) = -.93$, $p = .36$.

The results do not provide support for the hypothesis that the more family-oriented benefits used, the less the work-family role strain.

Hypothesis 4: The greater the perceived supervisor support for combining employment with family responsibilities, the less the work-family role strain.

Supervisor sensitivity, supervisor flexibility and the general measure of supervisor support were entered as a block into the multiple regression equation with the dependent variable in order to assess the contribution of this set of supervisor support variables to the explanation of variance in work-family role strain. Although moderate to high intercorrelations were found between the three measures of perceived supervisor support (see Table 4), tolerance levels were above .01 when the three variables were entered as a block in the multiple regression equation.

As a set, general supervisor support, supervisor sensitivity and supervisor flexibility did not account for any variance in employed mother's work-family role strain, $F(3, 76) = 2.24$, $R^2 = .081$, $p = .09$.

Because the set of total supervisor support variables was not related to work-family role strain, each supervisor support variable was examined separately using multiple regression analysis. Thus, three separate multiple regression equations were examined. Of the three supervisor support variables, only

Table 4**Intercorrelations Between Supervisor Support Variables**

	2	3
Supervisor Support		
1. General supervisor support	.87*	.45*
2. Supervisor sensitivity		.52*
3. Supervisor flexibility		

* $p < .001$.

supervisor flexibility made a significant contribution to the explained variance in work-family role strain, $F(1, 78) = 6.87$, $R^2 = .08$, $p = .01$, and had a significant Beta coefficient, $Beta = -.285$, $p = .01$. The results showed that the greater the supervisor flexibility, the less the work-family role strain.

As indicated by R square change, supervisor flexibility continued to make a significant contribution to work-family role strain when entered into the multiple regression equation after the six control variables (R^2 change = .067, $p = .013$).

While these results do not provide support for the hypothesized relationship between overall supervisor support and work-family role strain, the findings show that supervisor flexibility, one dimension of supervisor support, is a relevant predictor of work-family role strain.

Hypothesis 5: The more family-oriented benefits available, the more family-oriented benefits used.

The number of available benefits was significantly related to the number of family-oriented benefits used by the respondent, $r = .40$, $n = 116$, $p = .001$. The greater the number of available benefits, the greater the number of benefits used.

The scatterplot for available benefits and use of benefits showed that clustering occurred around lower values for both variables. Most women had fewer than six available benefits and were using fewer than three of the available benefits. The scatterplot also indicated that as the number of available benefits increased, the number of benefits used typically did

not surpass the use of four benefits.

The correlation between the number of benefits available and the percentage of benefits used supports the patterns identified by the scatterplot. As the number of available benefits increased, the percentage of benefits used decreased, $r = -.316$, $n = 71$, $p = .004$. Respondents were less likely to use all of the benefits available to them when the number of available benefits was large.

The results provide partial support for the hypothesized relationship between available benefits and use of benefits.

Hypothesis 6a: When work demands are high, individuals with high perceived supervisor support will have lower levels of work-family role strain than individuals with low perceived supervisor support.

Hypothesis 6b: When work demands are low, individuals with low perceived supervisor support will have higher levels of work-family role strain than individuals with high perceived supervisor support.

Prior to testing these hypotheses with analysis of variance, a work demand index was created and a total supervisor support scale was constructed.

Due to the lack of significant intercorrelations between length of the work week, evening/night shifts, weekend shifts and psychological work demands (see Table 3), an index, rather than a scale, was created for total work demands. The standardized scores for each of the four work demand variables

were computed, summed and averaged to create the work demand index.

General supervisor support, supervisor sensitivity and supervisor flexibility were summed and averaged to create a total supervisor support scale. The moderate to high intercorrelations between these three measures of supervisor support supported the construction of the total supervisor support scale (see Table 4). The reliability of this scale, as measured by Chronbach's alpha, was .82. Two-way interactions between the work demand index and the total supervisor support scale were then examined.

The two-way interaction for the work demand index and the total supervisor support scale was not significant, $F(3, 71) = .61$, $p = .44$. These two factors did not jointly affect work-family role strain.

Because total supervisor support may moderate the relationship between different aspects of work demands and work-family role strain, analysis of variance was used to examine possible interaction effects between the total supervisor support scale and each of the four work demand variables making up the work demand index.

Due to the distribution of responses for work hours and the scheduling of work hours, cell sizes were extremely unequal for these variables. As a result, interaction effects could not be examined. Cell sizes for psychological work demands and total

supervisor support were relatively equal and analysis of variance was conducted. The two-way interaction for psychological work demands and total supervisor support was not significant, $F(3, 75) = .97, p = .33$. Thus, psychological work demands and total supervisor support did not jointly affect work-family role strain.

Because the three supervisor support variables comprising the supervisor support scale were designed to measure different dimensions of supervisor support, analysis of variance was also used to investigate interaction effects of psychological work demands and each of the three supervisor support measures on work-family role strain. No significant interaction effects were found for psychological work demands and either general supervisor support, $F(3, 93) = 2.14, p = .15$; supervisor sensitivity, $F(3, 93) = .607, p = .44$; or supervisor flexibility $F(3, 75) = .019, p = .89$.

The results of these analyses of variance do not provide support for the prediction that supervisor support, or dimensions of supervisor support, moderate the relationship between work demands and work-family role strain.

Hypothesis 7a: When the use of family-oriented benefits is high, individuals with high perceived supervisor support will have lower levels of work-family role strain than individuals with low perceived supervisor support.

Hypothesis 7b: When the use of family-oriented benefits is low, individuals with low perceived supervisor support will have higher levels of work-family role strain than individuals with high perceived supervisor support.

Prior to testing hypotheses 7a and 7b with analysis of variance, a use of benefits index was constructed by summing and averaging respondent's use of benefits and spouse's use of benefits. Due to the limited number of respondents with spouses who were using one or more family-oriented benefits ($n = 16$), the sample size was too small to use the constructed index. As a result, only respondent's use of family-oriented benefits was included in the analysis. The total supervisor support scale, described in the results section for hypothesis 6a and 6b, was also used to test these hypotheses.

Two-way interactions for the respondent's use of benefits and total supervisor support on work-family role strain were examined. The two-way interaction was not significant, $F(3, 76) = .05$, $p = .82$.

Because the three supervisor support variables comprising the supervisor support scale were designed to measure different dimensions of supervisor support, analysis of variance was also used to investigate interaction effects between respondent's use of benefits and each of the three supervisor support measures on work-family role strain. No significant interaction effects were found for respondent's use of benefits and either general supervisor support, $F(3, 95) = .02$, $p = .88$; supervisor

sensitivity, $F(3, 95) = .03, p = .87$; or supervisor flexibility, $F(3, 76) = 3.55, p = .06$.

The results of these analyses of variance do not provide support for the prediction that supervisor support, or dimensions of supervisor support, moderate the relationship between respondent's use of benefits and work-family role strain.

Hypothesis 8: The relationship between available family-oriented benefits and use of family-oriented benefits will be stronger when perceived supervisor support is high than when perceived supervisor support is low.

Using a median split, cases were divided into two groups: (1) low supervisor support, and (2) high supervisor support. Correlation coefficients between the number of available benefits and the number of benefits used were then computed for the two groups.

The relationship between available benefits and use of benefits was significant for both supervisor support groups. Contrary to what was predicted, the strength of the relationship was greater for women with low supervisor support, $r = .43, n = 44, p = .002$, than for women with high supervisor support, $r = .30, n = 43, p = .028$.

Post Hoc Analysis

While testing the proposed hypotheses, relationships not specified in these hypotheses became evident. Three of the six control variables and future use of family-oriented benefits

were associated with work-family role strain. Also, the use of family-oriented benefits was significantly related to dimensions of supervisor support.

The results of the one-tailed correlation analysis showed that of the six control variables, occupational role commitment, family role commitment and difficulty in finding alternate child care arrangements were significantly related to work-family role strain (see Table 5). The strength of the relationships was weak but all were statistically significant. The more committed the employed mother is to her work and family roles and the greater her difficulty in finding alternate child care when regular care is unavailable, the greater the work-family role strain.

Future use of family-oriented benefits made a significant contribution to the variance in work-family role strain, $F(1, 97) = 10.88$, $R^2 = .10$, $p = .001$, and had a significant coefficient, $Beta = .317$, $p = .001$, when it was the only variable in the multiple regression equation with role strain. The results showed that the greater the number of family-oriented benefits that would be used by the respondent if they were available, the greater the work-family role strain. As indicated by R square change, future use of benefits continued to make a significant contribution to role strain when entered after the six control variables, $R^2 \text{ change} = .039$, $p = .04$.

A median split was done for future use of benefits and a t-test was run to check for significant differences on role strain between mothers with low future use and mothers with high future

Table 5**Correlations Between Control Variables and Work-Family Role Strain**

Control Variables	<u>n</u>^a	Role Strain
Occupational role commitment	98	.17*
Family role commitment	99	.23**
Occupation length	98	-.07
Use of outside help	99	-.06
Satisfaction with child care	99	-.07
Difficulty finding alternate care	98	.26**

a Number varies due to missing data.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

use of family-oriented benefits. Significant differences were found between the two groups, $t(97) = -2.99$, $p = .004$. Mothers with high future use reported greater work-family role strain ($M = 3.13$) than mothers with low future use ($M = 2.83$).

The results of the one-tailed correlation analysis showed that available family-oriented benefits was significantly related to general supervisor support and supervisor sensitivity (see Table 6). In addition, the results indicated that future use of benefits was associated with general supervisor support, supervisor sensitivity, and supervisor flexibility, however, current use of family-oriented benefits was only significantly related to supervisor flexibility (see Table 6).

Table 6

Intercorrelations Between Family-Oriented Benefits and
Supervisor Support Variables

Family-Oriented Benefits	Supervisor Support		
	General Sensitivity Flexibility		
Available	.27**	.33***	.12
Current use	.08	.15	.30**
Future use	-.20*	-.20*	-.22**

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Chapter V

Discussion

This study investigated the impact of work demands and workplace support on work-family role strain of employed mothers with preschool age children. Availability and use of family-oriented benefits was also assessed. In addition, moderating effects of supervisor support were examined.

Role strain theory provided the conceptual framework for examining work-family role strain, however, current work-family literature provided the basis for exploring institutional level coping mechanisms for reducing strain associated with combining work and family roles. The results of this study, therefore, are discussed in terms of their contribution to existing work-family literature, particularly the literature on workplace support for combining work and family roles.

Work-Family Role Strain

Previous research shows that when compared to employed fathers and employed mothers of older children, employed mothers of preschool age children are more likely to report spillover between work and family (Crouter, 1984) and greater work-family role strain (Greenberger et al., 1989; Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985). Although none of these studies investigated the relationship between type of child care used and work-family outcomes, it was assumed that employed mothers using group daycare might experience especially high levels of work-family role strain due to the lack of flexibility in the operating hours of full-time

daycare centers and the need to make alternate child care arrangements when the child is ill. The mothers in this sample, however, experienced a moderate level of work-family role strain. Due to the lack of current research investigating the relationship between child care arrangements and work-family outcomes, it is not known how mothers using other care arrangements might score on work-family role strain.

Work Demands

Contrary to what was predicted in Hypothesis 1, employed mothers who perceive their paid work as both psychologically and structurally demanding do not experience greater strain between their work and family roles. When structural and psychological work demand variables were examined separately, however, the results indicate that work-family role strain is not influenced by either the number of hours worked per week or the scheduling of these hours, but is related to the psychological demands of the job.

Although the number of paid work hours and work-family role strain are not related for this sample, this finding is not consistent with previous research that reports higher work-family role strain with a longer work week (Campbell & Moen, 1992; Keith & Schafer, 1980; Voydanoff, 1988; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984). In this study, the lack of a significant relationship between work hours and work-family role strain may be due to limited variation in the number of hours the mothers were employed per week. The majority of mothers (75%) worked between

30 and 40 hours with only 5% working more than 40 hours, and 18% working fewer than 30 hours per week.

While working non-day and irregular shifts has been associated with higher levels of work-family conflict (Staines & Pleck, 1983) and greater schedule incompatibility between work and family life (Pleck et al., 1980), the results of this study indicate that working evening/night shifts or weekend days is not related to work-family role strain. This finding may be due to the fact that only 5% of the mothers worked evening or night shifts and 15% worked weekend days.

Because of the rigid operating hours of group daycare centers, it was believed that mothers with preschoolers in group daycare might be more likely to work full-time hours and typical shifts. The viability of this assumption was questionable due to the lack of research on work characteristics of group daycare users. Because previous research has found work hours and the scheduling of work hours to be related to work-family outcomes (Campbell & Moen, 1992; Keith & Schafer, 1980; Pleck et al., 1980; Staines & Pleck, 1983; Voydanoff, 1988; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984), excluding these variables from this study, without empirical support, would not have been justified.

Psychological work demands was significantly related to work-family role strain. The more psychologically demanding the paid work, the greater the perceived work-family role strain. Mothers who feel they have too much work to do for their job and not enough time to get all their work completed are more likely

to perceive that they cannot adequately fulfill their work and family demands. This finding is supported by work-family research which has also found that psychological work demands such as heavy workloads and pressure for output are positively related to work-family role conflict (Voydanoff, 1988) and work-family role strain (Katz & Piotrkowski, 1983). While psychological work demands may create job stresses that spillover into family life (Voydanoff, 1987), this finding provides further support for the belief that the psychological demands of one's paid employment influence employed mothers' perceived ability to adequately fulfill the demands of both their work and family roles.

Although psychological work demands was significantly related to work-family role strain, it is important to address the fact that this relationship was no longer significant when commitment to work and family roles, satisfaction with child care, difficulty finding alternate childcare, and the length of time in current employment were controlled. This finding suggests that other factors need to be considered when investigating the relationship between psychological work demands and work-family role strain.

Workplace Support

While it was hypothesized that work demands would increase the level of strain between work and family roles, it was also predicted that workplace support would help to reduce work-family role strain for employed mothers. Three aspects of

workplace support were assessed: organizational culture, use of family-oriented benefits, and supervisor support.

Organizational culture. The results of this study provide support for the hypothesized relationship between organizational culture and work-family role strain. The more supportive the organizational culture of employees with family responsibilities, the less the strain between work and family roles. This finding supports the view that having a "family-friendly" organizational culture or philosophy is an integral part of how business organizations can help employees balance work and family responsibilities (Bowen, 1988; Galinsky & Stein, 1990; McCroskey, 1982).

Within the set of organizational culture variables, only work environment support emerged as a relevant predictor of work-family role strain. The more supportive mothers perceive their work environment to be of employees with work-family difficulties, the less difficult they feel it is to adequately fulfill their work and family demands. This finding provides support for the view that a work environment that is supportive of employees' work-family difficulties may help to improve employed parents' ability to balance work and family life and reduce associated strain (Bowen, 1988; Galinsky & Stein, 1990; McCroskey, 1982).

The availability of family-oriented benefits was not significantly related to work-family role strain. This may be due to the fact that while almost all women in the sample (97%)

had one or more benefits available to them, simply having them available may not have been enough to lower their level of work-family role strain.

Although available benefits is not significantly related to work-family role strain, the number of available family-oriented benefits is positively related to work environment support, general supervisor support, and supervisor sensitivity. Mothers with access to family-oriented benefits are more likely to perceive their work environment as supportive, and their immediate supervisors as instrumentally and emotionally supportive as well as sensitive to their work-family needs. While current work-family research has not examined the relationship between available benefits and such measures of support, this finding suggests that perceptions of work environment support and supervisor support may be influenced by tangible benefits offered by the workplace.

Use of family-oriented benefits. It was predicted in hypothesis 3 that the more family-oriented benefits used, the less the work-family role strain. When respondent's use and spouse's use of family-oriented benefits were entered as a group in the multiple regression equation, total use of benefits was not related to work-family role strain. When respondent's use of family-oriented benefits and spouse's use of family-oriented benefits were examined in separate regression analyses, neither variable was related to work-family role strain. The findings also showed that no significant differences in role strain were

evident between (1) mothers with no use of benefits and mothers with use of benefits; and (2) mothers with some use of benefits and mothers with high use.

Greenberger et al. (1989) found that while single women who use more family-oriented benefits report reduced role strain, married women report increased strain. It is surprising that although 71 mothers (61%) in this sample report that they have used in the past year or are currently using one or more family-oriented benefits, the use of family-oriented benefits is not associated with work-family role strain. One possible explanation for this finding is that the most frequently used family-oriented benefits were leave-related benefits such as sick child days, personal days, short term leave for family reasons, and leave in lieu of overtime. While such benefits provide temporary solutions to specific work-family problems, they are not long term solutions and therefore, may not be useful in reducing work-family role strain. In addition, leave-related benefits are more likely to have been used sometime in the past year rather than at the time of assessing current levels of work-family role strain.

The lack of a significant relationship between spouse's use of family-oriented benefits and work-family role strain may be because only a few women had spouses who were using family-oriented benefits. Of the 55 women who had spouses, only 18 had a spouse who had used in the past year or was currently using one of the 13 family-oriented benefits.

Although predictions were not made about the relationship between work-family role strain and the desire to use family-oriented benefits if they were available, the regression results indicate that the greater the number of benefits that would be used by the respondent if they were available, the higher the work-family role strain. Significant differences were also found between women who would use five (the median) or more family-oriented benefits and women who would use less than five benefits. Those in the high future use group reported higher work-family role strain than those women in the low future use group.

The findings for future benefit use may be an indication of the salience of family-oriented benefits to employed mothers and an actual desire to have a greater number of benefits available to them. Another possible explanation for these findings is that this variable may be another way of assessing work-family role strain. While 11% of the sample would not use any of the family-oriented benefits if they were available, 47% would use one to five benefits and 41% would use six or more. While it would be possible to use leave-related benefits, employee assistance programs and workshops/seminars "simultaneously", the use of several different types of scheduling benefits at one time is less feasible. The desire to use numerous benefits seems to be more an indicator or measure of the degree of difficulty perceived in combining work and family life than a predictor of work-family role strain.

Supervisor support. Although research is limited, supervisor support has been identified as a central component of workplace support and influential in work-family outcomes (Fernandez, 1985; Galinsky & Stein, 1990; Greenglass et al., 1989). Hypothesis 4 predicted that the greater the supervisor support, the less the work-family role strain.

The set of supervisor support variables (supervisor flexibility, general supervisor support, and supervisor sensitivity) was not useful in predicting work-family role strain. When the three supervisor support variables were examined separately, rather than as a set, only one dimension of supervisor support (supervisor flexibility) was significantly related to work-family role strain.

A significant negative relationship was found between supervisor flexibility and work-family role strain. Employed mothers who perceive their supervisors as flexible may feel they can more adequately meet their work and family demands because they are able to alter their work demands in order to meet their family demands (e.g., able to come in late or leave work early), or they are able to let family demands overlap with work demands (e.g., allowed to receive phone calls from home at work, can bring the child to work). Such perceived flexibility is likely to reduce feelings of anxiety when coordinating work and family responsibilities.

This finding is not consistent with Greenberger et al.'s (1989) research even though the same measure of supervisor

flexibility was used. This may be due to the type of child care arrangement used. Participants for Greenberger et al.'s (1989) study were recruited through preschools, however the type of care arrangement used when the child was not in preschool was not stated. The subjects for the current study were all using licensed group daycare. Due to the limited number of part-time spaces available, children were likely to be in daycare for the full day. Supervisor flexibility may be more instrumental to work-family role strain for mothers using this type of care arrangement due to the lack of flexibility at the child care center.

Consistent with Greenberger et al.'s (1989) findings, general supervisor support was not significantly related to work-family role strain. The lack of a significant finding for general supervisor support is not surprising since this measure was designed to assess emotional and instrumental supervisor support in general rather than supervisor responsiveness or sensitivity toward employees with family responsibilities.

Although it has been suggested that fulfilling work and family demands will be perceived as less difficult for employees who perceive their supervisors as sensitive to their family responsibilities, the results do not support this view. This finding suggests that regardless of the perceived level of supervisor sensitivity, if the supervisor is not able to provide some assistance when work-family difficulties arise, work-family role strain may not be reduced.

The results indicate that supervisor flexibility but not supervisor sensitivity is related to work-family role strain. These findings suggest that supervisor practices may play a more instrumental role than supervisor attitudes in alleviating employees' perceived strain between work and family roles.

Available Benefits and Use of Benefits

It was predicted in Hypothesis 5 that the more family-oriented benefits available, the more family-oriented benefits used. Partial support was provided for this hypothesis. While the number of benefits used, increases with the number of benefits available, the plot of this relationship reveals several patterns. First, the relationship between availability and use of family-oriented benefits is strongest when five or fewer benefits are available and when fewer than three benefits are used. Second, there appears to be a limit on the number of benefits that are used. As the number of available benefits increases, the number of benefits used generally does not surpass the use of four benefits.

The relationship between available benefits and the percentage of benefits used indicates a similar pattern. The percentage of benefits used decreases as the number of available benefits increases. Thus, individuals are less likely to use all of the benefits available to them when a range of benefits is available. These findings suggest that from the available benefits, employed mothers choose benefits that are useful to them and that meet their specific needs.

It has been suggested that the use of available benefits may be influenced by the supportiveness of supervisors or managers. For example, use of family-oriented benefits may be undermined by supervisory practices if employees feel that their supervisors or managers are uncooperative or pressure them not to use available benefits (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987; Raabe & Gessner, 1988). Based on this literature, it was predicted in Hypothesis 8 that the strength of the relationship between available benefits and use of benefits would be greater for women who perceive high overall supervisor support than for women who perceive low overall supervisor support.

Contrary to what was expected, the results of the selective correlation analysis show that women who perceive low overall supervisor support are more likely to use available benefits than women who perceive high overall supervisor support. This finding suggests that under nonsupportive conditions, women are more likely to use available family-oriented benefits. Thus, family-oriented benefits may be relied on to alleviate work-family difficulties when awareness or understanding of employees' work-family responsibilities is low and supervisor flexibility for family emergencies is minimal.

The lack of support for the proposed hypothesis may be due to the type of supervisor support that was assessed. The measures of support comprising the overall supervisor support variable were designed to assess emotional and instrumental

support as well as flexibility and sensitivity for employees combining work and family roles. Measures of supervisor support that are more specific to the use of family-oriented benefits may be more applicable when examining the relationship between supervisory practices and the use of available family-oriented benefits.

Moderating Effects of Supervisor Support

In addition to investigating direct effects of supervisor support on work-family role strain, this study also sought to examine interaction effects between supervisor support and two work environment variables in predicting work-family role strain.

It was predicted in Hypotheses 6a and 6b that the impact of work demands on work-family role strain would be greater for mothers who perceive low supervisor support than for those mothers who perceive high supervisor support. The results indicate that total supervisor support and the work demand index do not jointly affect work-family role strain.

Although structural work demands could not be examined for interaction effects with supervisor support, due to the lack of variation in these variables, the joint effects of psychological work demands and total supervisor support, as well as psychological work demands and dimensions of supervisor support on work-family role strain were investigated. None of the interactions however, were significant.

The lack of significant interaction effects for total

supervisor support and psychological work demands, and for each dimension of supervisor support and psychological work demands indicates that regardless of supervisor support, employed mothers who perceive greater psychological work demands also perceive greater work-family role strain. Despite the absence of interaction effects for these measures of supervisor support and psychological work demands, other dimensions or types of supervisor support not included in this study may moderate the relationship between psychological work demands and work-family role strain. Work related supervisor support for example, may be more influential than general supervisor support or support for combining work and family roles.

It has been suggested that the use of family-oriented benefits may be counteracted by negative attitudes and unsupportive supervisors or managers (Hughes & Galinsky, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987). Based on this literature, it was predicted in hypotheses 7a and 7b that the impact of use of family-oriented benefits on work-family role strain would be greater for mothers who perceive high supervisor support than for mothers who perceive low supervisor support.

The results of the analyses of variance used to test these hypotheses, do not reveal significant interaction effects for either total supervisor support or each dimension of supervisor support and respondent's use of family-oriented benefits. Due to the lack of a significant relationship between use of family-oriented benefits and work-family role strain it was expected

that the interaction effects would not be significant.

As mentioned earlier, the type of benefit used may influence the level of work-family role strain. Hence, supervisor support may not moderate the relationship between those benefits used by this sample and work-family role strain, but may influence the relationship between the use of other family responsive benefits such as alternate work arrangements, employee assistance programs, workshops/seminars and role strain. Due to the limited number of respondents using these benefits in this study, such relationships could not be investigated. Future research is needed which examines the moderating effects of supervisor support for a larger group of individuals who are using these benefits.

Supervisor Support and Family-Oriented Benefits

Although interaction effects are not evident for dimensions of supervisor support and current use of benefits in predicting work-family role strain, significant relationships between dimensions of supervisor support and current and future use of benefits are evident.

Greater usage of family-oriented benefits is associated with the perception of more flexible supervisory practices when family emergencies arise. There are several possible explanations for this finding. First, employees who perceive their supervisors as flexible may be more willing to use family-oriented benefits because they may not feel they will be penalized for doing so. Second, employees who are using family-

oriented benefits may already perceive their supervisors as flexible because their supervisors have enabled them to use such benefits. Thus, these employees may be more likely to perceive that their supervisors will be accommodating and flexible in other work-family situations. Finally, the nature of the job may influence whether supervisors can be flexible and whether family-oriented benefits can be used. Employees may not perceive their supervisors as flexible when family emergencies arise and may not be able to use family-oriented benefits because the type of job will not accommodate such flexibility regardless of how sensitive the supervisor is perceived. This suggests that use of family-oriented benefits and supervisor flexibility need to be investigated in conjunction with the type of employment position.

Employed mothers who perceive their work environment as supportive and their supervisors as generally supportive, sensitive and flexible are less likely to report higher numbers of family-oriented benefits that they would use if they were available. This finding provides support for McCroskey's (1982) suggestion that employers who cannot afford to implement family-oriented benefits can provide their employees with an intangible benefit by creating an atmosphere that recognizes employees' family responsibilities.

Control Variables and Work-Family Role Strain

Although investigating the relationship between control variables and work-family role strain was not an objective of

this study, three of the six control variables emerged as relevant predictors of work-family role strain.

The results show that greater occupational role commitment is related to higher work-family role strain. This finding is consistent with Piotrkowski et al.'s (1987) view that high involvement in the work role can interfere with family involvement, and may increase the potential for competition between work and family for the individual's emotional involvement. Ladewig (1990) also suggests that despite the general acceptance and respectability of female labour force participation, societal expectations prevail that a woman's primary role is homemaker and childrearer. Thus, women who are highly committed to their paid work role may experience internal conflict as well as negative social sanctions that may not be experienced to such an extent by those who are less committed to their paid work role.

The results of this study also indicate that the greater the family role commitment the higher the perceived work-family role strain. Women who are highly committed to their family role may experience greater work-family role strain because by committing so much time and energy to their family role they may have to struggle to meet the demanding claims of their work role. The family role may interfere or overlap with the work role to such an extent that they cannot adequately meet their work demands. Employed mothers who are highly committed to their family role may also feel guilty about leaving their young child

in someone else's care which contributes to their level of role strain.

Greater perceived difficulty in finding alternate child care is also related to higher levels of work-family role strain. Employed mothers' ability to work outside the home is dependent upon care for their children while they are working. If the child cannot go to daycare (e.g., due to illness), it is essential that the mother have alternate care unless she is able to stay home from work. Finding alternate child care may be a daily worry for mothers who are completely dependent on their regular child care arrangement and have no other form of care to rely on if necessary.

While previous research has addressed sociodemographic characteristics such as age, income, and occupational prestige as control variables (cf. Greenberger et al., 1989), the results of this study suggest that future research on work-family outcomes must also consider other possible control variables (e.g., occupational role commitment, family role commitment, and difficulty finding alternate child care) that may influence the findings.

Limitations

When discussing the findings of this study, several limitations due to sampling, research design, and measurement need to be addressed. One limitation due to sampling is self-selection bias. Because respondents volunteered to participate in this study, the characteristics of these participants may

differ from women who either did not take or return questionnaires. Participants may have had a high degree of interest in parenting issues, workplace policies and practices, and/or ways of managing work-family difficulties. Another sampling limitation is that the findings of this study cannot be generalized to mothers of preschoolers in other childcare arrangements, mothers with older children, or mothers who do not have an immediate supervisor, manager or boss at work. In addition, limiting the sample to mothers perpetuates the view that parenting is a woman's issue and difficulties associated with combining work and family roles are women's problems.

A limitation of the research design is that it is a cross-sectional study. Thus, it is questionable whether differences in workplace support predict differences in work-family role strain or whether some women choose to work in a supportive work environment and go into employment that is inherently more flexible because of their family demands. Longitudinal research is necessary to adequately address this issue.

A major issue for research investigating the impact of the use of family-oriented benefits on well-being is the time at which the assessment of use is made. Greenberger et al. (1989) state that the point of reference taken in their study limited their findings because only family responsive benefits that respondents had used were assessed. For the current research, respondents were asked to identify family-oriented benefits that they were currently using or had used within the past year. This

point of reference was chosen in an attempt to obtain information about the use of leave-related benefits, workshops/seminars on work-family issues, and employee assistance programs that may not have been used at the time of the assessment but rather sometime in the near past. While data on the use of alternate work arrangements can be collected at the time of the assessment, collecting current data on the use of other benefits is problematic. Future research needs to establish a more accurate way of assessing the use of such benefits in order to provide a better understanding of their impact on work-family outcomes.

Conclusion

The limitations discussed above should not obscure the contributions of this research. Partial support was provided for the proposed relationship between work demands and strain between work and family roles. Structural work demands were not related to work-family role strain for this sample, however, psychological demands of the job were predictive of work-family role strain, in the absence of control variables. While previous work-family research has generally focused on structural demands of paid employment, these results provide support for assessing subjective, as well as objective, dimensions of work demands when investigating work-family outcomes.

Partial support was also found for hypothesized relationships between work-family role strain and components of workplace support. Although the findings cannot be generalized

to other populations, the results showed that work environment support and supervisor flexibility were predictive of work-family role strain perceived by employed mothers with preschoolers in group daycare. Greater perceived supervisor flexibility and higher levels of perceived work environment support were related to lower levels of strain between work and family roles.

In addition, partial support was found for the hypothesized relationship between available benefits and the use of family-oriented benefits provided by the employer. While the number of benefits used increased with the number of benefits available, the percentage of benefits used decreased. The women in this sample were less likely to use all of the benefits available to them when the number of available benefits was high. Thus, employees appear to be selective in their use of available benefits. Contrary to what was expected, women with low overall supervisor support were more likely to use available benefits than women with high overall supervisor support. This finding suggests that the use of benefits is greater under nonsupportive work conditions.

Perceptions of supervisor support did not moderate the impact of work demands on work-family role strain for this sample. Future research is needed using samples that have greater variation in structural work demands, such as work hours and the scheduling of these hours.

Finally, perceptions of supervisor support did not moderate

the impact of the use of benefits on work-family role strain. This finding may be an artifact of the type of benefit used, and the point of reference taken in assessing the use of benefits.

Implications

The findings of this study have implications for the family, work-family research and theory, and business organizations. Implications for the family are that having a supportive, flexible workplace may help to facilitate parents' ability to balance work and family roles. While employed parents may not be able to choose employment positions in work environments that are supportive of employees with family responsibilities, parents can play an influential role in modifying the overall culture or philosophy of their work organization.

Much of the work-family research on coping with work-family difficulties has focused on how individuals and families manipulate employment and family demands in an attempt to coordinate work and family roles. This study addressed the need to investigate coping mechanisms at the institutional level. The findings of this research support the view that the workplace can play an important role in alleviating work-family difficulties for employed parents. Due to the limited amount of research on this issue, further research is needed which continues to investigate dimensions of workplace support using diverse samples. Such research may help to remove the sole responsibility for solving work-family problems from the

employed parent, and in particular the employed mother.

The findings of this study also have implications for theory development. The results of this study, corroborated with emerging research on work-family outcomes, suggest that an integrated theory of work-family relationships is needed which incorporates individual, family and institutional levels of analysis.

This research also raises issues for business organizations. Although previous research has not examined the relationship between availability and use of family-oriented benefits, the results of this study indicate that benefits offered by the workplace are used. The women in this sample did appear to limit their use of available benefits to four or fewer benefits and were less likely to use all of the benefits available to them when a range of benefits was offered. The most frequently used family-oriented benefits were flextime, leave in lieu of overtime, and short term leave for personal or family reasons. Of the benefits that were not available to this sample, a large proportion of respondents reported that they would use sick child days with pay, personal days with pay, and workshops or seminars on work-family issues if they were offered by their workplace. These findings suggest that by conducting a thorough needs assessment, workplaces may be able to limit the number of benefits available and still meet the salient needs of their employees.

A second implication for business organizations is that

working in an environment that is supportive of employees' work-family difficulties and having a supervisor who is flexible when family emergencies arise was found to be related to lower levels of work-family role strain for this sample of employed mothers. This finding suggests that workplaces that cannot afford to offer formal family-oriented benefits can assist their employees by establishing informal types of workplace support. While this study does not directly assess work-related outcomes, reduced strain between work and family roles may have beneficial outcomes for employee productivity and morale.

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Appendix A
Daycare Correspondence

Daycare Director/Supervisor Information Letter

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



School of Family and
Nutritional Sciences
2205 East Mall
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1W5

Division of Family Sciences

Dear Director/Supervisor,

I am a graduate student in Family Studies at UBC and for my Master's thesis I am researching combining work and family life. I am particularly interested in examining how the work environment influences employed mothers' ability to integrate paid employment with raising a family.

In order to carry out my research I need volunteers! I am looking for employed mothers who have an immediate supervisor or manager at work. Mothers who agree to participate will be asked to fill out an 11 page questionnaire at their convenience. The questionnaire will require approximately 30 minutes of their time.

If you approve of this project, I would like to recruit volunteers through your day care center. This would entail providing parents with a recruitment letter; posting an announcement; and distributing questionnaires to willing participants through your center. Participants are asked to mail the completed questionnaire to UBC.

The study will be organized and conducted so as to avoid, as much as possible, any inconvenience to you or your staff. Any specific procedures, identified by your daycare center, for the recruitment of participants and the distribution of questionnaires will be followed. If you have any questions regarding the study please contact us. We will return your call as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration of this project. Please sign the attached form to confirm whether or not you approve of the present study and are willing to let us recruit subjects and distribute questionnaires through your center.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Warren
M.A. Candidate
(604) 822-2502

Phyllis J. Johnson, PhD
Associate Professor
(604) 822-4300

Permission Form to Recruit Volunteer Participants
Through the Daycare Center

Date _____

I, _____ Director/Supervisor of
_____ do approve of the
present study and am willing to let the investigators recruit
volunteers and distribute questionnaires through this daycare
center.

I, _____ Director/Supervisor of
_____ do not approve of the
present study and am not willing to let the investigators
recruit volunteers and distribute questionnaires through this
daycare center.

Certificate of U.B.C. Ethics Approval Given to the

Daycare Director/Supervisor

The University of British Columbia
Office of Research Services


B92-220

BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES SCREENING COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH
AND OTHER STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

C E R T I F I C A T E o f A P P R O V A L

INVESTIGATOR: Johnson, P.J.
UBC DEPT: Family & Nutr Sci
INSTITUTION: UBC Campus
TITLE: Work-family role strain among employed
 mothers of preschoolers: the impact of
 workplace support
NUMBER: B92-220
CO-INVEST: Warren, J.
APPROVED: **AUG 25 1992**

The protocol describing the above-named project has been reviewed by the Committee and the experimental procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

 Dr. R.D. Spratley
Director, Research Services
and Acting Chairman

THIS CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL IS VALID FOR THREE YEARS
FROM THE ABOVE APPROVAL DATE PROVIDED THERE IS NO
CHANGE IN THE EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Recruitment Notice Posted in All Participating Daycare Centers

**ARE YOU COMBINING PAID
EMPLOYMENT
WITH RAISING A FAMILY?**

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY
ABOUT WORK AND FAMILY LIFE!!**

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS WILL:

- BE MOTHERS OF AT LEAST ONE PRESCHOOL AGE CHILD
- BE EMPLOYED OUTSIDE THE HOME
- HAVE AN IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR, MANAGER, OR BOSS AT WORK
- HAVE 15-30 MINUTES TO COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE

**TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY
PLEASE PICK UP A QUESTIONNAIRE
FROM YOUR DAYCARE CENTER'S
DIRECTOR OR SUPERVISOR.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
JENNIFER WARREN, MA CANDIDATE, 822-2502
PHYLLIS J. JOHNSON, PHD, 822-4300
SCHOOL OF FAMILY AND NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Reminder Notice Posted in All Participating Daycare Centers

REMINDER

RE: WORK AND FAMILY LIFE STUDY

**IF YOU HAVE NOT YET
RETURNED YOUR
COMPLETED
QUESTIONNAIRE WE
WOULD APPRECIATE
RECEIVING IT AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE!**

**THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO
PARTICIPATED IN THIS STUDY!**

**Jennifer Warren
MA Candidate
School of Family & Nutritional Sciences
The University of British Columbia**

Appendix B

Parent Contact Letter and Questionnaire

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



School of Family and
Nutritional Sciences
Division of Family Sciences
2205 East Mall
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1W5

Dear Participant,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in the Work and Family Life Project. The purpose of this questionnaire is to try to better understand employed mothers' experiences in combining paid work and family roles. The questionnaire is divided into five parts. Within each part, instructions accompany each set of questions. It should take you approximately 30 minutes to complete. Your completion of this questionnaire will be taken as your consent to participate in this project.

All of your responses will be confidential. Individual responses will never be reported. Questionnaires will be assigned a code for data entry and the data will be used in statistical form only. To insure confidentiality, please do not write your name on any part of this questionnaire. Your answers to all of the questions would be greatly appreciated, but you are free to refuse to answer any part(s) of this questionnaire just as you are free to withdraw your participation at any point. Should you decide not to participate or not to complete all of the questions, please be assured that access to the services of your daycare center will not be jeopardized.

As soon as you have completed the questionnaire, please mail it in the stamped and self addressed envelope provided!

Thank you very much for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. Your responses will help to provide a better understanding of the role of the workplace in facilitating work-family coordination. If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact us. One of us will return your phone call as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Warren
MA Candidate
(604) 822-2502

Phyllis J. Johnson, PhD
Associate Professor
(604) 822-4300

PART I

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR OCCUPATION AND WORK SETTING BY FILLING IN THE REQUESTED INFORMATION OR BY PLACING A CHECK (✓) NEXT TO THE BEST RESPONSE.

1. What kind of work do you do? (Please provide your complete job title; e.g. receptionist, bookkeeper, salesperson)

2. For how long have you had your current employment position with your present employer?

_____ years _____ months

3. How many hours do you work (for pay) in an average week? _____ hours

4. In a typical week, do you work after hours (without additional pay) for your job either at your workplace or at home?

_____ no
_____ yes, at my workplace only
_____ yes, at my home only
_____ yes, both at home and at work

5. About how long does it usually take you to get from:

your home to your workplace _____ minutes
your workplace to your home _____ minutes

6. Does your work schedule usually include evenings/nights?

_____ yes _____ no

7. Does your work schedule usually include weekend days?

_____ yes _____ no

8. Please list one workplace change that would make it easier for you to balance work and family life (be as specific as possible).

9. Below is a list of benefits that are sometimes offered by workplaces. Please mark a check (✓) next to those benefits that

- (1) are available to you in your current employment position.
 (2) you are currently using or have used in the past year.
 (3) you would consider using if they were available to you.

	Benefit is available			Currently using or used in past year	Would use if available
	Don't know	No	Yes		
a. flexible hours/ flextime	()	()	()	()	()
b. job sharing	()	()	()	()	()
c. compressed work week	()	()	()	()	()
d. part-time with no benefits	()	()	()	()	()
e. part-time with prorated benefits	()	()	()	()	()
f. work at home arrangements	()	()	()	()	()
g. short term leave for personal/family reasons (3 days-90 days)	()	()	()	()	()
h. extended leave for personal/family reasons (greater than 90 days)	()	()	()	()	()
i. personal days with pay	()	()	()	()	()
j. sick child days with pay	()	()	()	()	()
k. leave in lieu of overtime	()	()	()	()	()
l. employee assistance programs (EAP)	()	()	()	()	()
m. seminars/workshops for balancing work and family	()	()	()	()	()

10. Are there any benefits not listed in question 9 that you would like to have made available to you (please specify)?

- 11 a. Has your spouse used (in the past year), or is your spouse currently using any of the 13 benefits listed in question 9?

_____ yes _____ no _____ not applicable

- b. If yes, please circle the letter(s) below that correspond to each benefit your spouse used or is currently using.

a b c d
e f g h
i j k l m

12. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about your job by circling the number that best expresses your opinion.

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
a. On my job, there is always a great deal of work to be done.	1	2	3	4	5
b. I have too much work to do everything <u>well</u> on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
c. I never seem to have <u>enough time</u> to get everything done on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
d. My job requires me to work very fast.	1	2	3	4	5
e. On my job, I usually have tight deadlines to meet.	1	2	3	4	5
f. I want to work, but I do not want to have a demanding job/career.	1	2	3	4	5
g. I expect to make as many sacrifices as are necessary in order to advance in my job/career.	1	2	3	4	5
h. I value being involved in a job/career and expect to devote the time and effort needed to develop it.	1	2	3	4	5

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
i. I expect to devote a significant amount of time to building my job/career and developing the skills necessary to advance in my job/career.	1	2	3	4	5
j. I expect to devote whatever time and energy it takes to move up in my job/career field.	1	2	3	4	5
k. Even when I'm busy doing other things, I often think about my job.	1	2	3	4	5
l. My main satisfaction in life comes from my job.	1	2	3	4	5
m. The most important things that happen to me involve my job.	1	2	3	4	5

13. How supportive is your work environment of employees when they have difficulties coordinating work and family responsibilities? Please circle the number that best expresses your opinion.

not at all supportive	not very supportive	somewhat supportive	moderately supportive	very supportive
1	2	3	4	5

PART II

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR, MANAGER OR BOSS AT WORK.

14. a. Do you have an immediate supervisor, manager or boss--someone who is directly over you at work?

_____ yes _____ no

b. If yes, is this person _____ male or _____ female?

15. Please circle the number that best describes how much you agree with the following statements about your supervisor/manager.

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
a. My supervisor/manager goes out of his/her way to do things to make my work life easier for me.	1	2	3	4	5
b. It is very easy for me to talk to my supervisor/manager.	1	2	3	4	5
c. My supervisor/manager can be relied on when things get tough at work.	1	2	3	4	5
d. My supervisor/manager is willing to listen to my personal problems.	1	2	3	4	5
e. My supervisor/manager understands that I have to meet family responsibilities as well as those related to my job.	1	2	3	4	5
f. My supervisor/manager is aware of the family demands being placed on me.	1	2	3	4	5
g. My supervisor/manager tries to find ways of helping me meet my family responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
h. My supervisor/manager does not understand that it may be difficult for me to coordinate work and family responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
i. I can talk to my supervisor/manager about <u>family-related</u> problems that are making it difficult for me to combine work and family roles.	1	2	3	4	5
j. My supervisor/manager expects me to keep my work and home life separate.	1	2	3	4	5
k. My supervisor/manager is knowledgeable about company policies that apply to family issues.	1	2	3	4	5
l. I can talk to my supervisor/manager about <u>work-related</u> problems that are making it difficult for me to combine work and family roles.	1	2	3	4	5

16. If the following situations were to happen, how do you think your supervisor/manager would behave? Please circle the number that best describes how she/he might behave.

Never Seldom Sometimes Usually Always

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. If I ask for extra vacation time (unpaid) so I can spend more time with my family, my supervisor/manager gives it to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. My supervisor/manager is flexible in scheduling so as to accommodate my family needs (e.g. take child to the doctor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. If I receive phone calls (at work) from family members, my supervisor/manager is understanding. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. My supervisor/manager lets me take work home if I need to, instead of asking me to work late at the office. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. My supervisor/manager lets me bring my child to work in an emergency. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f. My supervisor/manager lets me come in late or leave early to accommodate my family needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| g. My supervisor/manager will let me take an occasional day off without pay. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| h. My supervisor/manager lets me come in at a non-scheduled time (e.g., on the weekend) to make up work I missed because of family commitments. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| i. My supervisor/manager lets me work from home if I can't come in on a given day because of family matters. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PART III

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT COMBINING WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES.

17. How much do your job and family life interfere with each other? Please circle the number that best expresses your opinion.

not at all	just a little	a moderate amount	quite a bit	a great deal
1	2	3	4	5

18. Please indicate, by circling the relevant number next to each statement, your level of agreement with the following statements.

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
a. The most important things that happen to me involve my family.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Even when I'm busy doing other things, I often think about my family.	1	2	3	4	5
c. My main satisfaction in life comes from my family.	1	2	3	4	5

19. Please indicate, by circling the relevant number next to each statement, how often you feel each of the following.

	never	rarely	some of the time	most of the time	always
a. My job keeps me away from my family too much.	1	2	3	4	5
b. I worry about how my children are while I am working.	1	2	3	4	5
c. I have a good balance between my job and my family time.	1	2	3	4	5
d. I wish I had more time to do things for my family.	1	2	3	4	5
e. I feel physically drained when I get home from work.	1	2	3	4	5
f. I feel emotionally drained when I get home from work.	1	2	3	4	5
g. I feel I have to rush to get everything done each day.	1	2	3	4	5
h. My time off from work matches other family members' schedules well.	1	2	3	4	5
i. I worry that other people at work think my family interferes with my job.	1	2	3	4	5
j. I feel I don't have enough time for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
k. I feel more respected than I would if I didn't have a job.	1	2	3	4	5

	never	rarely	some of the time	most of the time	always
l. I worry whether I should work less and spend more time with my children.	1	2	3	4	5
m. I am a better parent because I am not with my children all day.	1	2	3	4	5
n. I find enough time for my children.	1	2	3	4	5
o. I feel I have more to do than I can handle comfortably.	1	2	3	4	5
p. I have as much patience with my children as I would like.	1	2	3	4	5
q. I am comfortable with the arrangements for my children while I am working.	1	2	3	4	5
r. Making arrangements for my children while I work involves a lot of effort.	1	2	3	4	5
s. I worry that other people feel I should spend more time with my children.	1	2	3	4	5

PART IV

20. Would you be interested in attending a workshop or seminar on any of the following topics? Please check (✓) yes or no for each topic.

Stress management	_____	yes	_____	no
Time management	_____	yes	_____	no
Balancing work and family	_____	yes	_____	no
Child care	_____	yes	_____	no

If you checked yes for any of the above topics, please answer questions 21 and 22.
If you did not check yes for any of the above topics, please proceed to question 23.

21. When would be the most ideal time for you to attend a workshop or seminar on any of the topics listed in question 20? Please check only one category.

_____	lunch hour
_____	evening
_____	weekend
_____	other (please specify) _____

22. a. Workshops and seminars may be offered at a variety of locations. Which of the following locations would be the most ideal location for you to attend a workshop or seminar on any of the above topics. Please check only one category.

☐ workplace
☐ community centre
☐ educational institution (e.g. school, college, university)
☐ church
☐ conference centre
☐ other (please specify) _____

- b. Why would this be the most ideal location for you?
- _____

PART V

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY FILLING IN THE REQUESTED INFORMATION OR BY PLACING A CHECK (✓) NEXT TO THE BEST RESPONSE.

23. What is your age? _____ years

24. What is your present marital status? Please check only one category.

☐ married ☐ divorced
☐ common-law (for at least 6 months) ☐ never married
☐ separated ☐ widowed

25. If you are married or living in common-law, please answer the following questions about your spouse/partner.

- a. Is your spouse/partner employed? _____ yes _____ no (go to question 26)

- b. What kind of work does your spouse/partner do? (Please give full job title e.g., retail clerk, lawyer, mechanic, teacher.)
- _____

- c. How many hours does your spouse/partner work on this job in an average week?
- _____ hours

- d. Does your spouse/partner's regular work schedule include evenings/nights?
 _____ yes _____ no

- e. Does your spouse/partner's regular work schedule include weekend days?
 _____ yes _____ no

26. How many children are currently living with you? _____

27. Please provide the following information about your child(ren).

child	age (yrs)	Type of childcare arrangement (e.g. group day care, after school care nanny, babysitter, relative, none)
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
5	_____	_____
6	_____	_____
7	_____	_____

28. How satisfied are you with your current childcare arrangements?

_____ very dissatisfied
 _____ dissatisfied
 _____ satisfied
 _____ very satisfied

29. How difficult would it be for you to find alternative care should your regular arrangements breakdown?

_____ not difficult
 _____ somewhat difficult
 _____ very difficult

30. How many years of education do you have? _____ years

(e.g. 12 years of public school + 1 year of trade school + 1 year of college=14 years)
If you have completed any part of your education on a part-time basis, please calculate the full-time equivalent.

31. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? Please check only one category.

_____ some elementary or public school
 _____ completed elementary or public school
 _____ some high school
 _____ completed high school
 _____ some vocational or technical college
 _____ completed vocational or technical college
 _____ some training in a special diploma program (e.g., nursing, teaching)
 _____ completed special diploma program
 _____ some university
 _____ completed undergraduate university degree
 _____ some university post-graduate level
 _____ completed post-graduate university degree

32. What was your total personal income from wages and salaries in 1991, before taxes were deducted?

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,001-\$60,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10,001-\$20,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60,001-\$70,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$20,001-\$30,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$70,001-\$80,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$30,001-\$40,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$80,001-\$90,001
<input type="checkbox"/> \$40,001-\$50,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over \$90,001

33. What was your total household unit's income from all sources in 1991, before taxes were deducted?

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$70,001-\$80,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10,001-\$20,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$80,001-\$90,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$20,001-\$30,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$90,001-\$100,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$30,001-\$40,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,001-\$110,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$40,001-\$50,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$110,001-\$120,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,001-\$60,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Over \$120,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$60,001-\$70,000	

34. a. Do you identify with any ethnic group, other than Canadian?

☐ yes ☐ no

b. If yes, with which ethnic group do you identify? Please specify (e.g. English, Italian, Chinese, Polish etc.).

35. a. Do you hire anyone from outside your household to help with home chores on a regular basis?

☐ yes ☐ no

b. If yes,

What do they do? _____

How often (e.g. every day, once a week)? _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!
PLEASE MAIL THE QUESTIONNAIRE, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

Appendix C
Family-Oriented Benefits

Flextime

A standard number of hours worked per week with flexible start and finish times.

Job sharing

Two or more people share the work hours, responsibilities, salary, and benefits of one job.

Compressed work week

A standard number of hours worked per week but in less than five days.

Part-time (no benefits)

Working fewer than 30 hours per week with no benefits.

Part-time (pro-rated benefits)

Working fewer than 30 hours per week with benefits coverage paid on a pro-rated basis.

Work at home

Work responsibilities completed at home rather than at the workplace.

Personal days with pay

Paid days off work that can be taken for personal reasons.

Sick child days with pay

Paid days off work that can be taken to care for a sick child.

Short-term leave for personal/family reasons

Leave from work for up to 90 days for personal or family reasons.

Extended leave for personal/family reasons

Leave from work for longer than 90 days for personal or family reasons.

Leave in lieu of overtime

Time off work in lieu of overtime pay.

Employee assistance programs (EAP)

Counselling services available to help employees deal with work and family related problems.

Seminars/workshops on balancing work and family life

Seminars or workshops designed to assist employees in coordinating work and family responsibilities.

Sources: Paris, 1989; Ontario Women's Directorate, 1991;
Williams, 1990.

Appendix D

Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Sample

Table 1

Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Sample of Employed
Mothers with Preschoolers (n = 116)

Characteristic	Percent
Mother's Age	
20-29	19.1
30-39	62.0
40-49	18.9
Marital Status	
Married	47.4
Common Law	12.1
Separated	11.2
Divorced	8.6
Never Married	18.1
Widowed	0.9
Number of Children	
One	67.2
Two	25.9
Three or more	6.9
Ethnic Background	
None	70.7
Asian	9.5
European	7.8
United Kingdom	4.3
Other	7.7
Occupation	
Managerial, administrative & related	30.2
Clerical & related	30.2
Medicine & health	11.2
Teaching & related	8.6
Other	19.1
Personal Income	
< \$10,000	4.3
\$10,001-20,000	18.1
\$20,001-30,000	32.8
\$30,001-40,000	25.0
\$40,001-50,000	13.8
> \$50,001	7.7

Table 1 Continued.

Characteristic	Percent
Household Income	
< \$10,000	3.4
\$10,001-20,000	12.9
\$20,001-30,000	19.0
\$30,001-40,000	7.8
\$40,001-50,000	6.9
\$50,001-60,000	12.1
\$60,001-70,000	9.5
\$70,001-80,000	10.8
\$80,001-90,000	6.9
> \$90,001	7.0
Education	
Some high school	3.4
Completed high school	13.8
Some vocational	8.6
Completed vocational	10.3
Some special diploma	4.3
Completed special diploma	11.2
Some university	15.5
Completed undergraduate	14.7
Some university postgrad	3.4
Completed university postgrad	14.7
Spouse/partner employment status	
Employed	95.6
Not employed	4.4
Spouse/partner work hours	
Less than 30 hours	9.5
30 hours or more	90.5
Spouse/partner shift work	
Evening/night shifts	52.0
Weekend shifts	42.0
Spouse/partner occupation	
Managerial, administrative & related	33.3
Sales	13.6
Service	7.6
Transport equipment operating	7.6
Other	37.9