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# Dimensions of Job-Family Tension

by Leroy O. Stone, Ph.D., F.R.S.A.

With chapters by Alfred J. Kahn, D.S.W.  
Sheila B. Kamerman, D.S.W. and Donna S. Lero, Ph.D.



1994 International Year of the Family  
Année internationale de la famille



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Family and Community Support Systems Division

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Published by authority of the Minister  
responsible for Statistics Canada

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December, 1994

Price: Canada: \$24.95  
United States: US\$30.00  
Other Countries: US\$35.00

Catalogue No. 89-540E

ISBN 0-660-15436-6

Ottawa

Version française de cette publication disponible sur demande  
(n° 89-540F au catalogue)

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*Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a longstanding cooperation involving Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses and governments. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued cooperation and goodwill.*

## Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Stone, Leroy O. 1936-  
Dimensions of job-family tension

Issued also in French under title: Emploi et famille, les dimensions de la tension.

Issued by: Statistics Canada. Family and Community Support Systems Division.

ISBN 0-660-15436-6

CS89-540E

1. Work and family -- Canada. I. Statistics Canada.

Family and Community Support Division.

II. Kahn, Alfred J. III. Kamerman, Sheila B. IV. Lero, Donna S.

V. Title: Dimensions of job-family tension.

HD4904.25 S76 1994 306.3'6'0971

C95-988002-X



### 1994 International Year of the Family

The objectives of the International Year of the Family are to "highlight the importance of families; increase a better understanding of their functions and problems; ... and focus attention upon the rights and responsibilities of all family members".

United Nations

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences - Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48 - 1984.



## **Preface and Acknowledgment**

Social science research in Canada regarding the issues associated with balancing paid-work life and family life has been hampered by the lack of pertinent information gathered from representative national samples. Statistics Canada has taken major steps toward filling this void by means of the questions respondents were asked in the 1988 National Child Care Survey, the 1990 and 1992 General Social Surveys, and the 1991 Survey of Work Arrangements. This study makes use of data obtained in all of these surveys to: (1) review some of the main factors that give rise to the experience of conflict or tension between job related and family related responsibilities, (2) identify key attributes of the population that simultaneously has job related and family related responsibilities to a high degree, and (3) describe ways in which persons' obligations for family-caring work have impacts upon the pattern of their participation in the paid labour market.

Most of the literature that deals with job-family tensions in Canada is based upon studying the situations of particular groups of employees in samples of organizations. This is an appropriate focus where the concern has been to help employers and employees to develop improved awareness of the nature of job-family tensions and to achieve policy responses that will be helpful to both groups in those organizations.

The search for helpful policy responses may be assisted by another kind of literature that is based upon general household samples. These samples allow analysts to identify and compare groups with varying degrees of responsibility for managing both family and job obligations, without restriction to a particular set of organizations and including people with various degrees of attachment to paid work. For example, some people have quit jobs, or are reluctant to search diligently for employment because of their family-work

responsibilities. Little or no analysis of such behaviour can be done from samples that are restricted to the existing holders of jobs in specific groups of organizations.

Thanks are due to the production team within Family and Community Support Systems Division. Marie Beaudet and Kaifi Shaheen designed some of the programs used to process large microdata files. Sharron Smith designed the book and prepared the charts. Frances Aubry, Gordon Bulmer, Vincent Dale and Chantale Tremblay did many important checks. Aurèle Ouimet did much to improve the initial French version. Special thanks are due to reviewers of various earlier drafts. Their comments lead to major changes in the manuscript. They include Ernest Akyeampong, Gordon Bulmer, Miles Corak, Linda Duxbury, Donna Lero, Ian Macredie, and Jason Siroonian. Errors and opinions in this draft remain the responsibility of the author, especially since not all reviewers' advice was accepted.

The closing chapters contain portions of the edited proceedings of a 1991 workshop entitled "Work Life, Family Life: Innovations in Human Resource Management" that was held at Canadian Centre for Management Development (CCMD). The workshop was jointly organized by Statistics Canada, The Gerontology Research Institute of the National Capital Region and CCMD. It was attended by invited leaders in human resources management for large organizations in both the public and private sectors, and by university researchers. Special thanks are due to Anthony Campbell, former Vice-Principal, Canadian Centre for Management Development (CCMD) for sponsoring and serving as host for the CCMD workshop.

It is hoped that this book will serve as a source of reference information for those concerned with the implications of job-family tensions for the functioning of both families and organizations.

Leroy O. Stone,  
September 30, 1994.

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## Table of Contents

	Page
<b>Highlights</b>	11
<b>Introduction</b>	15
Organization of this Book	15
Notes on Terminology	18
Bibliography	19
<b>Chapter</b>	
<b>1. Factors in Job-Family Tension, A Perspective from the National Child Care Survey and the Total Work Accounts System</b>	21
by Leroy O. Stone and Donna Lero	
1.1. Job-Family Tension is Widespread	21
1.2. Men Also Experience Job-Family Tension to a Significant Degree	26
1.3. Active Public, Corporate and Government Interest	31
1.4. Some Basic Concepts and Theory About Sources of Job-Family Tension	33
1.5. Selected Findings from the National Child Care Study	35
1.6. A Broader Survey of Dimensions of Job-Family is Needed	38
1.7. Bibliography	39
<b>2. On the Demographics of the Population that has Both Job and Family Obligations, an Exploration of the 1990 Canadian General Social Survey Data</b>	43
2.1. Purpose	43
2.2. Data Source and Measurement Scales	44
2.3. The Target Groups and Highlights of their Distinctive Features	47
2.4. Age and Gender Compositional Differences	48
2.5. Health and Functional Status	50

---

## Table of Contents - Continued

	Page
<b>Chapter</b>	
<b>2. On the Demographics of the Population that has Both Work and Family Obligations, an Exploration of the 1990 Canadian General Social Survey Data - Concluded</b>	
2.6. Educational Attainment	51
2.7. Friendship, Volunteering and Aspects of Close-Family Support	54
2.8. Concluding Comment	58
2.9. Bibliography	59
<b>3. Family Caring Responsibilities and the Pattern of Paid-Work Arrangements</b>	61
3.1. Purpose	61
3.2. Key Questions Concerning Workers' Reports on Family Responsibilities as Reasons for Involvement in Non-Standard Paid-Work Arrangements	63
3.3. Family Responsibilities and Part-Time Work, Leaving a Job and Looking for Work	65
3.3.1. Working part-time	65
3.3.2. Leaving the last job held	67
3.3.3. Not seeking paid work	68
3.4. Family Responsibilities as Reasons for Irregular Work Schedules or for Working at Home	71
3.5. Summary	76
3.6. Concluding Comment	78
3.7. Bibliography	81
<b>4. Key Unmet Information Needs by Alfred J. Kahn</b>	83



## Table of Contents - Concluded

	Page
<b>Chapter</b>	
<b>5. The Meanings of Research Findings for Policies Relating to the Balancing of Job and Family Obligations: Building Bridges Between Research and Policy Making</b>	89
by Sheila B. Kamerman	
<b>6. Job and Family Issues in the Canadian Context: Themes in the Workshop Discussions</b>	95
Edited by Leroy O. Stone -- based on transcripts from the workshop "Work Life, Family Life: Innovations in Human Resource Management"	
6.1. Issues of Job and Family	95
6.2. Attitudes and Practices of Management	98
6.3. Data and Analysis Concerns	99
<b>Appendix</b>	
<b>Introduction to the 1991 Work Arrangements Survey and the 1992 General Social Survey</b>	103
Survey of Work Arrangements	103
General Social Survey	106
Bibliography	108
<b>Glossary of Terms</b>	109
Bibliography	113

## List of Charts and Table

Chart	Page
1.1. Labour Force Participation Rates, by Sex, Canada, 1966-1993	21
1.2. Labour Force Participation Rates for Ever-Married Women, by Presence of Children at Home, Canada, Selected Years, 1971-1991	22
1.3. Percentage of Parents who Reported that They had Different Levels of Tension Associated with Balancing Job and Family Demands, by Age of Youngest Child, Canada, 1988	25
1.4. Distribution of Work Effort Over Alternative Classes of Recipients of the Work Output, Married Persons Aged 20-44, Employed Full Time, Living with a Pre-School-Aged Child, Canada, 1992	27
1.5. Leading Job-Family Obligations Groups for the Percentage of Time Budgets Spent Doing Child-Oriented Work of Economic Value	29
2.1. Distribution of the Private Household Population Aged 25 and Over, by Age Group, for Selected Groups with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990	49
2.2. Distribution of the Private Household Population Aged 25 and Over, by Rated Level of Health Status, for Selected Groups with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990	52
2.3. Distribution of the Private Household Population Aged 25 and Over, by Level of Educational Attainment, for Selected Groups with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990	53
2.4. Percentage of the Population Aged 25 and Over, who Reported Specified Levels of Number of Friends, Volunteer Work for Organizations, and Giving Measured Help Weekly to Close Family that Do Not Share Their Homes, for Selected Groups with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990	55

---

**List of Charts and Table - Continued**

<b>Chart</b>	<b>Page</b>
3.1. Percentage of Part-Time Workers who Gave Personal or Family Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Working Part Time, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991	65
3.2. Percentage of Persons Unemployed or Not in the Labour Force who Gave Personal or Family Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Leaving Their Last Job, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991	67
3.3. Percentage of Persons who Gave Illness or Personal Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Not Looking for Work Among Those who Looked for Work in the Past Six Months, But Did Not Look for Work in the Past Four Weeks, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991	68
3.4. Percentage of Persons who Gave Illness or Personal Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Not Looking for Work Among Those who Looked for Work in the Past Six Months, But Did Not Look for Work in the Past Four Weeks, Females Aged 15-69, by Level of Education, Canada, 1991	70
3.5. Percentage of Paid Employees with Irregular Work Schedules who Reported Child Care as the Main Reason for Having an Irregular Work Schedule, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991	71
3.6. Percentage of Paid Employees who Worked at Home who Reported Child Care as the Main Reason for Working at Home, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991	72
3.7. Percentage of Paid Employees with Irregular Work Schedules who Reported Care of Other Family Members as the Main Reason for Having an Irregular Work Schedule, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991	73
3.8. Percentage of Paid Employees who Worked at Home who Reported Care of Other Family Members as the Main Reason for Working at Home, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991	74

---

**List of Charts and Table - Concluded**

<b>Chart</b>	<b>Page</b>
3.9. Percentage of Paid Employees with Irregular Work Schedules who Reported Child Care or Care of Other Family Members as the Main Reason for Having an Irregular Work Schedule, Females Aged 15-69, by Level of Education, Canada, 1991	75
3.10. Hours of Market Work Per Person Per Day Spent by Selected Groups of Women Aged 20-44 who Had a Full-Time Job, Canada, 1992	80

**Table**

3.1. Average Work Hours Per Person Per 24-Hour Day, by Class of Recipient of the Work Output, for Selected Groups of Women Aged 20-44 who Were Living with a Spouse and Had a Full-Time Job, Canada, 1992	77
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## Highlights

- Although mothers experience greater job-family tension than do fathers, some men have work-loads that may be conducive to job-family tension. In 1992, married men and women aged 20-44 with a pre-school child at home and a full-time job, had similar *total* work loads -- 10.5 hours per person per day for every day of the week for women versus 9.8 hours for men. (The total work load includes unpaid work of economic value as well as paid work.) Within this total, the married women's greater devotion to family-caring work comes out clearly in their average of 3.1 hours per person per day on child-oriented work of economic value. This is 1.7 hours greater than the figure for their male counterparts. Among defined Job-Family Obligations Groups that had a pre-school child at home, the six that devoted the greatest proportions of their daily time budgets to child-oriented work of economic value included two groups of males. Over one-third of the population with full-time jobs and with a high level of parent-care responsibility in 1990 consisted of men. Thus, while clearly much less than women's family work, the men's contribution was not negligible.
- In its brief review of social science theory concerning job-family tension the book suggests that the concepts of *job-family tension* and *job-family conflict* be distinguished. It proposes to regard *conflict* as a potentially objectively measurable set of circumstances, and *tension* as a more subjective psychic state involving anticipation of conflict or resulting from actual conflict.
- In the National Child Care Survey (NCCS), parents with main responsibility for arranging child care in their families, who worked at a job during the survey reference week, and who made use of non-parental child care to some degree were asked to rate 15 potential sources of job/family conflict on a scale of 1-10, indicating how much tension each factor contributes in their lives. Two of the

15 items always appeared as the most important contributors to job/family tension. Those two items were 'feeling tired or overloaded because of your job' and 'difficulty maintaining a balance between job demands and family responsibilities'.

- The NCCS data indicate that mothers whose employers allowed some flexibility in hours had significantly lower general levels of job/family tension compared to those who did not. While they still experienced some degree of tension in managing job and family responsibilities, mothers with flexible hours attributed considerably less tension to the following potential sources of stress: difficulty maintaining a balance between job and family; mother's work schedule; time pressures related to dropping off or picking up children at their day care settings; the extent to which their employer is inflexible and unsupportive of their role as parents; and feeling tired and overloaded because of their job.
- The population with high levels of both job and family responsibilities is a much younger than average group, within the larger set of all persons aged 25 or more. Within this population, the sub-group that is heavily oriented toward child care and that which is mostly oriented toward parent care are both mainly concentrated in the 25-44 age range. However, the sub-group that is mostly oriented toward parent care had nearly 15% aged 55-64.
- Both sub-groups with high levels of both job and family responsibilities were generally better educated, in better health, and did more volunteer work for organizations weekly, than groups that were similar except that they had weak attachment to paid work. Both groups with high levels of both job and family responsibilities had lower than average percentages of persons who reported that they had four or more friends.
- Personal and family responsibilities are seen as forming the main reason motivating part-time work, or quitting a job, or avoiding the

search for work among roughly 20% to 25% of women in the prime ages (25-44) for bringing up children and who were in one of three selected statistical groups. The three groups are: (1) those working part time, (2) those who left their last job, and (3) those without a job and did not look for paid work in the past four weeks, even though they had done so in the preceding six months.

- The broad picture that can be painted for men in the three statistical groups described above is very different from that for women. Except in the 45-54 age group, less than one in 10 of male part-time workers gave family factors as the main reason for working part time. For the whole 25-54 age span, at most 3% of men who left their last job gave family responsibilities as the main reasons for doing so.

- The 1991 Work Arrangements Survey is unique in providing data based on respondents' reports about care for family members other than children as reasons for having irregular work schedules or for working at home. Among women aged 45-64 with irregular work schedules, roughly 5% reported "other family" (i.e. mostly non-child-care) responsibilities as the main reason for having such schedules. The estimate for the subset of these women aged 55-64 is quite close to 10%.

- In 1991, university educated women with an irregular work schedule were more likely to cite family-caring responsibilities to explain that schedule than did women with lower levels of education. While nearly 12% of the former group of women reported family-caring responsibilities as the main reason for having an irregular work schedule, just over 6% of those with no university education gave that explanation.

- The presence of a young child in the home has a marked association with the hours spent doing paid work by women who had a full-time job and were living with a spouse. Married women

aged 20-44 with a full-time job and a pre-school child in the home spent 1.4 hours less at market work per person per day than did their female counterparts who had no child in the home.

- Hours per person per day spent in child-oriented work of economic value are not greatly different between: (a) university-educated married women aged 20-44 with a full-time job and a pre-school child at home, and (b) their female counterparts who did not have university education. Of these two groups, the university-educated women spent an average of 2.9 hours per person per day in child-oriented work, while their counterparts who did not have university education spent 3.3 hours on average.



## **Introduction**

The general purpose of this work is to contribute to the fund of basic information about the pattern of inter-group variation in the prevalence of tensions arising from the effort to achieve satisfactory balance between paid-work and familial obligations in Canada. The use of national population samples allows the examination of some of the variables associated with the existence of job-family tension, without having to restrict one's range of observation to the employees of a particular set of firms or agencies.

With the help of these data, the book attempts to underscore the fact that family responsibilities play a significant role as a factor affecting attachment to the labour force as well as the use of non-standard work arrangements by those who have jobs. By comparing groups with varying degrees of involvement in job-related and family-related responsibilities, it aims to describe some of the distinctive features of those that have high levels of both job and family obligations. It also offers previously unpublished data from the National Child Care Survey concerning the degree of tension experienced in managing paid work and other demands on the time of certain groups of parents. It also highlights key reasons given by the parents for the tensions they report.

## **Organization of this Book**

Chapter 1 presents previously unpublished findings from the National Child Care Survey concerning factors associated with the incidence of job-family tension in the population that has young children. Prior to this study, no national survey allowed social scientists to test models concerning the occurrence or population distribution of job-family tensions or conflicts. This chapter builds upon the presentation made by Donna Lero at the workshop mentioned in the Preface. It extends her theoretical remarks concerning the explanation of the incidence of job-family tension. It

also presents some highlights from her empirical findings. Chapter 1 begins with a selective review of the development of interest in Canada concerning issues arising from job-family tensions.

Chapter 1 also presents information that reflect men's participation in child care activities. This information is based on the 1992 General Social Survey and estimates in the Total Work Accounts System (see Stone, Chicha and Jones, 1994).

Chapter 2 surveys some of the distinctive socio-demographic attributes of groups that are heavily involved in both job-related and family-related work responsibilities. Unlike Chapter 1 and much of the existing literature in this field, Chapter 2 avoids any effort to limit the review to a particular kind of family-related responsibility.

Chapters 3 examines aspects of the statistical association between workers' paid-work arrangements and their family-care responsibilities. It also considers indicators of effects of the latter responsibilities upon job-search activity by those that are not employed. The general hypothesis is that for a substantial percentage of those with paid employment or self-employment in a business, patterns of paid work are significantly affected by their family-care responsibilities. A further hypothesis is that for a significant proportion of persons who formerly had jobs but no longer do, their job-search activities are markedly influenced by their family obligations. Again, there is no restriction to a particular kind of family-care responsibility.

Data in Chapter 3 are based on respondents' reports of their perceptions of the links between their family-care responsibilities and their choices of certain non-standard paid-work arrangements or their patterns of job search. The data source is the 1991 Work Arrangements Survey, which gathered detailed data on employees paid-work styles.

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Chapters 4 and 5 are summaries of the papers presented at the CCMD Workshop by Professors Alfred Kahn and Sheila Kamerman, internationally renowned authorities in the field of policies and practices concerning simultaneous management of job-related and family-related obligations. These papers cast a critical eye upon the then existing Canadian data sources for national study of aspects of job-family tension and upon the identification of public policy issues or goals related to job-family tensions in Canada. Kahn's paper outlines an agenda for data development that would advance government and large-organization work concerning the redesign of employees' job environments so as to make them more family-friendly. His ideas comprise a blue print for future data development that might try to offer useful detail about the alternative company environments within which job-family conflicts may arise.

The CCMD-Statistics-Canada workshop included roundtable discussions in six syndicates. These were chaired by Yung-Ping Chen (Deputy Provost, University of Massachusetts, Boston), Jocelyne Côté-O'Hara (President and Chief Executive Officer, STENTOR, Ottawa), Anne Martin Matthews (Director, Gerontology Research Centre, University of Guelph), Judith MacBride-King (formerly with Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Community Services, Province of New Brunswick, and more recently with The Conference Board of Canada), Jacques M. Pelletier (Director General, Human Resources Management, Public Service Commission of Canada), Kay Stanley (formerly Co-ordinator, Status of Women Canada, and more recently an Assistant Deputy Minister in Health Canada). A synthesis of the results of the syndicate discussions is located in Chapter 6.

From these syndicate discussion groups emerged summaries that represent some of the existing themes in the thinking among leaders of human resources management units within large organizations in Canada. Chapter 6 is a summary statement of those themes. It is perhaps the only published collation of such a variety of human resources management leaders' opinions to date. As the reader will

see, this thinking contained some responses or reflected considerable sensitivity to the challenges raised in the papers by Kahn and Kamerman.

### Notes on Terminology

Three aspects of the use of terms in this book are worthy of note. First, we advocate and practice deviation from the popular phrase “*work-family tension*”. The phrase “*work-family tension*” is catchy; but it has the unfortunate effect of reinforcing the popular image that only activities for which one is paid deserve to be called *productive work*. As much as feasible, this book uses the term “*job-family tension*” instead of “*work-family tension*”. The book speaks about “*family work*” as well as “*paid work*” obligations.

Second, we need to acknowledge that it is becoming increasingly difficult to be clear about what one means precisely by the word “*family*”. The narrow definition of “*family*” often brings to mind a couple and their children or a lone parent and her/his children. Anthropologists have for many decades referred to an “*extended family*”, which goes well beyond the bounds of the particular groups just mentioned. The use of the term “*family*” in this book is often meant to include relations beyond the traditional nuclear family.

A third concept that plays a key role in this book is that of *work of economic value*. Work of economic value exists if an activity produces an identifiable output whose consumption may be said to have utility for the consumer and the output can be purchased in the marketplace. The output does not have to be currently sold in labour markets. It only needs to have the possibility of being sold there. Clearly, paid work is included. Also included is unpaid work whose output is either already being sold in labour markets or whose output would have to be purchased if it was not being obtained from non-market sources. (For more detailed discussion see Stone, Chicha and Jones, 1994.)

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Stone, Leroy O.; Chicha, Marie-Thérèse; and Jones, Frank. 1994.  
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Paper prepared for the International Association for Research on  
Income and Wealth, 23rd Conference, St. Andrews, N.B., August  
21-27.



## Chapter 1

### Factors in Job-Family Tension, A Perspective from the National Child Care Survey and the Total Work Accounts System

Leroy O. Stone, Ph.D.

and

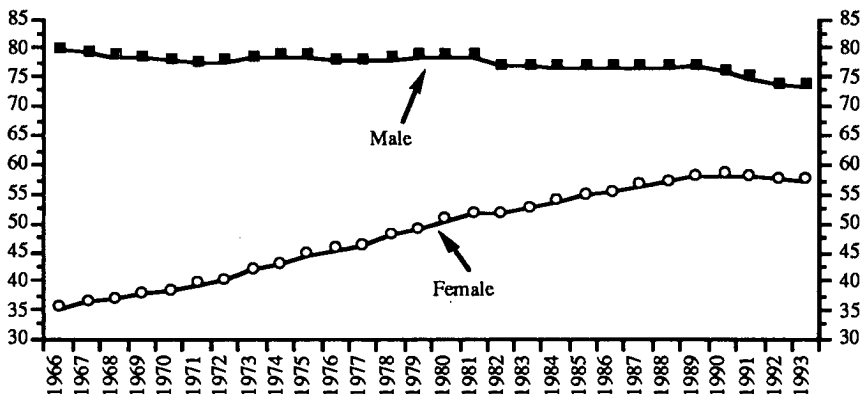
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#### 1.1. Job-Family Tension is Widespread

As the proportion of women entering and remaining in the paid labour market has risen (see Chart 1.1), the cohort of post-war baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1966, helped forge new attitudes of acceptance of women's paid work outside the home. Even for those who were bringing up children, involvement in the paid labour force

**Chart 1.1. Labour Force Participation Rates,(1) by Sex, Canada, 1966-1993**



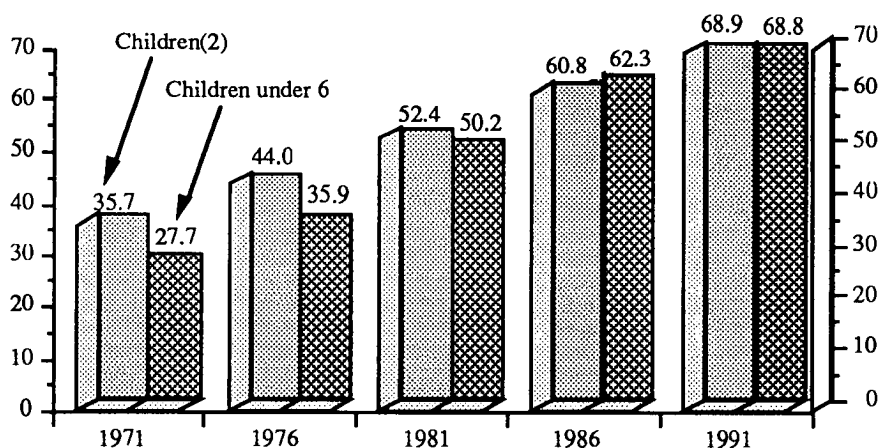
(1) The participation rate represents the labour force expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1994, pp. 323 and 332.

has grown sharply (see Chart 1.2). The dual-earner family has become a dominant pattern of adaptation, reflecting both changed cultural values and standards of living that often cannot be maintained with only one employment-income recipient in the home.

There has also been rapid growth in the number of seniors of advanced age, many of whom rely upon supports delivered partly by family members who have jobs outside the home (see Stone, 1988 and Alberta, 1991). A report of the Ontario Women's Directorate notes that environments that facilitate the retention of seniors' autonomy involve significant supports provided by family members and the community (Ontario, 1991). Joyce Potter suggests that "more and more workers are also caring for elderly parents and grandparents" (Potter, 1989, p. 27). While only a small fraction of seniors need to be "cared for", in the common meaning of this phrase,

**Chart 1.2. Labour Force Participation Rates(1) for Ever-Married Women, by Presence of Children at Home, Canada, Selected Years, 1971-1991**



(1) The participation rate represents the labour force expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over.

(2) The category "Children" represents women with children of any age, including those with children under six.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1990, Table 4.1; 1989, Table 2, p. 2-5; 1993, Table 1, p. 12.



these reports serve to highlight the need to take into account the situations of those who have support obligations to parents, spouses, or other adults with whom they have strong familial bonds, when studying aspects of job-family tensions.

The Ontario Women's Directorate report also calls attention to the importance of considering the supports for persons who are handicapped, and who may be neither children nor seniors. It notes that autonomous and productive life by such persons often entails significant supports from the family and the community. (Here, the word "autonomous" might be taken to mean independent of government-financed supports.) The report adds that "employed persons caring for handicapped relatives have the same anxieties and worries as those offering other kinds of care" (free translation of the French text in Ontario, 1991, p. 17).

Developments across a broad front have increased public attention to the problems that many workers have in achieving a satisfying balance between their paid-work and their family-work obligations. For example, the workers in a dual-earner family are often required to juggle the demands that arise from both paid-work and family-work obligations in ways that cause them to lead stressful lives. Employees who have trouble with balancing job and family obligations sometimes become less effective on the job (see Akyeampong, 1992).

The National Child Care Study (NCCS) provides ample documentation of the existence of a substantial percentage of employees experiencing stress from the effort to balance their paid-work and familial obligations. This study (NCCS) is based on a 1988 national survey of a sample that represented 2.7 million families with at least one child under the age of 13. Among these families there were 1.4 million parents who worked for pay as employees outside the home while assuming primary responsibility

in their families for arranging child care for one or more children aged 13 or less (Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993, p. 21).

Nearly nine out of every 10 (89%) survey respondents who used a form of non-parental child care while working reported that they experienced at least some tension in juggling their paid-work and their family-work obligations (Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993, p. 43). Nearly one in every five (19%) rated their tension level as being severe. Another 38% rated their tension level as being moderate.

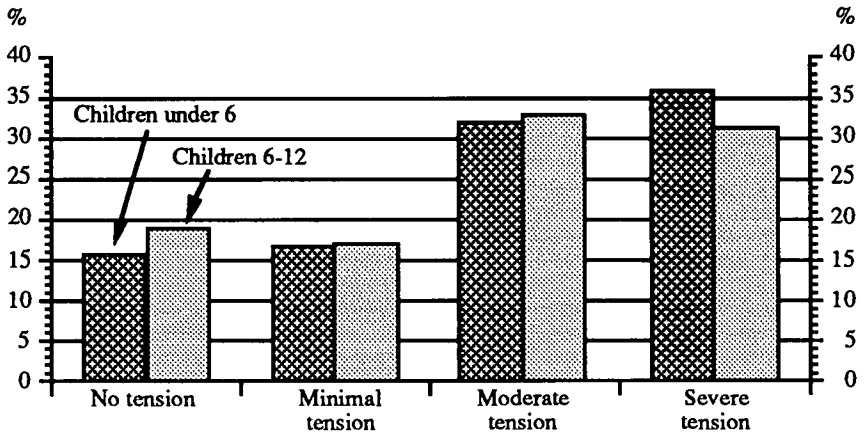
Although many factors help to account for the degree of tension experienced, it is worth noting that close to two-thirds of these respondents attributed moderate or severe levels of tension to difficulty in balancing paid-work demands and family-work obligations (Chart 1.3). Over 35% of those with children under six had severe levels of tension associated with this difficulty. Lero and her colleagues concluded that:

“Our analysis of the survey data suggests that the pressures that employed parents experience are not likely to diminish unless there are significant changes in the workplace and in the availability and suitability of child care resources to support the harmonization of work and family responsibilities.” (Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993, p. 46.)

Lero and Johnson (1994, p. 23) report the following as three major conclusions in research findings from a variety of Canadian and U.S.A. studies:

“Work-family conflict or stress is widespread. Estimates of the prevalence of work-family conflict across studies range from 25% among general populations of employees to as high as 68% among parents with preschool-age children.

**Chart 1.3. Percentage of Parents who Reported that They had Different Levels of Tension Associated with Balancing Job and Family Demands, by Age of Youngest Child, Canada, 1988**  
 (Parents with primary responsibility for child care who worked for pay outside the home and used non-parental child care while on the job.)



Source: Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993.

“Work-family stress is multidimensional, reflecting a complex interplay among work-related factors, family stressors and supports, and the availability and quality of community-based support services (child and elder care).”

“Finally, research suggests that work-family stress should not be viewed as an individual employee's problem or a woman's issue. Significant change will occur only with the adoption of enlightened approaches to work-family conflict that view the harmonization of paid work and family life as a systemic issue involving wellness and productivity.”

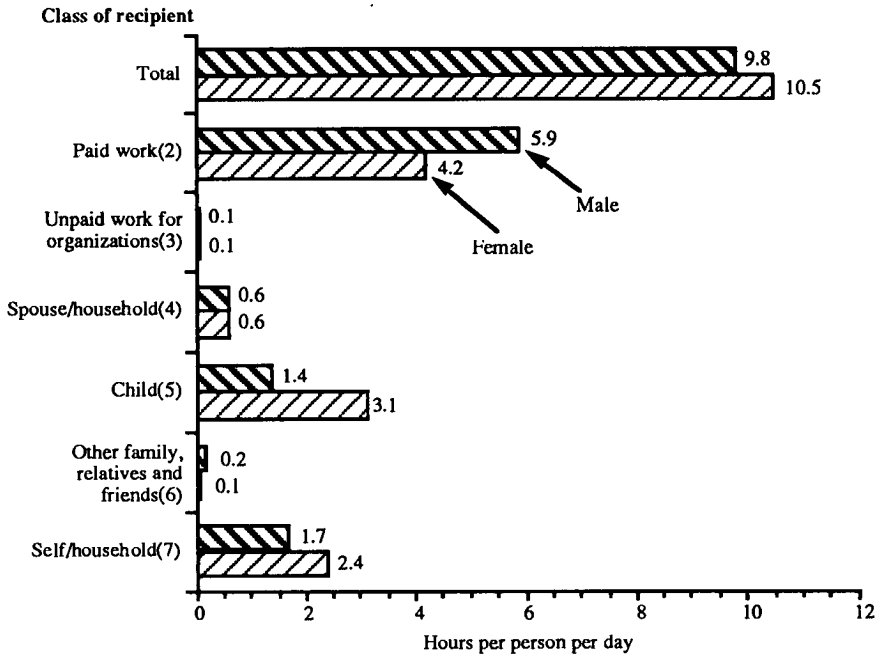
## **1.2. Men Also Experience Job-Family Tension to a Significant Degree**

Difficulties in achieving an acceptable balance between paid-work demands and family-work obligations are not limited to women and, among women, are not entirely concentrated on child care issues. As Lero and Johnson (1994, p. 24) report, mothers do experience greater job-family conflict than do fathers (see also Duxbury, Higgins and Lee, 1991); but a substantial percentage of men also share that conflict. In her study of 7,000 employees, Judith MacBride-King found that 76% of male employees reported at least some stress related to this balancing problem (MacBride-King, 1990, p. 19). Substantial percentages of single mothers experience high levels of job-family tension (Lero and Johnson, 1994, p. 25); but the same appears to be true for single fathers (Higgins, Duxbury and Lee, 1992).

That both men and women share the experiences of job-family tension is also indicated indirectly by the data in Chart 1.4, which are obtained from Statistics Canada's Total Work Accounts System (TWAS). The chart deals with persons aged 20-44 who had a spouse or partner as well as a child aged less than six years at home in 1992, and who worked for pay at least 30 hours per week. The *total* work loads (including unpaid work of economic value as well as paid work) of men and women are not greatly different, though the women's much greater contribution to family-caring work is clearly shown. The men's participation in family-caring work is not negligible, however, according to these TWAS estimates.

Both groups of young married men and women, with a full-time job and a pre-school child at home, spent an average of close to 10 hours per day every day of the week doing work of economic value. The figure for women is higher (10.5 hours versus 9.8 hours for men). The women's greater devotion to family-caring work comes out clearly in

**Chart 1.4. Distribution of Work Effort(1) Over Alternative Classes of Recipients of the Work Output, Married Persons Aged 20-44, Employed Full Time, Living with a Pre-School-Aged Child, Canada, 1992**



- (1) "Work" means paid work or unpaid work of economic value.
- (2) Paid work (work for pay, extra work or overtime, travel during work, waiting and delays during work) for the business sector, government and community services.
- (3) Volunteer work for organizations and other organizational voluntary and religious activity (excluding religious meetings and services), and unpaid work or help for business (family or farm), hobbies and domestic home crafts for sale, including travel related to hobby and craft business.
- (4) Unpaid work for spouse and other household members, which comprises domestic work, shopping for durable household goods; transportation assistance; medical care; house maintenance and repair assistance; care for disabled or ill and other unpaid work; all while the spouse is present.
- (5) Unpaid work for children, which includes not only care of children and unpaid babysitting but also domestic work and routine shopping while in contact with a child or children of the household.
- (6) Unpaid work for other adult family members, excluding the spouse -- work that includes doing domestic work with other family present if the respondent is a single child living with the parent; or adult medical care in the home, transportation assistance, care for disabled or ill and other unpaid work or personal care to adults, while other family are present. Also includes unpaid work for other relatives and friends -- e.g., meal preparation and cleanup, routine shopping, help and personal care to adults; house maintenance and repair assistance; transportation assistance; care for disabled or ill and other unpaid work; all while friends or other persons were present.
- (7) Unpaid work for self and other members of the household, including the following activities done with no one else present: meal preparation and cleanup, routine shopping, washing, dressing, packing, medical care at home; automobile maintenance and repair; other repair services and waiting for purchases or services.

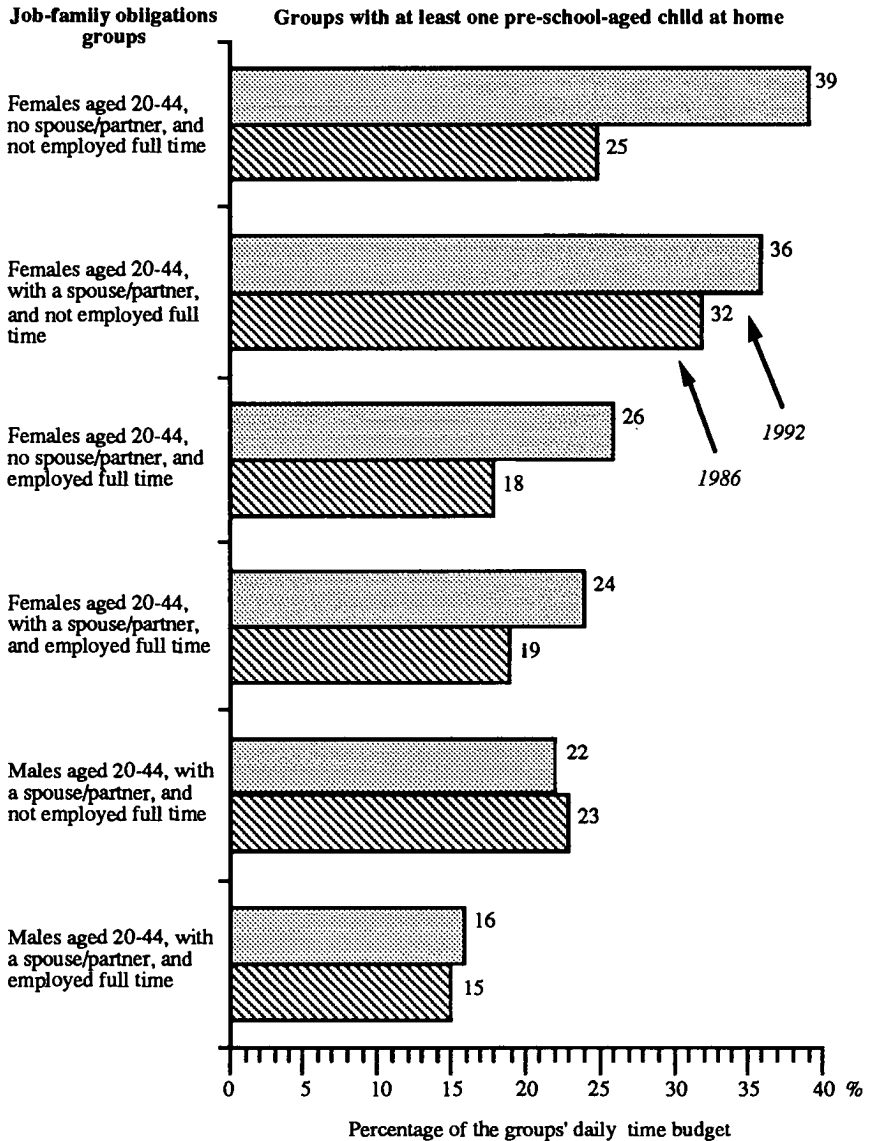
Source: Statistics Canada, Total Work Accounts System and the 1992 General Social Survey.

the 3.1 hours per day on child-oriented work of economic value, which is much greater than the figure for men. However, the figure for these men is not negligible (an average of 1.4 hours daily).

Data from the Total Work Accounts System allow one to estimate the total volume of time spent in child-oriented work of economic value by all groups. Chart 1.5 shows data for the defined groups that devoted the greatest proportions of their daily time budgets to such work in 1992 and in 1986. For those that had a pre-school child at home, two of the six leading Job-Family Obligations Groups were comprised of men. While men living with a spouse and young children are rarely responsible for organizing or for doing most of the child care in their homes, and do substantially less of it than do their wives, their contributions, as a group, are not insignificant. The commitments of men to family-caring work merit consideration when the question of designing family-friendly job environments comes up for discussion.

The data from the TWAS is supported by more direct evidence contained in Frederick's work, also based on the 1992 General Social Survey, concerning groups that had difficulties with time management (Frederick, 1993). Frederick shows that women are more likely to experience stress due to lack of time than men. The gender difference is especially sharp among dual-earner families. However, substantial proportions of men, in particular groups considered by Frederick, reported feeling "time crunched" as well.

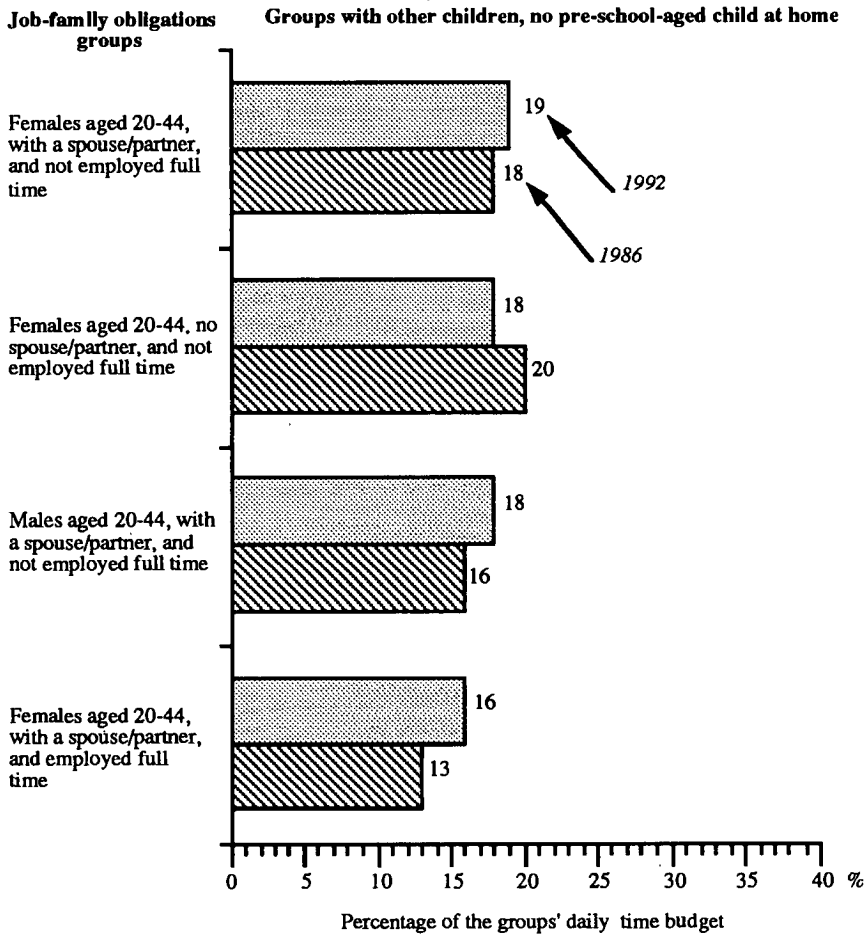
Frederick's interpretations suggest that she sees the job environment as being one of the key factors in the prevalence of heavy time-stress. Indeed she says that "with ever-increasing numbers of women entering the paid labour market, the number of Canadians feeling time crunched will not likely diminish in the near future" (Frederick, 1993, p. 7). Her data indicate that one-third of Canadians aged 15 or more (33% for men and 32% for women) agreed with the following statement: "I worry that I don't spend enough time with

**Chart 1.5. Leading Job-Family Obligations Groups(1) for the Percentage of Time Budgets Spent Doing Child-Oriented Work of Economic Value**

(1) Job-family obligations groups are defined in terms of population attributes that are linked to the probability of having both job and family work obligations to a high degree. The leading groups are those that spent 15% or more of their aggregate time budgets on child-oriented work of economic value in 1992.

Source: Statistics Canada, Total Work Accounts System and the General Social Survey.

**Chart 1.5. Leading Job-Family Obligations Groups(1) for the Percentage of Time Budgets Spent Doing Child-Oriented Work of Economic Value - Concluded**



(1) Job-family obligations groups are defined in terms of population attributes that are linked to the probability of having both job and family work obligations to a high degree. The leading groups are those that spent 15% or more of their aggregate time budgets on child-oriented work of economic value in 1992.

Source: Statistics Canada, Total Work Accounts System and the General Social Survey.



my family and friends". Having a job is not the only reason why one would agree with such a statement; but it is surely a prominent reason.

Child care may be the most common, by far, of the family-work dimensions that give rise to tensions in trying to balance paid-work demands and family-work demands but it is not the only one. Some people have spouses, grown children or other relatives or close friends for whom they have substantial familial obligations that lead to such tensions. Among the set of other relatives, parents and spouses are particularly worthy of attention.

In many cases where parental or spousal caring are factors in job-family tensions, supports to persons with unusually limited functional capacities are involved. There are other cases that should not be ignored, however, because they involve threats to and deterioration of the quality of family life, a topic that merits much more than casual consideration.

### **1.3. Active Public, Corporate and Government Interest**

Media reports and stories about these problems are now commonplace. Large companies and government organizations have begun to be actively concerned about how the job environment can be redesigned so that it is more family-friendly.

At their 1987 Annual Conference, First Ministers recognized that changes were needed in Canadian attitudes, programs, services and legislation if those with dependents and who also worked for pay were to be ensured the same range of opportunities as their counterparts who had no dependents. In November of 1989, Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women produced their first report on strategies to assist workers in managing their roles as employees, spouses, parents and caregivers of disabled or elderly

dependents (Government of Canada, 1989). A continuing commitment to basic principles and to an improved integration of work and family responsibilities was affirmed in June of 1993.

In 1994, the Minister of Human Resources Development Canada reported that an "Advisory Group on Working Time and the Distribution of Work is exploring a range of issues related to ... flexible working arrangements in Canadian society." He expressed the view that "for an increasing number of Canadians [the opportunity to take a job] depends on finding new ways to balance work and family responsibilities" (Government of Canada, 1994, pp. 53-55).

Canadian corporations are showing a growing recognition of the potential value of family-supportive programs. In a survey conducted by Toronto's Hewitt Associates for the magazine, *Benefits Canada*, researchers asked 300 responding organizations which employee benefits they expected to see change by the year 2000 (Benefits Canada & Hewitt Associates, 1989). Of a list of 19 possible emerging practices, five benefits surfaced as most likely to show increased use within the next 10 years: flexible benefits, employer-sponsored day care, flextime, employee assistance plans, and maternity/paternity leave. Interestingly, all of these practices have applications to the integration of paid work and family life.

Although employers feel they have a role to play in reducing the burden employees have in balancing paid work and family life, a small proportion of them seem to have taken the initiative to implement active family-supportive programs. Flexible working hours are somewhat prevalent among Canadian corporations, as are special family-related leaves, but most policies are informal with requests handled on an ad hoc basis. Relatively few employers offer more direct child care benefits, such as child care centres or child care information services.

### **1.4. Some Basic Concepts and Theory About Sources of Job-Family Tension**

It is worthwhile to introduce somewhat formally the concepts of *job-family tension* and *job-family conflict*, as well as review some theoretical ideas and major research findings concerning sources of that tension. There is no standard measure of job/family conflict or job/family tension. Conceptually, job/family conflict results from role overload and from competing role demands that lead to difficulties coordinating the practical demands of a job and the needs of dependent family members. It is perhaps useful, for statistical purposes, to distinguish between *conflict* as a potentially objectively measurable set of circumstances, and *tension* as a more subjective psychic state involving anticipation of conflict or resulting from actual conflict.

Job-family conflict arises from two complex variables called “role overload” (cited above) and “job-family interference”. Role overload takes place when the cumulative time demands arising from a person’s multiple roles prevent the person from carrying out the roles adequately or with a sense of comfort. Job-family interference takes place when the job obligations and familial obligations create demands for incompatible uses of the *same* time slot (e.g., being called to an important meeting at the same time that the child expects to be picked up at school, taken home and helped with home work).

Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson (1993) note that the phrase “schedule incompatibility” is also used when one is referring to job-family interference. “Schedule incompatibility” seems preferable because the effects of role overload are readily perceived as being instances of interference. A supervisor who feels that a subordinate is not concentrating adequately on the job owing to family-related pressures readily perceives the latter as being sources of interference in job performance. Similarly, a spouse who feels that

her/his partner is not giving enough time to the family because of preoccupation with job duties readily perceives the latter as being sources of interference.

A key point about “job-family interference” is that job obligations and familial obligations create demands for different uses of the *same* time slot. There are degrees of such conflict. These depend on how frequently the conflict arises and how deeply the person is troubled by the existence of the conflict along with a perceived inability to adequately deal with such issues on an ongoing basis. Less predictable situations, such as when a child is sick or care arrangements break down, produce another disturbing type of job-family interference.

Role overload does not necessarily lead to competition among incompatible potential activities concerning use of the same time slot; but it might do so. This is especially likely when the overload arises from voluntary acceptance of responsibilities that expose one to demands for one’s time arising from more than two groups with whom some form of bonding has developed. This point implies that role overload could be created in part by roles that involve neither the job nor the family.

For example, when the same person accepts responsibility and develops bonding in family, job and volunteer-organization or other community-support groups, the combination of all three might create overload that the family and the job alone might fail to create. This is familiar to nearly all people who have assumed roles in all these areas; but it is noted here to emphasize that role overload should not be considered a dimension of job and family factors solely.

Our present focus is not meant to suggest that factors other than family or job consistently deserve less priority in analyses of role overload and its consequences. For example, hospitals in a community may rely very heavily on volunteer workers. Should employer demands be so heavy that there is a shortage of volunteer

workers in hospitals and other community services, the business sector's own interests might not be well served by the level of employer pressure on workers' time budgets.

A somewhat different, but closely related, approach to the development of theory about sources of job-family conflict involves identifying "sources of stress" and "supports" in the job, family and community environments. The general hypothesis may be stated as follows:

Job/family conflict results from the interplay between work-related sources of stress and supports, family stresses and supports, and the extent to which community-based resources such as child care services effectively meet individual and family needs.

A list of work-related sources of stress, and another of family-related sources of stress, have been produced in a review of over 80 studies conducted for the Conference Board of New York (see Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993, pp. 41-42). Many of the items on these lists would be well known to employees who have family responsibilities. They involve both factors that contribute to the outbreak of conflicts and those that are more related to persons' psychic states in connection with anticipated or precipitated conflicts.

### **1.5. Selected Findings from the National Child Care Study**

Some findings from analysis of data from the National Child Care Study (NCCS) are worthy of note here. Prior to this study, there was no national survey which allowed social scientists to test models concerning the occurrence or population distribution of job-family tensions or conflicts.

Given the focus of the NCCS, a key factor that influences the likelihood of job-family tension is the presence of young children in

the respondent's home. Mothers with two or more preschoolers were slightly more likely to experience severe job/family tension than mothers with only school-age children at home (22.1% compared to 17.5%).

As already noted, it is important to consider that in many home settings family resources provide opportunities for managing job-family conflicts. Family resources help reduce the amount of conflict working parents would otherwise experience. These resources include a supportive spouse who helps share homemaking and child care tasks, and an income that enables one to purchase household and child care services when needed. As a result, we would expect mothers who are single parents and those with lower incomes to experience more job/family tension.

The NCCS data indicate that single mothers reported higher levels of job-family tension than did married mothers. The groups with highest and lowest incomes reported higher levels of tension than did groups with intermediate levels of income.

Several attributes of the job can be influential in the extent of job-family tension felt (see Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993, pp. 41-42). In considering pertinent attributes of the job, the distinction between those who had full-time and those who had part-time jobs is important. Approximately 27% of mothers represented in the NCCS sample worked part time (less than 30 hours per week). On average, the reported general level of job/family tension was considerably lower among mothers who worked part time. Only 11.5% of part-time workers rated their general level of job/family tension as severe, compared to 22% of full-time workers.

Given the importance of perceptions and other psychic factors in the study of job-family tensions, it is important to go well beyond objective attributes of jobs, persons or families and measure how tension or conflict are perceived. It is also important to measure how respondents evaluate the relative importance of alternative sources of

such tensions. The NCCS is a rich source of information about respondents' perceptions, albeit focussed on child care and on a very large subset of parents who provide child care.

In the NCCS, parents with main responsibility for arranging child care in their families, who worked at a job during the survey reference week, and who made use of non-parental child care to some degree were asked to rate 15 potential sources of job/family conflict on a scale of 1-10, indicating how much tension each factor contributes in her/his life. The 15 items spanned several areas: the mother's work hours and work schedule, her partner's work hours and work schedule, factors related to child care, logistics involved in using child care and in sharing child care responsibilities with a spouse, the extent to which parents perceived their employer as inflexible or uncaring about their role as a parent, and several items that captured general concerns about maintaining a balance between job demands and family responsibilities.

Aspects of role overload were dominant in the findings. Two of the 15 items always appeared as the MOST important contributors to job/family tension. Those two items were 'feeling tired or overloaded because of your job' and 'difficulty maintaining a balance between job demands and family responsibilities'.

Almost two-thirds of the selected parents reported moderate or severe tension on a daily basis associated with the factors just cited (see Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993, p. 43). The force of these subjective factors in creating a sense of having a high degree of job-family tension was influenced by several objective attributes of the parent, the family situation and the job. These factors included age of the youngest child in the family, whether the working parent had a full-time job, the respondent's marital status, and the kinds of child care used while the respondent was on the job (Lero, Brockman, Pence, Goelman and Johnson, 1993, p. 46).

So far, the review of objective factors has not considered data concerning the statistical effects of work-place features. The NCCS data allows analysts to compare mothers who said they could be flexible in their work hours and those who said they lacked that flexibility. The data indicate that mothers whose employers allowed some flexibility in hours had significantly lower general levels of job/family tension compared to those who did not. While they still experienced some degree of tension in managing job and family responsibilities, mothers with flexible hours attributed considerably less tension to the following potential sources of stress: difficulty maintaining a balance between job and family; mother's work schedule; time pressures related to dropping off or picking up children at their day care settings; the extent to which their employer is inflexible and unsupportive of their role as parents; and feeling tired and overloaded because of their job.

### **1.6. A Broader Survey of Dimensions of Job-Family Tension is Needed**

Thus, the NCCS is a rich source of objective and subjective data concerning correlates of high levels of job-family tension for a large subset of those with primary child-care responsibility in their families (mostly mothers, as is well known). This was the subset who had a job and also made use of some non-parental sources of child care. Another national study of this kind should be done so as to cover all the major kinds of caring work linked to familial obligations. This study should allow comparisons between those using formal supports and those relying *entirely* upon informal (e.g., familial) supports. The study should also allow estimation of the total volumes of major kinds of support provided, and the participation of various groups in that provision irrespective of whether they are primarily responsible for designing or choosing the support arrangements.



The design of such a study might be informed by descriptive portrayals and analyses of a variety of socio-demographic groups that are involved in providing informal supports that may give rise to job-family tensions. These portrayals would not be limited to a particular type of support, such as child care or elder care, and would seek to highlight meaningful differences among groups with varying degrees of involvement in delivering and receiving informal supports. This book is, in part, an attempt to contribute to the development of such a wide-ranging study of caring work that is based on familial obligations.

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## Chapter 2

# **On the Demographics of the Population that has Both Job and Family Obligations, an Exploration of the 1990 Canadian General Social Survey Data**

### **2.1. Purpose**

Chapter 1 closed by emphasizing the importance of analyzing the prevalence of job/family tensions in situations where the pertinent family obligations reach beyond the bounds of child care. This chapter portrays some features of socio-demographic groups that have *high levels of both* job and family obligations. It does not restrict the scope of the family obligations to any particular kind, such as child care. This data source allows those who are concerned with employees job/family tensions to gain a relevant perspective that cannot be achieved by limiting one's observations to the employees of a particular group of companies. This chapter draws upon information obtained from the 1990 General Social Survey, a national sample of over 10,000 households.

A review of socio-demographic features groups that have high levels of both job and family obligations should consider variables such as: gender, age, marital status, living arrangements, health and functional capacity, education, mobility, and family structure. Also relevant are aspects of the patterns of supports these groups provide to close relatives, their own reliance upon similar supports, and their participation in unpaid work and health related non-work activities outside of their homes.

The review presented in this chapter is limited by the fact that the 1990 General Social Survey was not designed for the purpose of supporting analyses on job/family tensions. It coincidentally

gathered relevant information from the survey respondents. Data based on this information have been captured for presentation in this chapter. The next section surveys some characteristics of these data.

## **2.2. Data Source and Measurement Scales**

The 1990 General Social Survey (GSS) offers pertinent data for the full range of ages of adulthood where the joint holding of job and family responsibilities is likely to lead to job/family tensions. Second, it provides an opportunity to break down the population judged to be having both job and family obligations into sub-groups according to indicators of time commitment to work output in both the family and the job setting.

The 1990 GSS measures persons' employment activity in terms of their weeks of paid work over a year, and of average weekly hours on the job. This allows one to classify the survey respondents into three levels of attachment to paid work:

- High attachment (WH): paid work was the main activity and the person worked for pay for 40 or more weeks in a year for at least 30 hours per week.
- Moderate attachment (WM): paid work was the person's main activity but the person either worked for pay for less than 40 weeks or worked less than 30 hours per week.
- Low attachment (WL): paid work was not the person's main activity.

Grouping of the population into levels of family responsibility was done in terms of indicators of degree of commitment of time to giving help to close family members. The grouping developed for this chapter reflects two kinds of consideration: (1) degree of commitment of time to giving help to close family members and (2) identification of those family members (young children versus others

who are not young children, especially parents or spouses reported as having moderate or greater disability). Three classes of having family responsibility were identified:

- Strong child-care responsibility (CC): there was either a child under 15 years old in the home or the person gave help (personal care, housework, transportation) at least weekly to a child living elsewhere. Also, the person did all her/his household's meal preparation or all its laundry and cleaning, or did one-half of both meal preparation and laundry and cleaning.
- Substantial parent-care responsibility (PC):
  - EITHER there was in the home a parent who did less than one-quarter of the measured household chores (meal preparation, laundry and cleaning),
  - OR there was a parent aged 65 or more living elsewhere who was reported to be disabled or retired and to whom the person gave housework help at least weekly. Also, the person did at least one-half of either meal preparation or laundry and cleaning in her or his home.
- Substantial spouse-care responsibility (SC): there was a spouse in the home but the *spouse* did less than one-quarter of the measured household chores (meal preparation, laundry and cleaning) and did not have a job with pay. Also, the person did all her/his household's meal preparation or all its laundry and cleaning, or one-half of both meal preparation and laundry and cleaning.
- Weaker levels of family-care responsibility (LC): the person did not fall into either of groups CC, PC, or group SC.

Unlike the classification of persons according to attachment to paid work activity, the family-obligations groups just defined cannot be ranked in terms of degree of family responsibility. One may be inclined to assume that the group with high child-care responsibility is the one most preoccupied, on average, with family caring. However, there are many individual cases of major burdens arising in the group that has high levels of parent-care responsibility. In

addition, our society provides more opportunities to receive help from formal sources of supports regarding child care than is the case with parent care.

In processing the GSS data, we allowed a respondent to be classified to only one of the family-responsibility categories just listed. This allows us to simplify the presentation. The priority for classification was, from first to last, CC, PC, SC, and LC. This means that a person was tested first regarding CC, and if he/she satisfied the conditions for CC the person was not allowed to be tested for satisfaction of the other conditions.

An unpublished table prepared from the 1990 GSS (and available by writing to the author) shows that in no age group did as much as 1% of the respondents satisfy both CC and PC conditions. This means that although some respondents did have major responsibilities for child care and parent care at the same time, the percentage of such persons in the survey sample was very low.

For the 1990 GSS, the class SC was empty. This means that the 1990 GSS sample turned up no respondent who had a spouse at home where the spouse was (reportedly) a major source of caring responsibility beyond that normally shared by spouses. Thus the data presented below cite only three classes of responsibility for close-family support:

- CC: major child-care support
- PC: substantial parent-care support
- LC: weaker levels of close-family support.

We can now combine three levels of paid-work attachment (strong, moderate and weak) and three classes of provision of help to close family members (strong child-care, substantial parent-care, weaker levels of close-family caring) to identify selected target groups. This process will allow us to examine the distinctive features of those who *jointly* had high levels of *both* job and family responsibilities.



### **2.3. The Target Groups and Highlights of their Distinctive Features**

The target groups of primary interest are those with the following combinations:

- (CC.WH) those with full-year full-time attachment to paid work AND classified as having a high measured level of provision of help to young children.
- (PC.WH) those with full-year full-time attachment to paid work AND classified as having a substantial measured level of provision of help to parents.

For the sake of economy of expression only, we shall refer to these two key target groups, identified above, as the groups with “strong levels of both job and family responsibilities”. To highlight key features of these two groups, they will be compared with groups that have other combinations of the two attributes defined above (attachment to paid work, and responsibility for close-family caring). For example, the two target groups can be compared with others that had similar levels of close-family caring but weak attachment to paid work.

Before going into the details, a summary of the highlights may prove to be helpful. The following are the highlights of this portrait of the population with strong levels of both job and family responsibilities:

- The 1990 GSS data confirm that they are a much younger than average sub-population, within the larger set of all persons aged 25 or more. They are also mainly comprised of women.
- The 1990 GSS data confirm that there are major differences between the child-care target group and the parent-care target group, though both groups were mainly concentrated in the 25-44 age range. The latter target group had nearly 15% aged 55-64, while near to 0% of the child-care target group was in this age range.

- Both target groups were generally much better educated and in better health than their comparison groups, who had weak attachment to paid work.
- Both target groups had lower than average percentages of persons reporting that they had four or more friends. This was mostly due to their heavy family-support activities; because attachment to paid work was positively associated with reporting having more than three friends, however.
- Both target groups were more likely to have done volunteer work for organizations weekly than their comparison groups, who had weak attachment to paid work. The meaning of this difference needs to be clarified in a further multivariate analysis where education is held constant.
- Among those with a close relative living outside their homes and with a university degree or diploma, the child-care target group was much less likely than its comparison group to have given measured help to those close relatives. The measured help included only meal preparation, housework and transportation.

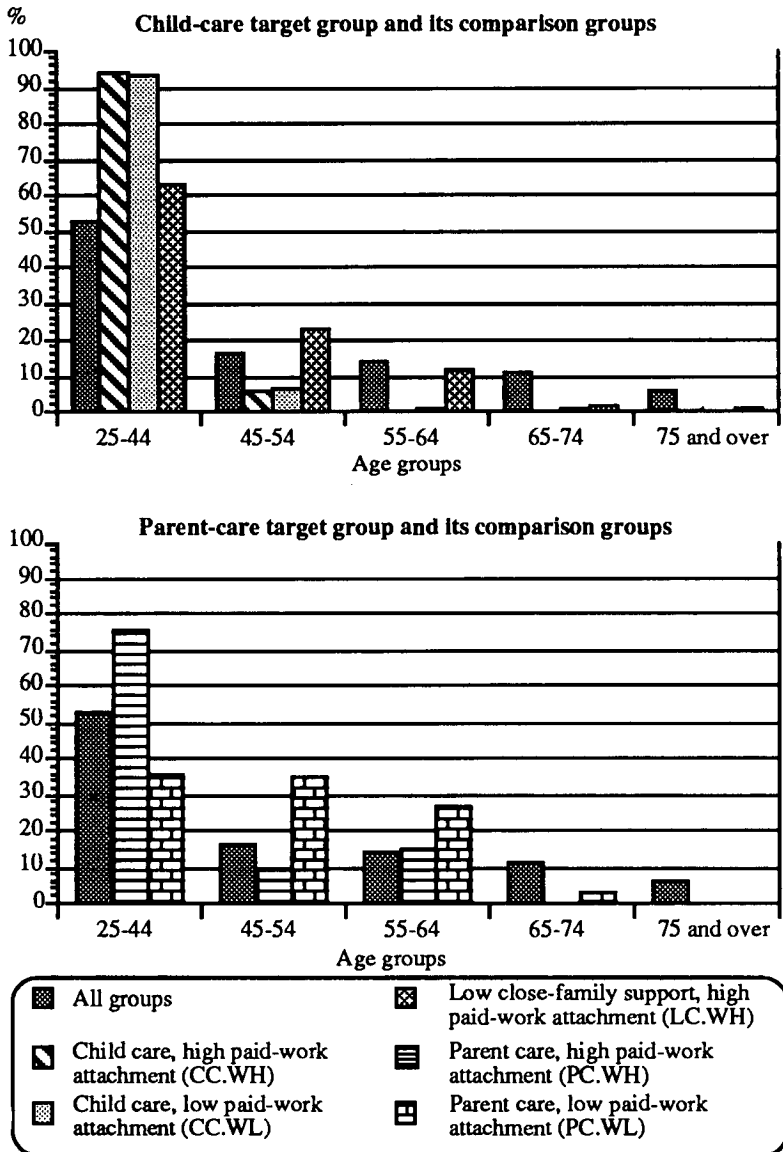
The text will now turn to the details underlying these highlights.

## **2.4. Age and Gender Compositional Differences**

The two target groups with strong levels of both job and family obligations together comprised less than 10% of the population aged 25 or more. The group with heavy child-care responsibilities was vastly greater than that with similar parent-care responsibilities -- the former was 7% of the population aged 25 or more, while the latter was less than 1%.

Not surprisingly, the age profiles of the target groups were highly distinctive (see Chart 2.1). Both groups had a much higher than average percentage in the 25-44 age group. The child-care group had

**Chart 2.1. Distribution of the Private Household Population Aged 25 and Over, by Age Group, for Selected Groups with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990**



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1990.

a very pronounced concentration (94%) in this age group, as one might expect. In contrast, nearly 15% of those with high paid-work attachment and heavy parent-care responsibilities were aged 55-64.

Also worthy of note is the age structure of the group with heavy parent-care responsibilities but with weak attachment to paid work (PC.WL). This group has a much more mature age structure than does the group with heavy parent-care responsibilities but with high attachment to paid work (PC.WH). Only 36% of the former group was aged 25-44, while more than one quarter were aged 55-64.

The explanation of this difference should be developed carefully. One of the hypotheses that come to mind is that heavy parent-care responsibilities tend to inhibit paid-work attachment in the older groups. It is that same group which has other good reasons for not being strongly attached to paid work. (These reasons include both voluntary choice and social pressure that tends to push older people out of labour markets -- see National Advisory Council on Aging, 1992.)

As one might expect, the two target groups are also mainly comprised of women. Whereas 52% of the whole sample (aged 25 or more) were women, nearly three-quarters (73%) of child-care target group consisted of women. The corresponding figure for the parent-care target group is just under two-thirds (65%).

## **2.5. Health and Functional Status**

Based on the crude measures of health and functional capacity provided by the 1990 GSS, the child-care target group had a higher percentage with top-level health rating than did the group that had similarly high levels of child-care responsibility but weak attachment to paid work. Whereas 92% of the CC.WH group reported their health as excellent "for someone their age", 89% of the contrasting

CC.WL group made a similar report (see Chart 2.2). (Both groups had very substantial sample sizes, so the difference, though not major, is being reliably estimated from the 1990 GSS data.)

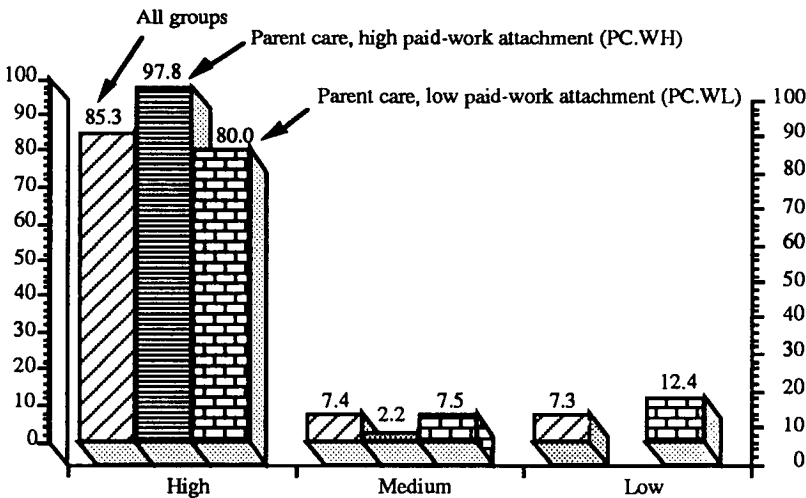
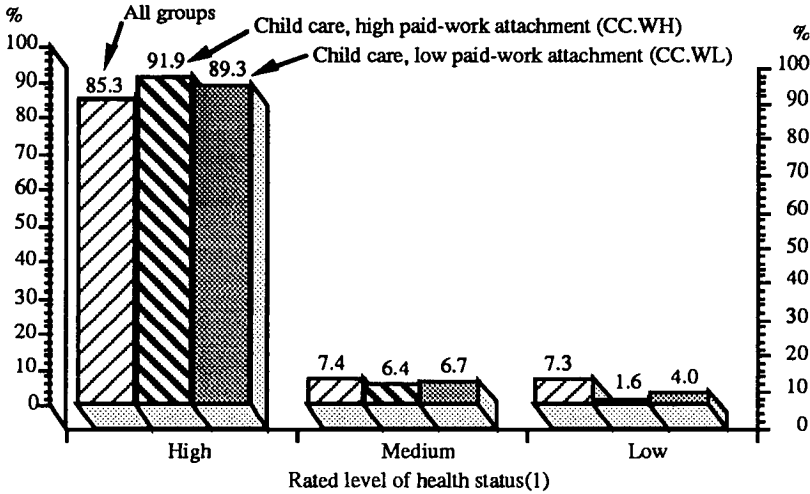
Chart 2.2 also shows pertinent data on the percentages rating highly on the health and functional status scale for the target group with heavy parent-care responsibilities (PC.WH). Nearly 98% of this group rated their health as excellent compared to other persons of the same age. The corresponding percentage was much lower (80%) among those who had heavy parent-care responsibilities but low paid-work attachment. Age is a factor in this large difference. The latter group had a much higher percentage aged 55-64 than did the one with heavy parent-care responsibilities and strong attachment to paid work.

Health and functional status comprise a causative factor in the differences just cited. Poor health or functional capacity will tend to inhibit strong attachment to paid work. Attachment to paid work can also influence health status. Physical health is closely linked to mental health, and participation in the world of paid work offers superior opportunities for psychic rewards. The conditions of paid work do, in many cases, create health hazards, however. This is a complex subject, and the aim here is to note that there is two-way causation between health status and attachment to paid work in our society.

## **2.6. Educational Attainment**

Higher education is associated with better than average access to both employment opportunity and good health status. As is well known, good health helps with maintenance of strong attachment to paid work. Thus, it is not surprising to find that the groups with strong levels of both job and family obligations had higher than average percentages of persons with university education (see Chart 2.3). For the whole sample of persons aged 25 or more, 15% reported having had a university degree or diploma. This figure is well below the 21%

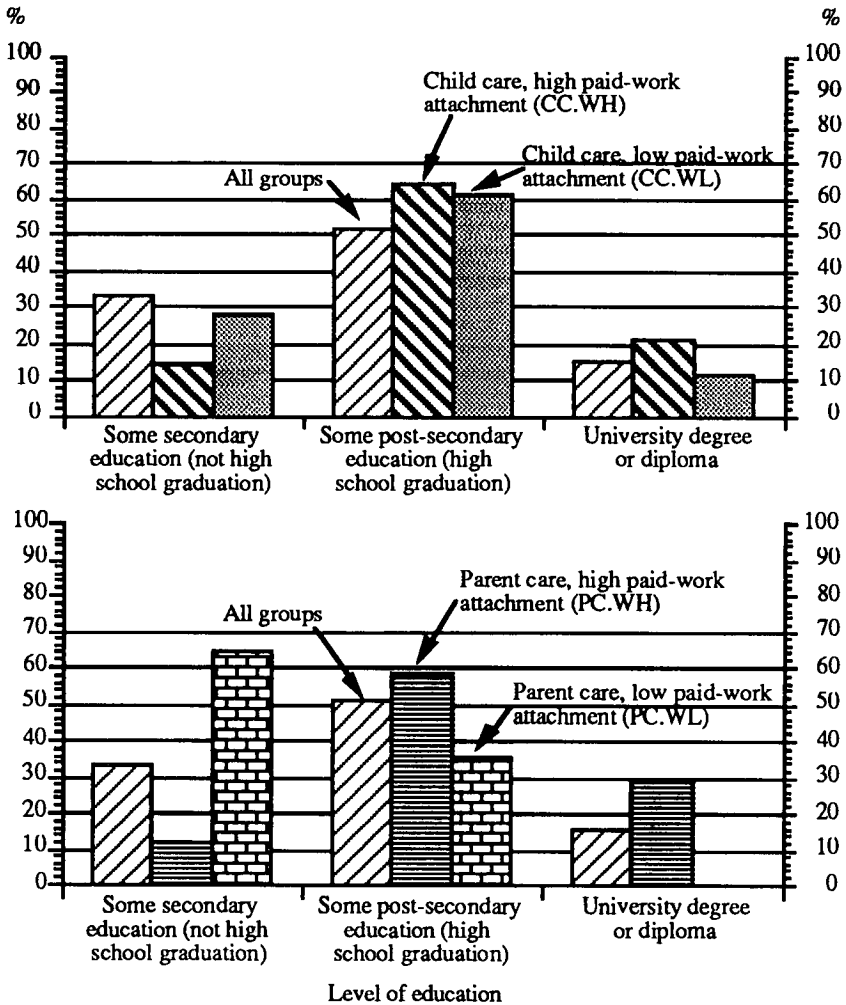
**Chart 2.2. Distribution of the Private Household Population Aged 25 and Over, by Rated Level of Health Status, for Selected Groups with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990**



(1) "High" was assigned to a person if he/she reported that his/her health was *excellent* compared to others of the same age. (The related survey question looks like a crude way to tap health status but in many surveys it has proven to be a reliable broad-scale differentiator of people with objectively determinable differences in health status.) "Medium" was assigned to a person if (a) he/she reported that his/her health was *good* compared to others of the same age, and (b) he/she reported that he/she was *not* limited in the kinds or amounts of activity he/she does. "Low" was assigned to all other persons.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1990.

**Chart 2.3. Distribution of the Private Household Population Aged 25 and Over, by Level of Educational Attainment, for Selected Groups with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990**



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1990.

estimated for the child-care target group (CC.WH). The percentage for the parent-care target group (PC.WH) is even higher at 29%, though here one needs to keep in mind the very much smaller sample size (and therefore a less reliable estimate).

The comparison group to each of these target groups was much less well educated. Thus, at the same general level of family-care responsibility, those with strong attachment to paid work were much better educated than those with a weak attachment to paid work. A marked difference in age distribution between the two groups with heavy parent-care responsibility is a key factor in their educational differential. Those who had heavy parent-care responsibility and weak attachment to paid work had a much higher percentage aged 55-64 than did their counterparts who had strong attachment to paid work.

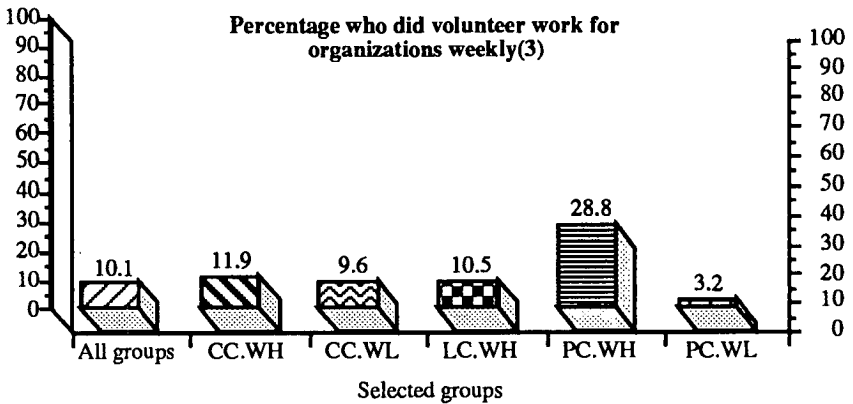
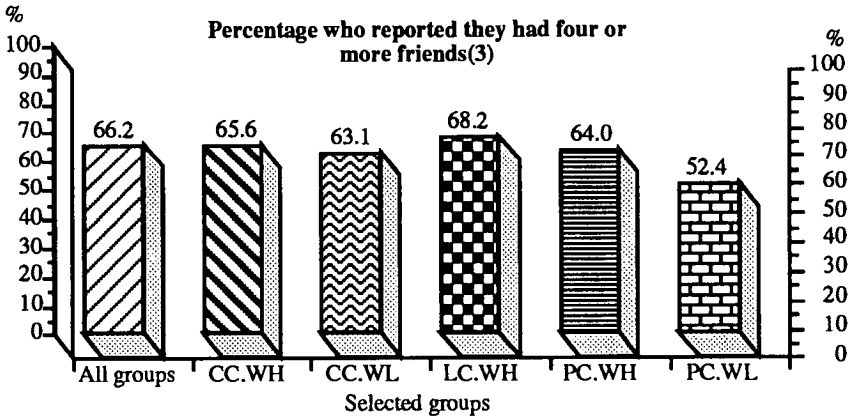
### **2.7. Friendship, Volunteering and Aspects of Close-Family Support**

To what extent was the holding of joint responsibilities for paid work and for family support to a high degree associated with numbers of friends, participation in volunteer work for organizations, and giving help to close relatives that did not share the respondents' homes? Chart 2.4 has been designed to provide a basis for answering this question. Regarding numbers of friends and participation in volunteer work for organizations, the data are limited to those who reported that they felt their state of health was excellent "compared to other persons their age". This limitation reduces the degree to which inter-group differences in functional capacity can becloud the comparisons.

In contrast with their comparison groups, the two target groups of persons with strong levels of both job and family obligations had higher percentages of persons who reported that they had more than four friends. Their comparison groups had similar levels of family support activity but weak attachment to paid work. These four

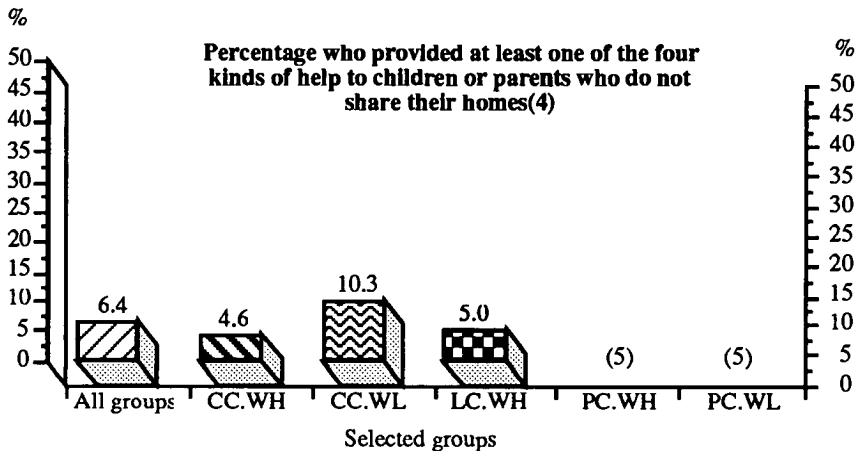


**Chart 2.4. Percentage of the Population Aged 25 and Over, who Reported Specified Levels of Number of Friends, Volunteer Work for Organizations, and Giving Measured Help(1) Weekly to Close Family that Do Not Share Their Homes, for Selected Groups(2) with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990**



See footnote(s) at end of chart.

**Chart 2.4. Percentage of the Population Aged 25 and Over, who Reported Specified Levels of Number of Friends, Volunteer Work for Organizations, and Giving Measured Help(1) Weekly to Close Family that Do Not Share Their Homes, for Selected Groups(2) with Particular Combinations of Levels of Job and Family Responsibility, Canada, 1990 - Concluded**



- (1) Types of help measured include: child care, housework, personal care and transportation.
  - (2) For legend and explanation of abbreviations, see Chart 2.1.
  - (3) Limited to those who reported their health was excellent compared to others of the same age.
  - (4) Limited to those with a child alive and at least one child living outside the home or with a parent alive and no parent in the home, and who had a university degree or diploma.
  - (5) Sample size too small.
- Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1990.

groups with heavy family-support responsibility had *less* than average percentages reporting that they had four or more friends, however. The group with weak close-family support activity and strong attachment to paid work had a higher than average percentage reporting that they had four or more friends.

The inter-group variation in percentage with more than four friends was not large, however. With one exception, the figures in the top panel of Chart 2.4 cluster around the overall average of 66%. Well below that average (at 52%) is the figure for those who had heavy parent-caring activity and weak attachment to paid work. Keep in

mind that this group's age structure was much more heavily weighted, than was the case for the whole sample, toward the senior end of the age range.

Volunteer work for organizations. Among those who reported that their health was excellent, some 10% did volunteer work for organizations weekly. The corresponding figure was slightly higher (12%) for the child-care target group (CC.WH). The estimate for the parent-care target group was much higher at 29%. In sharp contrast, among the group with heavy parent-care activity and weak attachment to paid work, less than 5% are estimated to have done volunteer work for organizations weekly. Key factors that help to explain this sharp difference are the age and educational differences between the two groups having heavy parent care responsibilities. There is a strong positive association of education with volunteer work for organizations.

Assistance to close relatives who did not share the respondents' homes. For the provision of help to close relatives who did not live with the respondent, the data are restricted in two ways. First, only those with a child alive and at least one child outside the home or those with a parent alive and no parent sharing the home were considered. Among these persons, the observations are confined to those with a university degree or diploma. These restrictions are rough indirect statistical controls on aspects of opportunity to provide help to close relatives living outside the home. The help could be either with meal preparation, housework or transportation. The close relative could be either a parent or a child.

Among those who satisfied the data restrictions just cited, the child-care target group had a lower than average rate of participation in giving help to close relatives who did not share their homes (5% versus 6% for those aged 25 or more). That participation rate was markedly below that (10%) of their comparison group, i.e. those with

heavy child-care responsibility but who had weak attachment to paid work. (The sample was too small to support provision of data for those with heavy parent-care responsibilities.)

## **2.8. Concluding Comment**

There are distinctive sets of socio-demographic features for the groups that have both job and family obligations to a high degree. (The highlights have been summarized in an earlier section of this chapter.) As one would expect, child care figures prominently in this population. Unfortunately, due to the small sample sizes involved, the chapter has not given details for those most involved with child care duties -- the people with children under six years of age. Also, for the same reason, it has not been possible to provide a good coverage of the groups that have major parent-caring or unusual spouse-caring responsibilities.

It appears, based on the 1990 GSS data, that less than 1% of the adult population has major parent-caring responsibilities. The 1990 GSS data show that even among women in the age groups used here, the percentage with heavy parent-caring responsibilities was below 3%, being distinctly higher for those aged 45-64 than for those aged 25-44.

There has been much media coverage of cases where persons simultaneously have major child care and parent care responsibilities. The GSS data indicate, however, that even among women, far less than 1% *simultaneously* had *heavy* responsibilities of the limited sort measured. The GSS allows one to measure only a few key examples of instrumental help. (For *both* child care and parent care, "heavy" here means support given at least weekly.)

## **2.9. Bibliography**

National Advisory Council on Aging. 1992. *The NACA Position on Managing an Aging Labour Force*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.



## Chapter 3

# Family Caring Responsibilities and the Pattern of Paid-Work Arrangements

### 3.1. Purpose

Chapter 2 presented some features of the population that has job/family obligations to a high degree. Thanks to the nationwide coverage of the General Social Survey, the identification of features was done in a context where it is possible to cover a wide variety of kinds of family obligation and of levels of attachment to paid work. That is precisely the context in which we should pose the following question: to what extent do the choices made by persons about the nature of their attachment to paid work depend upon perceived family obligations?

From one viewpoint, the answer to this question is quite obvious. This is the viewpoint in which one simply looks at the contrast between women's and men's typical life courses in connection with attachment to paid work. One sees how the strong sex difference can be readily understood by reference to the women's greater devotion of time to family caring work.

This approach does not provide information about how people perceive the influence of their family obligations on their decisions about activity in paid labour markets, however. Moreover, those decisions have different aspects, not all of which can be covered by merely reviewing the gender differences in pattern of doing paid work over the life course. These aspects include the following:

- working for pay on a part-time rather than on a full-time basis,

- use of flexible work arrangements concerning the times of starting and stopping spells of paid work or the place where paid work is done (at home, e.g.), and
- the thoroughness of the search for a job by the unemployed.

Thanks to the 1991 Survey of Work Arrangements, it is now possible to provide information about these dimensions of attachment to paid work. Using this source it is also possible to report on respondents' perceptions of the influence of family obligations upon their decisions regarding the manner of their attachment to paid work activity. Some of this information is presented below (see also Siroonian, 1993).

The concept of *paid-work arrangements*, as used in this text, has several dimensions. They include the frequency, duration, timing and location of work episodes over a given week. Frequency refers to the number of separate work episodes, and the duration of an episode is its length in time. Timing refers to when episodes start and when they end. Location refers to whether the work is done at a place away from home or within the home premises. Home premises include the dwelling unit and any nearby structures or land that may be used by the home occupants for business purposes.

Questions asked in the 1991 Survey of Work Arrangements allow one to approach the study of the links between family-care responsibilities and paid-work arrangements from a number of different viewpoints. For one of these viewpoints, persons involved in specific non-standard aspects of work arrangements (e.g., irregular work, work at home) were asked to comment on their reasons for that involvement. This chapter addresses a number of analysis questions that deal with aspects of the relative statistical importance of family-care responsibilities among reasons given for involvement in selected aspects of paid-work arrangements.

Although the Survey of Work Arrangements excludes the self-employed, the database containing the survey results also has



responses to questions in the main Labour Force Survey. The Survey of Work Arrangements was taken in conjunction with the November 1991 monthly Labour Force Survey. This allows us to compute certain relevant measures for a sample that includes both employees and the self-employed.

### **3.2. Key Questions Concerning Workers' Reports on Family Responsibilities as Reasons for Involvement in Non-Standard Paid-Work Arrangements**

This descriptive analysis involves selecting groups that were known to be participants in non-standard features of paid-work arrangements. Within each group, the 1991 Survey of Work Arrangements data, together with items drawn from the main Labour Force Survey, allow one to show the percentage who cited family responsibilities as the main reason for having the particular feature of paid-work arrangements in question. For example, among the group of persons who worked part-time, we can show the percentage who gave personal or family responsibilities as their main reason for working part-time. This percentage is regarded, in this chapter, as an indicator of the relative statistical importance of family responsibilities as a reason for working part-time.

The features of paid-work arrangements that are of concern here are doing part-time work, having irregular work schedules, and working at home, for those who had a job in the survey reference week. Data for some of these variables include the self-employed.

Although the foregoing text has dwelt upon the work arrangements of persons with jobs, an analysis of the links between family obligations and participation in paid labour markets should include consideration of some persons who were without a job at the time of the survey. The persons in question had previously worked for pay

or as self-employed business persons, and family-care factors may have helped explain their departure from their last job or the thoroughness of their search for a new job.

For each of the groups just cited, a set of analysis questions was established to serve as guides in the exploration of the 1991 Survey of Work Arrangements database. To save space, this text will avoid stating the questions each time the discussion turns to a new group. Instead, a general form of the questions will be presented below so that they can be stated only once.

In reviewing the questions stated below, the reader should take note that the persons involved in a specific feature of work arrangement pattern (e.g., part-time work) represent a particular sub-universe within the general target population for the whole survey. In moving from those doing part-time work to those with irregular work schedules, and then on to those working at home, we are moving among three distinct, though partially overlapping, sub-universes of workers. Within each sub-universe the following general analysis questions were posed to guide development of this chapter:

- With what relative frequency are family-care responsibilities cited as a reason for membership in the sub-universe (e.g., as a reason for membership in the group that was doing part-time work)?
- What is the pattern of variation in the just-cited relative frequency among key age and gender groups within the membership in the sub-universe?
- Within specific sex-age categories, are there systematic patterns of educational variation in the relative frequency? Such patterns may suggest that socio-cultural factors are relevant in the perception of family-care responsibilities as the main reason for being involved in a specific non-standard feature of paid-work arrangements.

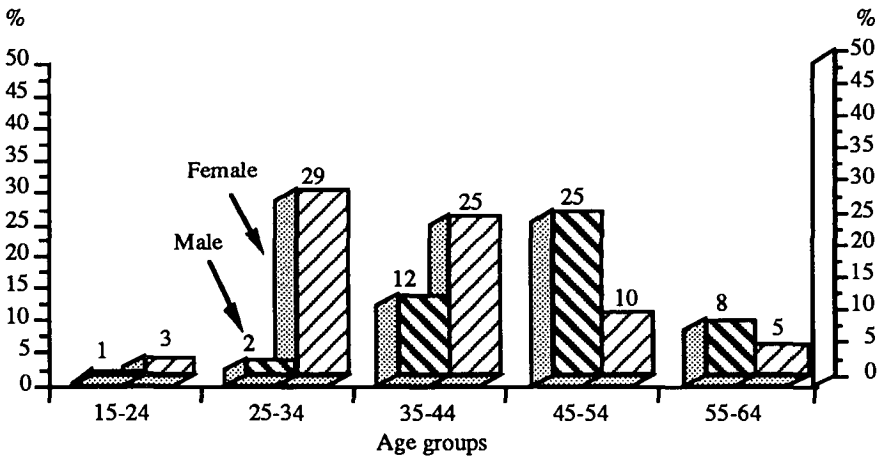
In the discussion that follows, these questions will be addressed with respect to five sub-universes: those doing part-time work, those with

irregular work schedules, those working at home, those who left their last job and are now without a job, and those without a job who are avoiding seeking a new job. For the last two, the issues for which family factors are pertinent are why they left their last job, and why they are not attempting to find another job.

### **3.3. Family Responsibilities and Part-Time Work.** **Leaving a Job and Looking for Work**

**3.3.1. Working part-time.** Among women in the primary ages for child rearing (25-44) and who worked part-time, more than one quarter gave personal and family responsibilities as the main reason why they worked part-time (Chart 3.1). Only in the 45-54 age group of men is there a similarly high proportion of part-time workers who also gave personal or family responsibilities as the main reason why they worked part-time. Among women in the 45-54 age group, where

**Chart 3.1. Percentage of Part-Time Workers who Gave Personal or Family Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Working Part Time, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991**



Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

family caring would more likely involve spouses and parents rather than young children, nearly 10% of the part-time workers gave personal or family responsibilities as the main reason why they worked part-time.

There is a notable ambiguity about the implications of a report that a person worked part-time mainly due to personal and family responsibilities. The person may have preferred to avoid all paid work, and was working part-time in order to supplement family income. Thus the proportion reporting that they worked part-time mainly because of personal or family reasons should not be routinely interpreted as an accurate indicator of the relative importance of family-care responsibilities in motivating people to work part-time.

Although some factors may cause the indicator to over-state the relative importance of family-care responsibilities in motivating people to work part-time, others may have the opposite tendency. For example, notice that the discussion has been about the *main* reason given by the respondent for working part-time. In many instances, family-care responsibilities form an important reason though not the main one. Since decisions of this kind are often the result of a network of reasons, focussing solely upon the main reason may produce a substantial under-estimate of the importance of family-care responsibilities as factors in decision-making about doing part-time work.

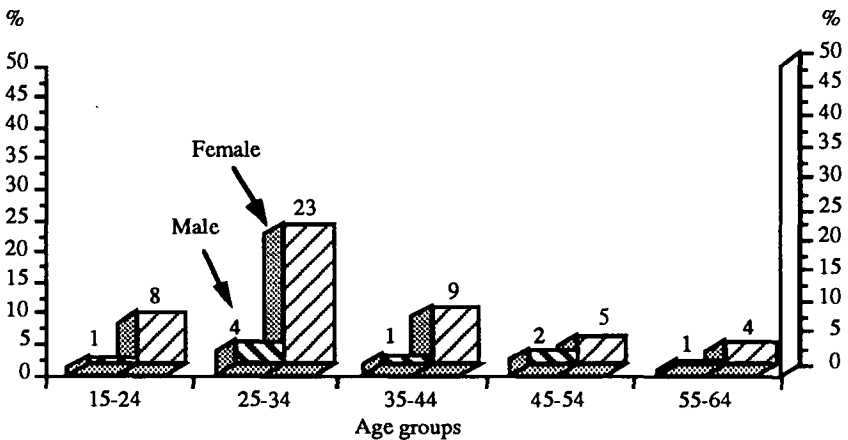
The discussion also needs to acknowledge that the prevalence of part-time work is a result of demand factors among employers, as well as of those that deal with attributes of the suppliers of the part-time work. From the employer-demand side, we can point to such things as the increased weight of service industries in the Canadian economy, and technological and other changes that allow employers to reduce their reliance upon full-time workers. Also

pertinent are increased diversification in the structure of economic production, and the rising need to move goods, information and services across widely varying time zones.

In short, the data shown in Chart 3.1 should be regarded as being only rough gauge of the relative statistical importance of family-caring responsibilities as reasons for working part-time. The qualifications cited above will also be applicable to a good deal of the data to be presented in the charts that follow. Nevertheless, Chart 3.1 points to family-caring responsibilities as being among the key reasons for working part-time for those who were in the ages for peak levels of participation in the activities of holding a job or looking for one.

**3.3.2. Leaving the last job held.** Among women in the prime ages of child-rearing and who left their last job, a substantial proportion gave personal and family responsibilities as the main reason why they left that job (Chart 3.2). That reason was the main one for just below one

**Chart 3.2. Percentage of Persons Unemployed or Not in the Labour Force who Gave Personal or Family Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Leaving Their Last Job,(1) by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991**



(1) The denominator is restricted to those who previously had a job.

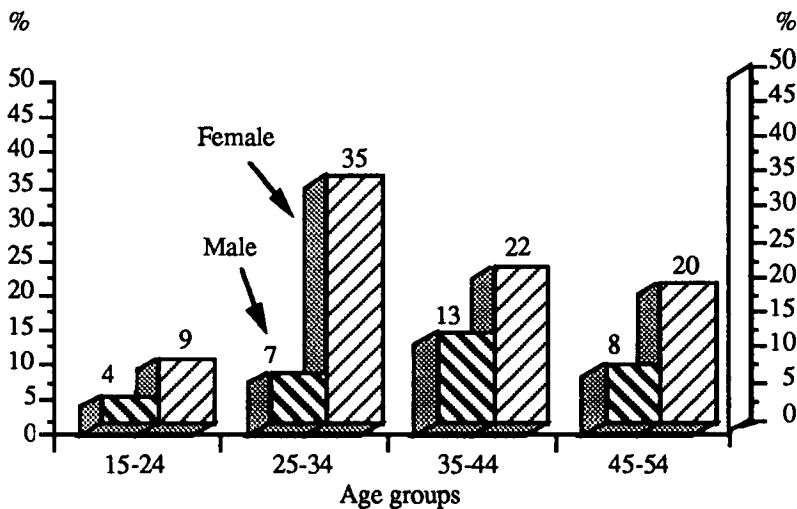
Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

quarter (23%) of such women who were aged 25-34. The figure falls to nearly one in 10 (9%) among similar women in the 35-44 age group. For women aged 15-24 who left their last job there is a similar percentage (8%) giving personal or family responsibilities as the main reason why they left that job.

For no age group of men who left their last job did as many as 5% of respondents report that personal and family responsibilities comprised the main reason. Among the age groups in Chart 3.2, the percentage among men is highest (4%) in the 25-34 age group.

**3.3.3. Not seeking paid work.** The figures for age groups of men tend to be well below those for women when one examines family factors among reasons for not looking for work in the past four weeks. This examination is limited to persons without a job who had looked for work in the past six months (see Chart 3.3). For each age group in

**Chart 3.3. Percentage of Persons who Gave Illness or Personal Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Not Looking for Work Among Those who Looked for Work in the Past Six Months, But Did Not Look for Work in the Past Four Weeks, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991**



Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

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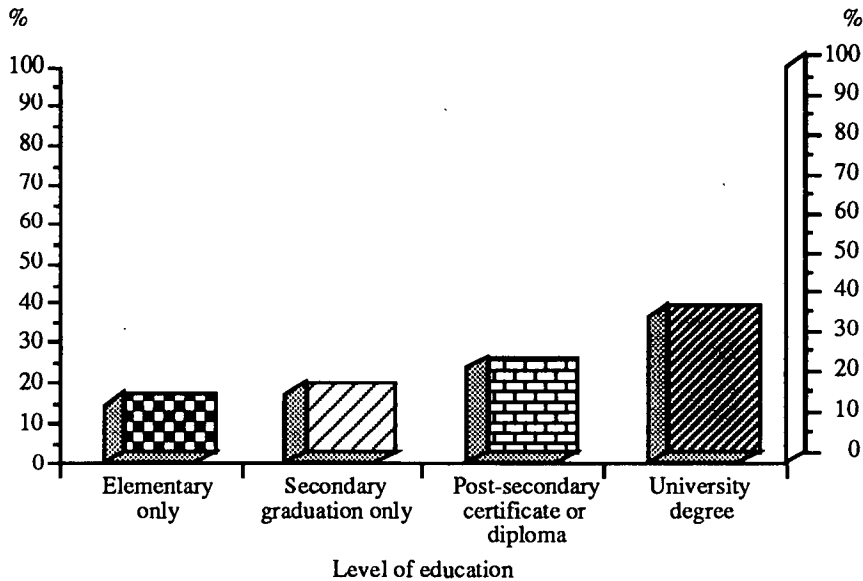
Chart 3.3 the percentage for men is far below that for women as regards those who gave illness or personal responsibilities as the main reason for not looking for work during the past four weeks. The highest percentage for the age groups of men shown in Chart 3.3 is 13% in the 35-44 age group. Only in the 15-24 age group of women is the corresponding percentage lower than 13%.

Although the Survey of Work Arrangements microdata file does not allow one to separate illness from personal responsibilities, the age pattern of the corresponding percentages among women points strongly to personal responsibilities as being the more important of the two (see Chart 3.3). By far the highest percentage is seen among young adult women (aged 25-34) who did not have a job in the survey reference week, who had looked for work in the past six months, but did not do so in the past four weeks. More than one-third (35%) of these women gave illness or personal responsibilities as the main reason for not looking for work during the past four weeks.

The corresponding percentage was only 9% for the group of women who were similar except that they were aged 15-24. That is, 9% gave illness or family reasons for not looking for work in the past four weeks, among women aged 15-24 who had no job in the survey reference week but had looked for work in the preceding six months. From the peak figure of 35% (for the corresponding women in the 25-34 age group) the figure falls as age rises beyond age 34. It is 22% in the 35-44 age group and 20% in the 45-54 age group among women.

Chart 3.4 lends additional support to the hypothesis that family reasons, and not illness, comprise the major factor behind the percentages shown in Chart 3.3. Chart 3.4 shows the same kind of information as does Chart 3.3, except that it shows the pattern formed by women at different levels of education. Due to sample size limitations, data in Chart 3.4 must be displayed for the 15 to 69 age group as a whole. The chart shows that as education increases there is a distinct rise in the percentage giving illness or personal factors as

**Chart 3.4. Percentage of Persons who Gave Illness or Personal Responsibilities as the Main Reason for Not Looking for Work Among Those who Looked for Work in the Past Six Months, But Did Not Look for Work in the Past Four Weeks, Females Aged 15-69, by Level of Education, Canada, 1991**



Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

the main reason for not looking for work in the past four weeks. The denominators for the first and last columns in Chart 3.4 are so small that the numbers shown must be treated with caution.

Nevertheless, the pattern in the chart suggests that over one-third of the women with university degrees gave illness or personal reasons for not looking for work in the past four weeks. The same reasons were reported by much less than one-fifth of the women who had only zero to eight years of schooling. (Keep in mind that these are only women without a job but who had looked for a job in the preceding six months.) Had illness been more important than family reasons, the pattern would have been the opposite -- the bars would have declined in height as level of education increased.

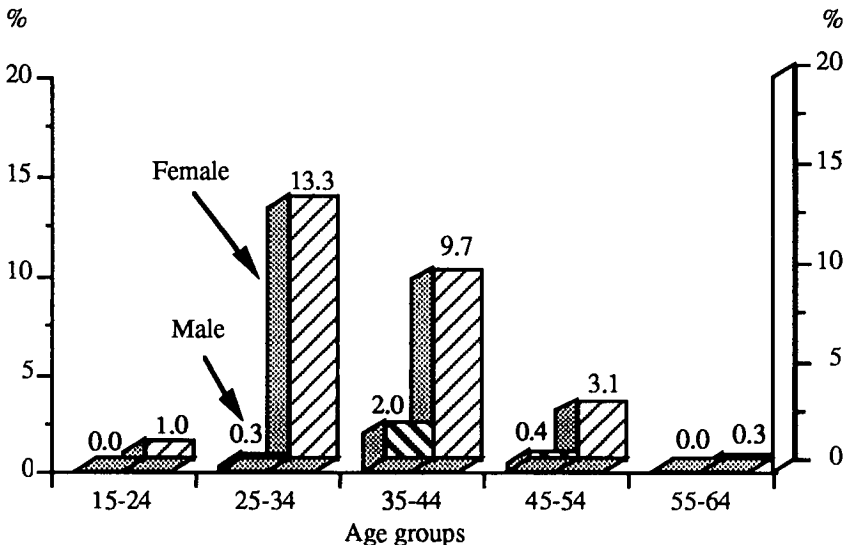


The reason for the pattern of educational variation shown in Chart 3.4 cannot be known without access to information not collected in the survey. However, a hypothesis may be put forward as follows. The higher the level of education, the greater the access to jobs. With illness not a major factor, as the level of education goes down from the university level, reasons other than family should become more prevalent -- e.g., discouragement in the effort to find a job due to the paucity of job openings. This is just a speculation, however.

### **3.4. Family Responsibilities as Reasons for Irregular Work Schedules or for Working at Home**

Charts 3.5 to 3.8 provide still more support for the theme of the foregoing commentary in its portrayal of the pattern of gender differences in the proportions of persons giving personal and family

**Chart 3.5. Percentage of Paid Employees with Irregular Work Schedules who Reported Child Care as the Main Reason for Having an Irregular Work Schedule, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991**

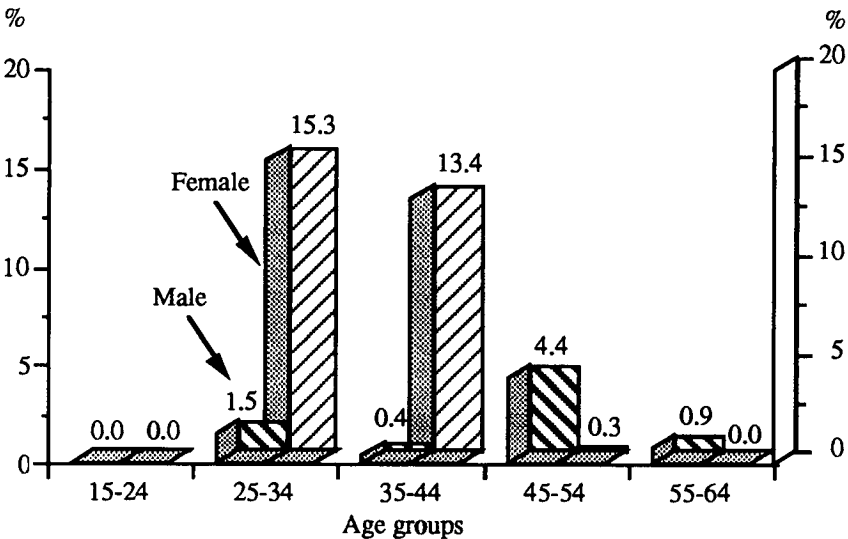


Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

responsibilities as main reasons for having irregular work schedules (see the Glossary of Terms) or for working at home. The percentages in these charts are based on two selected sub-universes -- (1) persons who described their work schedules as irregular and (2) persons who worked at home. Generally, these charts show lower levels for men than for women, as regards the proportions of persons giving personal and family responsibilities as main reasons for having irregular work schedules or for working at home. (For discussion concerning the prevalence of irregular work schedules see Siroonian, 1993.)

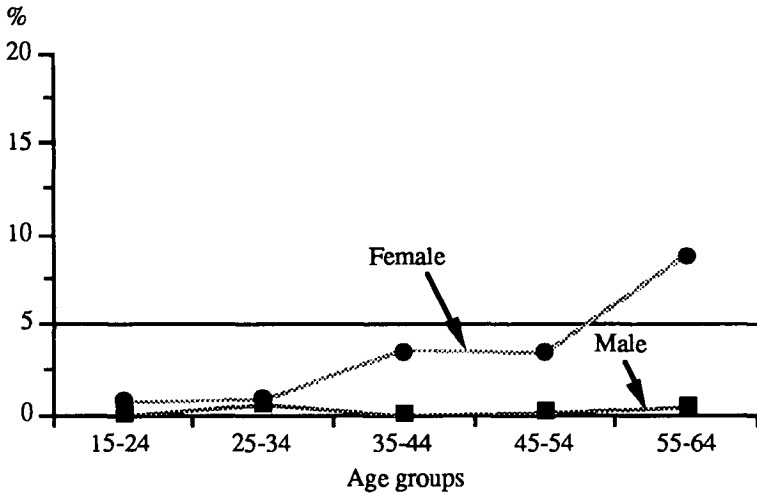
Charts 3.5 and 3.6 show the percentages who gave care of children as the main reasons for having irregular work schedules or for working at home. Charts 3.7 and 3.8 show the percentages who gave other family obligations as the main reasons for having irregular work schedules or for working at home.

**Chart 3.6. Percentage of Paid Employees who Worked at Home who Reported Child Care as the Main Reason for Working at Home,(1) by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991**



(1) Includes those stating they did all or some of their scheduled work at home.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

**Chart 3.7. Percentage of Paid Employees with Irregular Work Schedules who Reported Care of Other Family Members as the Main Reason for Having an Irregular Work Schedule, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991**



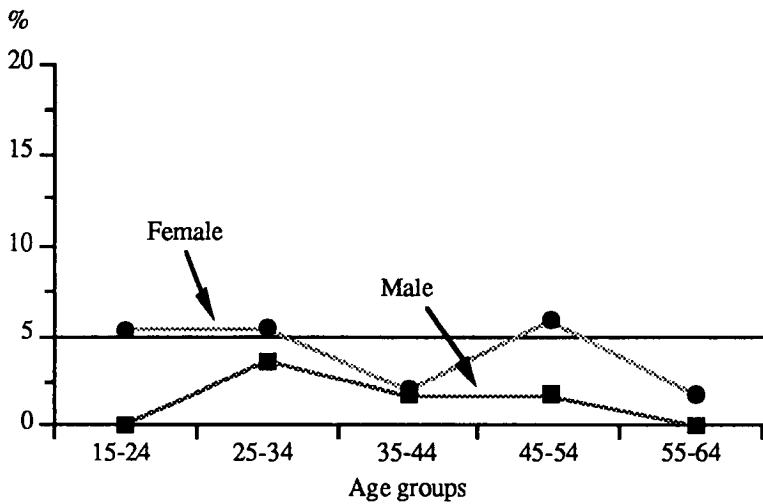
Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

For more than one in every 10 women who were aged 25-44 and who had irregular work schedules, child-care responsibilities were the main reasons for having those schedules. (Combine the data for age groups 25-34 and 35-44 in Chart 3.5.) The next highest figure is that of just over 3% for women aged 45-54 who had irregular work schedules.

Among women who worked at home, roughly 15% in the 25-34 age group and 13% in the 35-44 age group, reported that child care was the main reason for working at home. A similar report was made by 4% of men aged 45-54 who worked at home.

The 1991 Survey of Work Arrangements is unique in providing data based on respondents' reports about care for family members other than children as reasons for having irregular work schedules or for doing all or some of their work at home (Charts 3.7 and 3.8). Among women aged 45-64 with irregular work schedules, close to 5%

**Chart 3.8. Percentage of Paid Employees who Worked at Home who Reported Care of Other Family Members as the Main Reason for Working at Home, by Sex and Broad Age Group, Canada, 1991**



Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

reported “other family” (i.e. non-child-care) responsibilities as the main reason for having such schedules. The estimate for the subset of these women aged 55-64 is quite close to 10%. The bulk of these “other family” responsibilities would involve spouses and/or parents. That is, nearly 10% gave “other family” responsibilities as the main reason for having an irregular paid-work schedule among women aged 55-64 with that schedule. The curve for this percentage rises gradually from the value (nearly 1%) for women aged 15-24 to that for women aged 55-64.

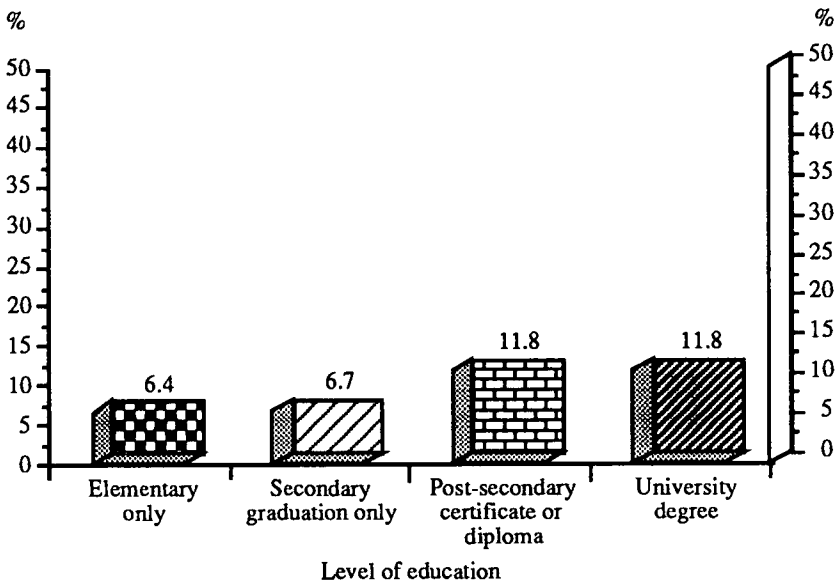
Close to 5% of women who worked at home across the 15 to 54 age range saw “other family” (i.e. non-child-care) responsibilities as the main reason for working at home. However, the 5% figure is closely approached or slightly exceeded only in each of the 15-24, 25-34 and 45-54 age groups. The corresponding figure in the 35-44 and in the 55-64 age groups of such women is nearly 2%. The odd shape of the

curve in Chart 3.8 arises from the relatively small numbers of women working for pay or in a business at home in 1991 (for related discussion see Siroonian, 1993).

In 1991, highly educated women with an irregular work schedule were more likely to cite family-caring responsibilities to explain that schedule than did women with low levels of education. This is the indication of Chart 3.9. While nearly 12% of such highly educated women reported family-caring responsibilities as the main reason for having an irregular work schedule, just over 6% of those with no university education gave that explanation.

The reasons for this pattern cannot be elicited from the existing survey data. It is often thought that highly educated women may

**Chart 3.9. Percentage of Paid Employees with Irregular Work Schedules who Reported Child Care or Care of Other Family Members as the Main Reason for Having an Irregular Work Schedule, Females Aged 15-69, by Level of Education, Canada, 1991**



Source: Statistics Canada, Work Arrangement Survey, 1991.

spend less time with their children than their counterparts with lower education. Table 3.1 tells a different story. Hours per person per day spent in child-care related activities are not greatly different between university-educated married women aged 20-44 with a full-time job and their female counterparts who did not have university education.

### **3.5. Summary**

On the whole, personal and family responsibilities are seen as important reasons motivating part-time work, or quitting a job, or avoiding the search for work among roughly 20% to 25% of women in the main child-rearing ages (25-44) who were in one of the following three sub-universes: (1) those working part-time, (2) those who left their last job, and (3) those without a job and did not look for paid work in the past four weeks even though they had done so in the preceding six months. The percentages are much lower in the other age groups of women, except for women aged 45-54 who were without a job and did not look for paid work in the past four weeks even though they had done so in the preceding six months. One-fifth of these women gave illness and personal responsibilities as the main reason they had not looked for work in the past four weeks.

The broad picture that can be painted for men in the three sub-universes just cited, based on the patterns in Charts 3.1 to 3.3, is very different from that for women. Consider the span of ages where responsibilities for child care or for parent support are likely to be greatest, the 25-54 age range. Except in the upper end of this age span (45-54), less than one in 10 of male part-time workers gave family factors as the main reason for working part time. For the whole 25-54 age span, at most 3% of men who left their last job gave family reasons for doing so. In this same age range, somewhat below 10% gave illness or personal reasons as the main factors behind their not seeking work in the past four weeks, among men without a job but who had looked for work in the preceding six months.

**Table 3.1. Average Work Hours Per Person Per 24-Hour Day (1) by Class of Recipient of the Work Output, for Selected Groups of Women Aged 20-44 who Were Living with a Spouse and Had a Full-Time Job, Canada, 1992**

Education	Unpaid work for					Total hours per person
	Paid work for industry and government(2)	business or volunteer organization(3)	Unpaid work for children(4)	Unpaid work for other relatives, friends and self(5)		
University degree						
Less than university degree						
University degree						
Less than university degree						

Presence of own child at home  
 Pre-school child at home  
 Other child (no pre-schooler) at home  
 Other child (no pre-schooler) at home

(1) Based on a seven-day work week. Hours exclude travel to and from work, as well as meals and breaks during the work day.

(2) Paid work time includes work for pay, overtime work, travelling on the job, and waiting and delays during work.

(3) Volunteer work for organizations, and unpaid work or help for business (family or farm), hobbies and domestic home crafts for sale, including travel related to hobby and craft business.

(4) Includes not only care of children and unpaid babysitting but also domestic work and routine shopping while in contact with a child or children of the household.

(5) Unpaid work for spouse and other household members, including domestic work, shopping for durable household goods; transportation assistance; medical care; house maintenance and repair assistance; care for disabled or ill and other unpaid work; all while the spouse is present. Also includes unpaid work for other relatives and friends, for example, meal preparation and cleanup, routine shopping, help and personal care to adults, medical care at home, house maintenance and repair assistance, transportation assistance, and care for disabled or ill; all done while friends or other relatives (excluding spouse and children) were present. In addition, this item includes unpaid work for self and other members of the household done with no one else present; for example, meal preparation and cleanup, routine shopping, washing, dressing, packing, medical care at home, automobile maintenance and repair, other repair services, and waiting for purchases or services.

Source: Total Work Accounts System and the General Social Survey, Statistics Canada.

As one might expect, care for "other family" was more prominent than care for children in the 45 to 64 age range. Among women with irregular work schedules, the percentage giving "other family" responsibilities for having those schedules rises gradually as age increases to reach a peak just below 10% in the 55-64 age group.

### **3.6. Concluding Comment**

The 1991 Survey of Work Arrangements allows one to study the relevance of family caring for the prevalence of part-time work from two very different viewpoints. The first viewpoint has been used for the analysis just summarized. It involves asking respondents direct questions about family reasons for their paid-work arrangements.

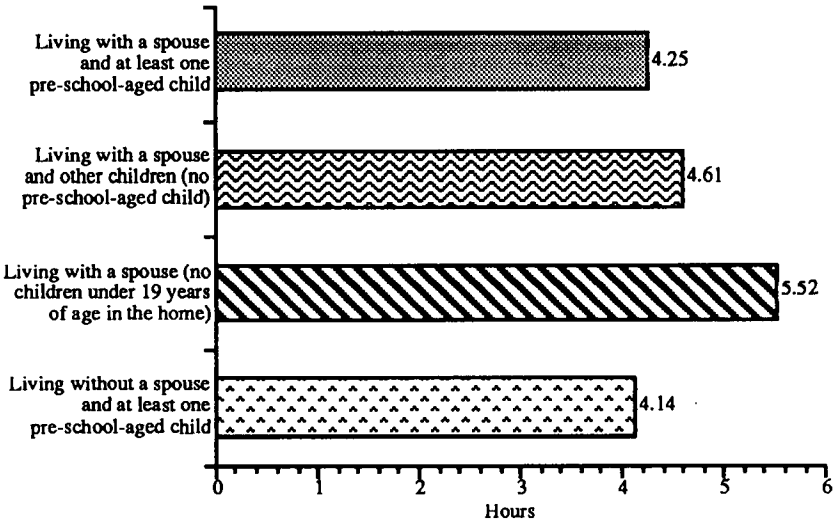
The second approach considers the universe of all persons with a job in the survey week, including those who were self-employed as business operators. A measure (scale) of the extent of devotion of one's time budget to paid work (called the "paid-work intensity") can then be devised using hours of paid work per week. In this scale, part-time work (work of less than 30 hours per week) could be one of the scale's categories.

Using this scale, one can conduct an explanatory analysis of the pattern of inter-group variation in the distribution of the population of workers over categories of the measure of paid-work intensity. The analysis should include indicators of degree of family-care responsibility, and several other relevant factors. The aim of the analysis would be to examine the pattern and the strength of association between paid-work intensity (the dependent variable) and indicators of degree of family-care responsibility.

A preliminary multivariate analysis along the lines just outlined has been done. The detailed results will be the subject of a separate publication (a report on the preliminary analysis is available from the



**Chart 3.10. Hours of Market Work Per Person Per Day Spent by Selected Groups of Women Aged 20-44 who Had a Full-Time Job, Canada, 1992**



Source: Total Work Accounts System and the General Social Survey, Statistics Canada.

effect on the paid-work intensity of women aged 20-44 who had a young child in the home and full-time job. The ones who had no spouse at home spent 4.1 hours per person per day (on a seven-day week basis) at paid work, a figure very similar to that for their female counterparts who had a spouse at home.

Thus both the direct analysis using respondents' stated reasons for having non-standard work arrangements and the indirect analysis that does not rely upon respondents' stated reasons support the basic hypothesis -- family-caring responsibilities form a key factor in explaining the prevalence of non-standard paid-work arrangements in the Canadian work force.

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author). In this analysis an effort has been made to take into account the statistical effects of measures of several variables such as the groups' compositions with respect to gender, education, occupation and industry. Also account was taken of a measure of their average access to help from family and friends with regard to meeting their family-caring obligations.

The analysis examined the extent to which inter-group differences in level of commitment of time to paid work might meaningfully be associated with indicators of inter-group variation in average level of family-caring responsibility. The results of the analysis are supportive of the findings reported above -- there are indications of substantial impacts of family-caring responsibility on the pattern of paid-work arrangements, even when several relevant variables are statistically controlled.

There is another body of recent data, the Total Work Accounts System (TWAS) that is based on the 1992 General Social Survey, which shows patterns consistent with this finding. Like the data used for the analysis just mentioned, this additional information does not involve respondents' reported perceptions of the influence of family responsibilities on their paid-work arrangements. From the TWAS one can estimate hours spent in paid work, per person per week, for persons who had a job in the reference week of the 1992 General Social Survey. Chart 3.10 shows estimates for groups with differing living arrangements that reflect varying levels of family-caring responsibility. This chart shows that the presence of a young child in the home has a marked association with the paid-work intensity of women who had a full-time job and were living with a spouse.

Married women aged 20-44 with a full-time job and a pre-school child in the home spent 4.2 hours per person per day (on a seven-day week basis) at paid work in 1992. This was 1.4 hours less per day than the corresponding figure for their female counterparts who had no child in the home. Moreover, the presence of a spouse had little

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## Chapter 4

### Key Unmet Information Needs\*

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**Cross-National Studies Research Program**  
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The data required in order to decide what steps to take in a firm or industry are different from that which society needs in order to identify policy questions. I feel that issue has not been emphasized adequately today although I feel certain that most persons here are aware of it. For example, if I wanted to decide what to do in my big company, I would commence with focus groups, then follow up with a survey, and lastly, establish task forces within my company. I would not look at either of the currently available datasets. If on the other hand, I represent the federation of trade unions, or the federation of industries, I would want to look at these datasets to start an agenda for inter-firm discussion.

That leads to something else which I believe is a big gap in the data discussed thus far. It strikes me that the Canadian discussion does not differentiate enough by *type* of workplace. Our book *The Responsive Workplace* reports a study of big firms, medium firms, and neighbourhood shops and it serves to differentiate between workplaces such as these. It makes an enormous difference in this area of policy. For instance, take the case of the mother who decides to work in a neighbourhood coffee shop so that her kids can drop by on the way home from school or so that she can get home easily in the case of an emergency; she will sacrifice in terms of salary and fringe benefits in exchange for flexibility and time. The employer

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\* Workshop paper prepared late in 1991 edited and shortened for publication.

who runs a very small establishment, by way of a coffee shop, is paying marginal wages but he will personally have better fringe benefits than the women working for him.

The employer with a large establishment will do other kinds of things that can be very successful and sometimes not so successful. For example, regarding the implementation of established benefits, the firm may offer flexible working hours but how carefully is this benefit observed? The firm may say that an employee has a right to five discretionary days but how much does the employee have to do to get access to those discretionary days and can the employee obtain clearance on time? We found that the companies that are rated very very high by employees, are the ones that have flexible administration of benefits, and companies rated low may have great benefits on paper but inflexible administration. We find that a lot of people are trading off salary and benefits for various reasons including flexibility, ability to spontaneously get help, and for proximity to their homes. Some women work part-time in order to have flexibility; some people work part-time because they manage financially with that and they enjoy the flexibility; and some people work part-time because they are unable to manage the household if they work full-time.

I would call for more understanding of the various family situations in greater detail, as well as differentiating workplaces in much more detail, and also differentiating whether you are making policy for the firm or policy for the society. These actions will determine the type of research you need to pursue.

Now a few words more about the children. You have a differentiation, not in the national survey but in the child care survey, of children under six years of age and the number of children. I would like to appeal to you to make children under three years of age the dividing point. It is the critical point in work-family issues. It's true that work-family issues are a problem for school kids and

latchkey kids, but the real issue is with children zero to three years of age. That is where the impact is greatest and that is the frontier of family policy in the industrial world.

I noticed with interest that Canada is beginning to experiment with extended parental leave. We monitor Europe and are constantly involved in studies of family policy in Western Europe and occasionally Eastern Europe. A few years ago, we began to notice that countries very concerned with gender equity and women's roles, were nonetheless suddenly adding to the statutory parental leave. Parental leave in European countries had been 14 weeks, 16 weeks, and in some very generous countries as much as five months and in Sweden, leave had already been extended to nine months. Suddenly these countries are extending parental leave from a minimum of one year to as much as three years. This is happening in conservative countries, radical countries, socialist countries, Catholic countries, Protestant countries and atheistic countries, all over Europe. So we spent some time, a couple of years ago, looking into it and we found that for some combinations of reasons countries are developing extended parental leave. The motives include worrying about low birth rates (1.3 in Italy, 1.3 in Spain, 1.4 in Japan), or the belief that in the first year or two of child rearing that a parent should be with the child since the child development research is least clear about impact of the alternatives. Governmental motives include high unemployment, concern about the cost of good child care, and numerous other reasons. They come together as a case for a one-, one and a half-, two-, or even three-year leave.

In Germany, after 14 weeks of mandatory maternity benefits and leave, one can receive a government payment from the time the child is six months old to a year and a half old (soon, two years). The payment is income tested, but they have discovered that most young couples are eligible to receive the payment because income testing is high enough and young couples normally don't earn a great deal of money.

In Sweden, they have increased the government payment from one and a half to two years of good income replacement at 90%, as compared to 60% presently in Canada. You can use part of the time if you want to go back to work sooner and translate it into a six-hour day until the child is eight years old in Sweden.

Finland has just done something even more generous, you have a choice of either collecting money and using it to buy child care, or collecting money and staying at home in order to take care of your own child, or taking the money and turning it into a shorter work day. Finland has a strange political situation where the Conservatives said let's help traditional families stay together by letting mothers stay at home, and the Socialists said let's help women go to work but deal with the tension between work and family life; and Finland's politics (prior to the U.S.S.R. break-up) have been such that you have to do both to get a governing coalition, so they did both. The result is choice for parents.

Similar to Finland, France has, by policy, decided to build the choice option in and they do a similar kind of thing but they have not implemented it as well.

In other words, this issue of work and family should pay attention to children and their ages and it should also pay attention to making the choices for parents real, if the parents should decide they want them.

Europe provides child care at the pre-school level for children aged three to six years. This represents between 80% to 95% of all children in most of Western Europe. However, some countries, like Italy and France, have an all day pre-school, so it is like child care, whereas some countries like Germany and Austria have a short day of care and one needs a supplement. But that is very important in analyzing this issue of how much child care is child care and whether it is statutorily available.



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In the United States, there is a big push on preschool rather than day care because that is the way in which we generate universal programs, and receive public funding. And in the long run, I believe that is the ultimate direction for Canada. It is only the anglo countries, that is the U.S., Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom that have really operated these dual systems and not created universal public coverage for the three- to six-year olds. These countries are suffering most from inadequate child care coverage given the female labour force participation rates that we now have.

In the U.S., 51% of mothers are back at work before the child is one year old. So we want a child care plan or something that will help mothers stay home for at least a year if they would like to do so. You could ask: "How can you do that without having a mommy track?" A mommy track refers to a differentiated career track, so we went to Sweden to find out the method used to develop a child care plan without having a mommy track. The Swedes said that they achieve it by part-time work and many other ways which protect the place of women in society. Have they really protected the place of women in society? The answer is "yes" concerning public employment and politics but not on a managerial level in private industry. So they pay a price for long leaves and a pattern of part-time work for many young mothers, but it's a price they're willing to pay.

A few odd final points:

1. I would think that in Canada you would want some of these analyses to use the immigration dimension to a greater extent than I have seen in your social survey or in your survey questionnaires. First of all, the immigration dimension is going to affect your demography very much. You're acting as though you are not going to make up for shortages of births by bringing immigrants into the country, but Canada is obviously doing that, as is Europe increasingly.

2. Secondly, given the cultural, ethnic and familial differences in Canada, if I were in a company that employed a great number of immigrants, I would want to look carefully at those differences when I think in terms of the work-family issue.

But if you are serious about data, then differentiate it by companies, by types of workplace and by detailed family structures, with particular attention to families with children zero to three years of age, those with children three to six years of age, and those with children above six years of age. I would differentiate it even further by the point at which statutory maternity leave ends.

## Chapter 5

# **The Meanings of Research Findings for Policies Relating to the Balancing of Job and Family Obligations: Building Bridges Between Research and Policy Making\***

**Sheila B. Kamerman, D.S.W., Co-director  
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Integrating work and family policy becomes an issue when both men and women are in the paid labour force out of need or preference, even when they have young children. Expectations and demands with regard to caregiving are high and personal expectations regarding quality of life are high. The problem is how to allocate the tasks and responsibilities for alleviating pressures or dealing with stressors. Who should do this? Should it be the caregivers, the employers, or government?

Integrating or re-integrating work and family life is an important issue only in advanced industrialized societies that are affluent and it reflects dramatic social changes with limited societal responses. Adequate responses are not cheap nor are they easy to institute. They involve intra-familial change, gender changes -- signifying changes for men as well as for women -- market responses, legislative changes, and workplace changes.

Thus far, most of the adaptation has been made by women, who continue to bear primary responsibility for integrating work and family life. And that is true even in the countries that have progressed the furthest in developing benefits and policies which deal with men as well as women. As long as these policies are

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\* Workshop paper prepared late in 1991 edited and shortened for publication.

elective, women are the ones who use the opportunities, and men only on a small scale, somewhat more in Sweden and somewhat more in the Nordic countries generally, but essentially women pick up most of the usage. The current cutting edge policy people in some of the European countries are trying to mandate the extended leave by saying that it will be extended only if men take it, but that has not yet passed in any country.

In recent years, there has been some response by the market. Legislative initiatives have been significant in some countries, but not in the Anglo-American countries. Canada has enacted more generous maternity and parenting legislation than all of the other Anglo-American countries. Responses by employers, unless mandated by law, have been even more limited.

Recruitment and retention of labour and improved productivity are pretty hard to document as outcomes of policies and are often rationales rather than the real factors in some places. In some other countries, ideology has played an important role. For example, in Nordic countries in general, they are trying very hard to create something that they call "gender equity" or as they would say in Sweden "gender equality".

What are the problems in Canada? What are the concerns that are directing attention to the issue of work and family? Having reviewed the material prior to attending this workshop, if Dr. Kahn and I were to ask you anything at all, we would say that we have read all of your pertinent material and we are still not sure what problem you are trying to solve.

Solutions involve defining the problem in a way that goes beyond the "women and work" issue, and therefore a larger constituency in support. Secondly, they involve allocating balance and carrying out tasks and responsibilities among women, family, employer and government. Who is going to do what? Who is going to carry out

what part first? Third, there is a need to recognize and respond to the distinction between “dual-earner” and “dual-career” families. It’s a different thing if you have a husband and wife working both at minimum salary jobs, as contrasted with two managers or two executives in the family. One cannot talk about them in the same way, but a lot of the work and family literature talks about them as though they are all dual-career families. Work is much less important in the dual-earner family in terms of emotional investment. Income replacement is needed if you provide alternatives by way of more extended leave for child care purposes or alternative ways of paying for child care. Others are career bent, and obviously one of the things that a modern society ought to do (if they really see the concern for quality of life as rather important) is to allow those sorts of choices to women and to men.

We need to know more about costs of some of these initiatives since they have been done in the occasional firm under occasional circumstances so it is difficult to know the real cost.

We need to know how we can change career opportunities for women and men so that the opportunities will be compatible with these concerns.

The usual agenda is one of alternative work schedules (flexible working hours, part-time work, part-time work with prorated benefits, and part-time work without benefits). That by the way is where you get countries that are leading edge and those that are not. In Germany they mandate benefits after 16 hours of work a week. In Sweden they mandate prorated benefits for part-time workers as national policy. Swedes receive benefits after 19 hours of work. In most American and Canadian firms, if you are working less than 35 hours there are no mandated benefits. It makes an enormous difference. Can you, as a worker can in Sweden or in Finland, take some of your extended parental leave (not all at one time) and prorate the time until the child is eight years old and work six-hour

days? Do you have a law that lets you work six hours a day with less salary, if you do so by taking some of your extended leave, turning it into six-hour working days? In these countries you can simply, by right, until the child is eight years old (as in Sweden) or four years old (as in Finland), work a shorter six-hour day and your employer must allow you to do so. I have not seen any studies of the effect of that on productivity, but Germany is a prosperous country, and Sweden until recently has been one of the most productive and prosperous countries with low unemployment, so maybe it can be done in a decent economy.

So the first area of focus is work schedules, alternatives and so forth. The second is leave policies, whether you are able to stay home longer if you want to be with your child and do you give up salary at a certain point but have your work protected.

All countries that have extended leave programs that follow maternity-disability leave are also extending job protection. Germany is presently extending it to two years and they would like to eventually extend it to three. (It has since been done -- with two years of income replacement -- ASCC.) Sweden protects jobs. Of all the countries that have extended child rearing leave programs, all of them have job protection from two to three years. Is it feasible? What does it do to the firm? Does it have to be the same job, a comparable job? Complicated questions arise when dealing with this issue.

Look for a moment at the working adult with a sick child or sick adult dependent. What do you do? This is a very important kind of issue. Or consider special things like starting school, attending a school play, etc. Most, if not all possible initiatives have been identified. There is no easy or cheap response, no magic. Many changes are needed by many actors, especially those in a position to affect large numbers of employees. Having reviewed all the material, I would say that Canada's goal should be to lead the Anglo-American countries. Canada is ahead of the U.S. in critical areas such as

parental leave and Canada and the U.S. are ahead of the U.K. on child care. The U.K. is just beginning to talk about this sort of agenda whereas Canada and the U.S. have talked about this for some time. So Canada could establish a work-family clearinghouse for example, to provide information to employers. It has been suggested but it is not likely to make a difference unless there is a statutory framework and some clear goals.

Now let me add a few more points concerning data. First, you don't really have a good national picture of what employers in medium- and large-sized firms are doing, except in so far as you are able periodically to extract some information from the population studies.

Every year, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes a report on employee benefits in medium- and large-sized firms (which they must report to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in compliance with the labor laws). In this report there is good coverage and we are able to get a clear picture of what employers are doing in the medium- and large-sized firms. Excluded from this report are the "mom and pop shops" but nonetheless this information is useful.

Secondly, I am very impressed with the value of time use studies in this field and I gather that you have something similar in the National Child Care Survey. The best illustrations of time use studies derive from work done in Finland where every two or three years there are marvelous time use studies which cover a very large sample. Time use studies are also prevalent in Hungary which is where time use studies began and where they have continued to use this type of study.

With time use studies, one is able to look at the families and actually see how much time the parents are at home together at the same time, how much time they are home with the kids after school. One gets a sense also of the difference between the workload of the man and the workload of the woman in the family.

Finns will tell you that if you take all the homework done by the father and all the homework done by the mother and all the market work done by each in a two-worker family, you are able to tell how many minutes more the mother is working daily in comparison to the father and you also have information about different types of families, and for different income levels. So I would recommend time use studies when you are talking about data in the long run.

Our Census Bureau does something which is relevant to this area of study and I think I should mention it. The first presentation today based on the General Social Survey has some useful material but there is no reason (since you are constantly sampling your population), not to do something similar to our Survey of Income and Program Participation. Our Census Bureau runs a panel study (the same people are interviewed periodically -- to get a picture of change). In other words, every quarter they go out and they add people and those people stay on for two-year cycles and then people drop off. It is a large sample of approximately 80,000 persons. As a result of this study, we get all the public programs that these persons use, all the private programs that they have access to, their income, their occupation, and family characteristics. So one can prepare numerous special analyses with a national sample like this one oriented to studies of change.



## Chapter 6

### **Job and Family Issues in the Canadian Context: Themes in the Workshop Discussions\***

Edited by Leroy O. Stone  
(based on transcripts from the workshop  
"Work Life, Family Life: Innovations in  
Human Resource Management")

A number of themes struck in the workshop discussions are summarized below because they include ideas of enduring value that could help to stimulate progress in this field over the years ahead. The text below is comprised of edited summaries of the remarks by the syndicate rapporteurs.

#### **6.1. Issues of Job and Family**

What is our problem? Our problem, in essence, is that there are children without adequate care and there is an elder care crisis in many of our cities. This was the view of one syndicate, which discussed inverting the pyramid such that, instead of talking about the family, and the parents, we should start focussing on the children.

A similar position emerged from another syndicate, where members expressed the view that in some respects, we were dealing with a much bigger issue. The group considered aspects of our culture and the kind of society being developed in our country. This prompted us to *question whether our society places sufficient value on children and family life*. If it does not, it is important to consider what steps we have to take in order to ensure that the colleague or employee who makes a decision that 5 o'clock is the end of the workplace day, in order to exercise his/her family responsibilities is not penalized in

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\* Opinions expressed in this chapter were those of the workshop participants. They do not reflect views of Statistics Canada.

the corporate culture. It is believed that in some government departments, or in some businesses these departures are perceived as a lack of interest in the job and in future advancement.

Yet another syndicate approached the question of 'what is our problem' by considering a variety of perspectives.

1. The company's perspective: When companies in Canada first really started to look at the job-family issue and job-family programming, our economy was hot. In Toronto the unemployment rate was 3%. Companies were competing for valuable, skilled employees. Recruitment and retention were the key issues.

By the way, throughout the recession, we have found generally that once a job-family program was implemented in an organization, in the private sector at any rate, there has not been a pull out of it despite the tough times.

2. Health and well-being of children, families and individuals: Job-family programming means trying to maintain or enhance the health and well-being of our children, the health of ourselves and the health of our families. Therefore, as we continue to look at this issue down the road, the health and well-being of children and families must always be kept in the forefront.

Thus, *one of the major challenges facing organizations is building a family-friendly culture or environment.* A change in an organization's culture is a key step. It is great that some organizations make job-family benefits available; but if employees cannot equitably access the benefits then there are some difficulties.

More than women's issues and more than child-care questions: It is important not to set too narrow a definition on issues of job and family; not to view them as issues of one gender or another; not even

to view job and family issues as child care or elder care. One must look *broadly* at the whole concept of workers with family responsibilities. One impetus for a focus on women's studies was the recognition that women were frequently "invisible", in terms of the kinds of data traditionally being collected in social science. However, when it comes to issues of job and family, it is men who are often "invisible" in terms of the recognition of their role. Perhaps the way to frame our concern is to cast it in the caregiving mode. Caregiving as a generic cross-gender kind of issue may get a better response than if it is presented as a woman's problem.

Need for a broader definition of "family": The term "family" also needs to be more broadly defined. Inherent in such a broad definition is the imperative to avoid pitting interest groups against one another within the same workplace context. For example, one can easily foresee situations in which some workers lobby successfully for a child care facility in the workplace and then find that co-workers without children, but with other kinds of needs in relation to job and family, are disregarded by the employer who points to the child care facility as the sole workplace response to family issues. Instead of focussing attention on only one type of family issue (and related solution), more appropriate workplace responses are family leave programs, or work at home programs. When implemented, such programs can be accessed by different constituencies in ways that reflect the idiosyncrasies of their situation. For example, in terms of a work at home program, people who have responsibilities for children, or for an elder, or for a dependent adult, or other type of family responsibility can utilize that particular program and not feel that it is targeted to one interest group rather than another.

Benefits and costs of workplace innovations: The benefits and costs of workplace innovations ought to be more clearly and comprehensively defined. For example, who is actually benefitting from workplace or work environment innovations? Is it just the

company or the employers? Perhaps the larger society would benefit from these innovations as well. Insofar as the costs for innovations are concerned, perhaps the developmental costs, which are up-front costs, might be thought of as infrastructure, akin to highways and roads. These innovations may enhance productivity. With greater productivity, the tax base would be increased. Consequently, there would be a payback to the government or the society at large for the initial investment.

## **6.2. Attitudes and Practices of Management**

Central to this whole issue of balancing job and family issues are the attitudes of managers and supervisors. In essence, the highest priority in an organization -- even preceding the introduction of innovative family sensitive programs and policies -- is to have supervisors/managers, who had either the training or the sensitivity to be able to work with employees on these issues and to be able to facilitate employees' access to appropriate benefits. The most innovative policies and programs may be in jeopardy if managers/supervisors fail to make them accessible to employees or if they promote the notion that utilization of them signifies lack of loyalty and commitment. If one does not have a manager willing to exercise discretion and show the necessary flexibility, then it is not helpful to have an extensive list of employee benefits.

While more information may be needed on the links between work and family life, a stronger need may exist in the area of communications. For example, if a federal government department has come up with a policy, that policy ought to be *widely communicated* to other parts of the government and elsewhere.

The legislative aspect should not be overlooked. A regulation that sets the right tone can help us make changes within organizations. However, policies and regulations are not everything. The manager's

and supervisor's attitudes on this question are of paramount importance. If there is some leeway that the manager does not know of or does not feel can be used, no change will be detectible.

### **6.3. Data and Analysis Concerns**

**Caution in international comparisons:** We have to be cautious with international comparisons, particularly in looking at the industrial composition of female employment. This can differ radically and we must not make cognitive leaps in judgment. For example, Canada and Sweden and others are worlds apart in terms of where women are in the labour force.

**Making global data relevant to local situations:** Many individual employers are reluctant to generalize from global data when looking at their own situations. Such data, however (national data or data from other studies), have the potential to guide them in useful ways regarding their decision making about job-family programming.

Employers who are thinking about implementing change in their organizations should really undertake to get a demographic profile of their own workforce. This is very important when decisions are being made about what forms of benefits or programs to offer staff. Before implementing child care or elder care benefits, it is important to know whether or not there is the potential for their use. Information on the age structure of the workforce, among many other variables, is important.

Thus, there is a need for both types of data -- the general and the specific data on an organization's workforce.

**Quantifying costs and benefits:** We need data on the costs of programs for various organizations. We also need information about the benefits to companies of various job-family initiatives.

Although there appears to be a demand for this data, there are questions regarding the reliability of cost-benefit data analyses when the focus is job-family issues. How valuable is such data? It is a very complex issue. For example, it is very difficult to say that by implementing program X we received a company productivity increases to level of Y. It is difficult because there are so many other variables that impact on productivity.

Some companies have attempted to address the cost-benefit issue by collecting data which attempts to answer the question "what do we lose by not providing such initiatives".

Elder care, an area where data are weak: The National Child Care Survey is an excellent initiative. However, we indicated that we would like to see something similar done with respect to elder care. Our data needs are very strong in this area.

Information in corporate data banks: While there is little or no information on personal circumstances in departmental data banks, there is a great need for such data banks because when projects are being planned in this field, statistics and figures are needed to demonstrate and support recommendations. Unfortunately, the most accurate information we receive comes from opinion polls. Many employees hesitate to volunteer personal information (on their family structure or other) because they are not sure how the information will be used. Employees are, for example, afraid that if they revealed the fact that they are having difficulty managing their family lives, their reputations would suffer and employers would hesitate to hire or promote them.

The cost of information is also an issue: Our information banks are certainly expensive to operate and it is often difficult to make a cost-benefit analysis. However, there have been a large number of low-cost innovations that could be carried out in the present context. For example, there already are organizations that specialize in

gathering data on areas such as day care centres or on service for the elderly. These data banks are easily accessible and can be put at the disposal of our employees so they have the information they need.

On getting more balanced research: The points that surfaced in respect to research found participants expressing concern for a balanced approach. This balance has a gender dimension and one should not only be looking at women's tension, or the tension of mothers, but also ensure that any research provides information on the situation for men or for fathers. If researchers do not focus on male and female roles, they end up perpetuating the stereotype that job and family responsibilities are primarily women's responsibilities, or women's issues.





## **Appendix**

### **Introduction to the 1991 Work Arrangements Survey and the 1992 General Social Survey**

#### **Survey of Work Arrangements**

The Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA) was conducted in November 1991 as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey. It was designed to gather data on an aspect of paid work about which little is known from large-scale surveys -- day-to-day and week-to-week work routines. This has become an important matter in human resources management because non-traditional work arrangements have become more common.

“The SWA not only gathered information on workers' schedules, but is also collected data on other work arrangements such as shift work, flexible schedules, home based work, temporary jobs, paid overtime, and multiple jobholding. Combined with data on the personal and family characteristics of workers, the SWA database offers a wealth of detail on these issues, as well as on the broader topic of balancing work and family responsibilities.”  
(Siroonian, 1993.)

The SWA questions were directed to paid workers only (persons who had an employer for whom they worked for remuneration, usually a wage or salary). The exclusion of self-employed and unpaid family workers will tend to produce an under-estimate of the overall prevalence of some unusual work arrangements such as moonlighting and working at home (Siroonian, 1993). [N.B. The database created from the survey includes questions from the main labour force survey, to which the SWA was a supplement. This study has used information from these questions to deal with a broader universe of workers than that covered in the SWA.]

“In November 1991, about 10.3 million employed persons were paid workers in their main job. Furthermore, of the 516,000 workers reporting more than one job that month, approximately 360,000 described their second job as paid employment.” (Siroonian, 1993.)

The development of the survey required the construction of operational definitions for a number of relatively unused concepts in the analysis of labour force data. The following are selected notes about some of these concepts (quoted from Siroonian, 1993):

Flexible schedule: A flexible schedule allows workers to choose their starting and ending time within the limits established by management.

Full-time: Full-time employment describes the work status of persons who usually work 30 hours or more per week, plus those who usually work less than 30 hours but consider themselves to be employed full-time (e.g., airline pilots).

Hours worked: Hours worked includes breaks but excludes lunches.

Part-time: Part-time employment describes the work status of persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week, excluding those who consider themselves full-time but work less than 30 hours per week (e.g., airline pilots).

Reference week: The reference week is the entire calendar week covered by the Labour Force Survey each month. It is usually the week containing the 15th day of the month. The interviews are conducted during the following week, called the “survey week”, but the labour force status determined is that of the reference week.

Work schedules:

Regular day-time: In a regular day-time schedule, work begins in the morning and ends in the afternoon. The standard “9 to 5” is included in this category.

Regular evening shift: In this schedule, work starts at about 3 or 4 p.m. and is over by midnight.

Regular night or graveyard shift: In this schedule, work starts at or around midnight and finishes around 8 a.m.

Rotating shift: Rotating shift is a combination of the above shifts, provided the shifts rotate on a regular basis and one shift does not predominate over the other(s).

Split shift: Split shift refers to two or more distinct periods of work with a period of free time (other than a lunch break) between work periods.

On call: For workers on call, hours vary substantially from one week to the next. Workers are asked to work as the need arises, not on a pre-arranged schedule.

Irregular schedules: Workers with an irregular schedule have no regular schedule, but one that is usually arranged a week or more in advance.

The Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA) was administered in November 1991 to a sub-sample of the dwellings in the Labour Force Survey (LFS) sample. Therefore, its sample design is closely tied to that of the LFS. (For a more detailed description of the LFS sample design, consult the publication, *Methodology of the Canadian Labour Force Survey, 1984-1990.*)

The monthly LFS sample consists of approximately 73,000 dwellings, from which the following categories of dwellings were excluded: dwellings found to be vacant, dwellings demolished or converted to non-residential uses, dwellings containing only ineligible persons, dwellings under construction, and seasonal dwellings. About 63,000 dwellings occupied by one or more eligible persons remained in the sample. From these dwellings, LFS information is obtained for approximately 122,000 civilians aged 15 or over.

The LFS employs a "panel design" that divides the entire monthly sample of dwellings into six panels, or rotation groups, of

approximately equal size. Each of these panels represents, by itself, the entire LFS population. All dwellings in a rotation group remain in the LFS sample for six consecutive months after which time they are replaced (rotated out of the sample) by a new panel of dwellings.

This rotation pattern ensures that the sample of dwellings reflects ongoing changes in the current housing stock and minimizes problems of non-response or respondent burden that would occur if households were to remain in the sample for longer than six months. It also has the statistical advantage of providing a common sample base for short-term, month-to-month comparisons of LFS characteristics.

Because of the rotation-group feature, supplementary surveys may be readily conducted using the LFS design, while employing less than the full-size sample.

The Survey of Work Arrangements employed three of the six rotation groups in the November 1991 LFS sample. For the SWA survey, the coverage of the LFS was modified to include all eligible members of the household 15 to 69 years of age.

### **General Social Survey**

The General Social Survey is a national sample of the population aged 15 years of age and older, excluding:

1. Residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories;
2. Full-time residents of institutions;
3. Households without telephones.

In 1992 the sample size was about 12,765 households, with a response rate of 77% (9,815 households). The sample was evenly distributed over 12 months to counterbalance seasonal variation in the data gathered. Within each month, it was equally divided over the

days of the week. The focus of data gathering was respondents' use of time. Respondents completed a diary of their activities over a 24-hour period. Included was information about the person(s), if any, with whom they were in contact in connection with the activities they listed. All the edited activities are to be found on an Episode File that contains over 190,000 records (one for each activity). Other files have one record for each respondent, and provide respondent attributes along with summaries of the information on the Episode File. [The Total Work Accounts System requires the creation of a new research-oriented file that involves merging data among the three main files of the 1992 GSS database.]

The main purpose of the General Social Survey (GSS) is: first, to gather data on social trends in order to monitor changes in Canadian society over time; and secondly, to provide information on specific policy issues of current or emerging interest.

The GSS employs two different Random Digit Dialing (RDD) sampling techniques -- the Elimination of Non-Working method and the Waksberg method. Interviewers dialed randomly selected telephone numbers and completed a Selection Control Form (GSS 5-1) for each one. When they contacted a private household, they enumerated all the members of the household on this form, and then randomly selected and interviewed one member aged 15 or more.

In carrying out the sampling, each of the 10 provinces was divided into strata or geographic areas. Generally, for each province one stratum represented the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of the province and the other non-CMA areas. There were a number of exceptions to this rule:

- Prince Edward Island has no CMA and so did not have a CMA stratum
- Montreal and Toronto were each separate strata.

Approximate measures of sampling variability, in the form of tables, have been developed for the users. These tables were produced using the coefficient of variation formula based on a simple random sample, with an adjustment factor due to the complex sample design used. The Design Effect for an estimate is the actual variance for the estimate (taking into account the design that was used) divided by the variance that would result if the estimate had been derived from a simple random sample. The Design Effect used to produce the Approximate Variance Tables has been determined by first calculating Design Effects for a wide range of characteristics and then choosing among these a conservative value that will not give a false impression of high precision. Guidelines for identification of numbers with high levels of unreliability (i.e. high coefficient of variation), based on the approximate tables, have been published in the User's Documentation.

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## Glossary of Terms

- *child-oriented work of economic value*

This is work of economic value that would be considered as being part of normal child care *or* whose outputs are used by the children with whom the person is in contact while the work is being done. For example, meal preparation and meal clean-up in the presence of one's children comprise, at least partly, child-oriented work of economic value. See the discussion of "work of economic value" below.

- *family-friendly job environment*

This phrase refers to working conditions, on the job, that are designed to help employees minimize conflict between their obligations to their employers and those to their families.

The pertinent conditions might include flexible leave policies, provisions for employees to control their times of starting and stopping work on the job within certain bounds, counselling services or access to these services provided by parties external to the employer, scheduling of meetings and training periods with due regard to employees' family obligations, etc.

- *irregular work schedule*

The work schedule can vary from one week to another. The schedule for a given week is usually arranged several days ahead of that week. (See Siroonian, 1993, p. 70.)

- *flexible working arrangements*

This phrase refers to a variety of features of attachments to one's job where an employee is allowed to vary her/his input to suit personal constraints that may arise from sources outside the place of work.

(Note: this is not one of the technical terms used in the official documentation of the Survey of Work Arrangements -- Siroonian, 1993.) One example of such variation arises in connection with the times of starting and stopping spells of paid work or the place where paid work is done (at home, e.g.).

- *job-family interference*

Job-family interference takes place when job obligations and familial obligations create demands for incompatible uses of the *same* time slot (e.g., being called to an important meeting for the same time period in which one had expected to pick up one's child at school).

- *job-family conflict*

When one's family obligations and job-obligations create competing and incompatible demands for different uses of the same time slot in a person's daily life there is job-family conflict. Although this specification refers to a single time slot, e.g., Tuesday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. when a person was torn between a feeling of obligation to stay at a late meeting on the job and another of going home to help a child with home work, it is most often used in a way that there seems to be no reference to any specific time slot. This is normal usage of the concept, as long as it is appreciated that statistical identification and measurement of job-family conflict will require such a specification. The general feeling of being in conflict due to competing job and family obligations is called "job-family *tension*" in this text.

- *job-family tension*

In this text, this is a psychic state. It is not an objectively identifiable state of affairs. See the comments about "job-family conflict".



- *paid work arrangements*

The concept of paid-work arrangements, as used in this text has several dimensions. They include the frequency, duration, timing and location of work episodes over a given week. Frequency refers to the number of separate work episodes, and the duration of an episode is its length in time. Timing refers to when episodes start and when they end. Location refers to whether the work is done at a place away from home or within the home premises. Home premises include the dwelling unit and any nearby structures or land that may be used by the home occupants for business purposes. (Note: this is not one of the technical terms used in the official documentation of the Survey of Work Arrangements -- Siroonian, 1993.)

- *non-standard paid work arrangements*

These are aspects of a paid work arrangement that fall outside the statistical norm for that arrangement. For example, in this text working at a job full-time is considered the statistical norm with respect to the duration of job episodes. As a result, part-time work is called a non-standard working arrangement. This does not deny the fact that part-time work may be becoming more common in our society. It only alleges that it is not yet the statistical norm as regards duration of paid-work episodes. (The concept of *duration* is explained above.)

Perhaps a less controversial example can be cited with regard to the timing of job episodes -- when they start and end. Job episodes, for those working outside their homes, typically start some time between 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Those starting at 11:30 a.m. would be considered non-standard.

- *paid-work work intensity*

This is the extent of devotion of one's time budget to paid work. A person's daily time budget is 24 hours. The extent of devotion of that person's time budget to paid work can be expressed as a percentage of her/his 24-hour day.

- *role overload*

When a person is unable to carry out her/his various roles adequately or with a sense of comfort because of the total amount of time they require, the person is said to have role overload. The person may perceive that an excessively large portion of her or his time budget is being spent in carrying out her/his many roles.

- *supports*

This term, as used in this text, refers to various kinds of assistance that persons might receive. The context here is usually one where the assistance refers to tasks involved with meeting family obligations -- e.g., assistance with baby-sitting. Supports may arise from formal sources (e.g., a child care agency) as well as from informal ones (e.g., a spouse).

- *time crunch*

This term is adopted from the work of Judith Frederick (1993). It refers to one's sense of having insufficient time to meet one's various obligations. Frederick speaks of people having a sense of being under "pressure of lack of time" (Frederick, 1993, p. 7).

- *work of economic value*

Work of economic value exists if an activity produces an identifiable output whose consumption may be said to have utility for the

consumer and the output can be purchased in the marketplace. The output does not have to be currently sold in labour markets. It only needs to have the *practical possibility* of being sold there. A feature of this concept is its coverage of a large class of outputs for which the work effort takes place outside paid labour markets, but where similar outputs are either already being sold in paid labour markets or would have to be purchased there were it not for their availability from non-market sources (e.g., family members). (For related discussion see Stone, Chica and Jones, 1994.)

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ISBN 0-660-15436-6

89-5400XPE94001



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