

Family-supportive policies: the employer-sponsored child-care approach as an influence of the relationship between work and family outcomes

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Abstract

This study investigates the potential benefits of implementing a family-supportive policy, such as employer-sponsored child care, to enhance organizational policies. There is a lack of present research on this topic, and this paper contributes a consideration of the availability of organizational policies relating to employees' work-family balance and work-related outcomes in a nontraditional-hour workplace. It examines the existing literature and household employment configurations, including single and dual-career employees making strategic child care decisions. The Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory provides a model for considering the independent variables of household employment configuration, use of familial care, and dependent-care profile. The FLO²R² Plan uses the findings to provide an institutionalized mechanism that encompasses the creation of new family-friendly policies.

Keywords: organizational policies, work-related outcomes, family-supportive policy, employer-sponsored child care, FLO²R² Plan, and employees' work-family balance.

Introduction

Changes in family structure and in the number of dual-earning parents have altered employment patterns, the composition of the work force, and the roles that policy developers need to perform in their organization (Brandon & Temple, 2006). The new 24/7 economy has been noticed by organizations through the growing need of their consumers, the prospective highly-qualified employee who is seeking a "meaningful" organization to work for, and their competitors (Brandon et al., 2006). Indeed, a growing number of employers know that family and work demands often conflict, and that this conflict can affect the organization. The concern is that the difficulties found in juggling family and work responsibilities can negatively affect the employee's performance. Therefore, organizations have found themselves developing family-supportive policies, such as child care packages, to reduce friction between family responsibilities and work demands (Brandon et al., 2006).

Using the Current Population Survey Data for 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2001, documented changes are evident in the income-earning balance of couples. In 1970, 90% of couples was defined as having a conventional arrangement in which the husband was the sole provider; in 2001, however, the one quarter of husbands were still seen as the sole provider, while 24% of wives shared equally in providing the income. This demonstrates a movement toward mutual economic dependency where husbands and wives depend on each other to co-manage their lives (Nock, 2001). This dramatic change in the 1970s and 1980s was from the economic restructuring that diminished employment opportunities and wages of less educated workers, men in particular, and the Civil Rights movement that enhanced the employment and wage opportunities for women (Nock, 2001).

With the changes in family structure, there is a work and family domain that needs to be ameliorated (Raabe & Gessner, 1988). Ameliorative efforts to lessen the negative effects between work and family are important as an institutional support in the workplace to facilitate more successful functioning by employed parents at work (Raabe & Gessner). The support provided through family-supportive policies is seen as a manifestation of an organization's supportive commitment (Nock, 2001).

The organization's family-supportive policy response is due to the economic effects on work-related outcomes, such as tardiness, turnover, absenteeism, and productivity. The organization's policy response to the friction between family responsibilities and work demands demonstrates the assumption that this policy will benefit the organization and the employee. However, organizations have found that providing a family-supportive policy is appealing but lacks empirical verification (Brandon et al., 2006). It is difficult to place an experiential value on a written policy in which only a few interested employees will participate due to their family needs. Not only is a family-supportive policy a subtle resource, it is difficult to determine an experiential value without concrete economic effects defined by the organization. Few studies have established that employees' work-related outcomes are related to such provisions. Indeed, few studies have possessed a representative sample of different organizations to investigate that family-supportive policies benefit employees and organizations. Furthermore, there is no current national-level workplace data available that can address the importance of a family-supportive policy such as an employer-sponsored child care system (Brandon et al., 2006).

With the definition change of *family*, throughout the decades, there is a need for employers to redefine their family-supportive policies in order to attract and retain qualified employees. The traditional family definition of 30 years ago that consisted of a husband who worked, the mother who stayed at home, and the two children is now seen in less than 5.2% of United States households (United States Department of Labor, 2006). Furthermore, 73 million employees in the United States are presently in a dual-income relationship (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006). From those 73 million employees in the United States, the trepidation of how to balance family and careers is a concern that parents find themselves managing more than their work.

According to the United States Department of Labor (2006), the proportion of families that were dual-income couples and had children under the age of 6 years rose from 52.7% in 2005 to 54.6% in 2006 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006). Although this might not seem like a big percentage change between 2005 and 2006 (1.9%), it is important to acknowledge and respond to employees' potential interest to stay in an organization for a long time, especially in an organization that is willing to generate fundamental responses to their employees' needs.

A system balanced between work demands and parenting demands must be in place to provide enough durability to those employees involved in child care decisions and stability between career and home. When the employee is concerned with child care during working hours, the quality of the employee's work productivity may be affected. Furthermore, the organization may observe increases in absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover due to the lack of policies that address parenting demands on employees.

Despite undeniable reasons why organizations should support their employees, the majority of United States organizations have not responded to the needs of working parents with children who are not of school age (Friedman, 2000). To reduce the amount of conflict experienced by working parents and their organizations experiencing an increase in absenteeism, tardiness, turnover rates, and declining productivity, developing a family-supportive policy, such

as an employer-sponsored child care system, may become an effective policy to address the above issues.

Taking one component of establishing a family-friendly organization, such as an employer-supported child care policy during the employees' work hours, would be an initiative that would assist the employee (Scanzoni, 1992). Earlier studies have focused on a limited range of family-supportive policies and were conducted in a time where the dual-income earning population was not as predominant as it is now (Scanzoni). Mintzberg and Quinn (1991) stated that, as the field of the world is continually changing, new issues must constantly be addressed—not only as the working population domain changes but also as the effect of employment unto family changes. The available studies do not explore relationships between the current steady rise of the family dual-income domain and the possible competitive advantage that an organization may obtain by developing a family-supportive policy that may retain employees with parenting demands (Haas, 1982).

In the study conducted by Gilbert and Voorhis (2003), 50 organizations with over 65,000 employees were surveyed on the number of existing family-supportive policies they currently had, the number of employees that were in a dual-income relationship, and the numbers of absenteeism and turnover the organization was experiencing. The study found 3% of the organizations had some form of family-supportive policy; however, the policies had not been updated since the 1980s. Those same organizations were experiencing a 5% turnover rate, and 7% of employees was absent. The authors further continued to obtain household demographics of the participants and found that 8% of the employees was in a dual-income relationship. Those organizations with no history of a family-supportive policy experienced a 3.5% turnover rate, 12% of employees was absent, and 13% was in a dual-income relationship (Gilbert et al., 2003). The reasons for absence among the employees were not known at the time of the study.

According to Glass and Estes (1999), rigorous evaluations on organizational policies designed to reduce work-family demands and the lack of research about the most efficacious and cost-effective family supportive policies are the reasons why organizations are faced with negative work outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and decreased productivity. If organizations concentrate on conceptualizing and developing policies that respond to the employees' family needs, those organizations will have the ability to implement, review, and evaluate the best policy designed to assist employed parents. Organizations will then be able to conclude if the family supportive policy will most likely solve the dilemmas faced by the employed parent and if they as organizations have the capacity to adopt strategic plans to continue with the policy.

The need to keep qualified employees will force organizations to rethink family-friendly policies, recruitment efforts, work schedules, and benefit plans in order to adjust to the contemporary workforce whose lifestyles are different from those addressed by traditional work policies. Friedman (2000) found that 41% of the companies surveyed in a study believed that work-family conflicts posed a threat to their company's objectives and retention because there was a lack of family-friendly policies.

About 14% of United States firms acknowledge the necessity of attracting highly qualified employees, acknowledge the change of the work-family structure, and provide child care benefits as part of their benefits (Gilbert, 2005). Kossek and Nichol (1990) found that employees who favored on-site child care as a benefit did indeed influence their employees' decisions to stay in the organization. Furthermore, those employees who utilized the on-site child care reported the ease of managing workloads and family responsibilities. Therefore, it is

incumbent on the organizations' management and policy developers to provide resources their employees can utilize in order to enhance performance and loyalty.

Purpose

It is important to realize the possible family-supportive policies organizations may find themselves implementing require an enormous amount of research, such as researching employee demographics and design solutions, in order to be successful. Although there are many family-friendly policies, it is important to pay close attention to an employer-sponsored child care approach based on the examination of employee needs.

In addition, no comprehensive, national survey of employer-supported child care programs has been conducted since 1982 (Burud, Aschbacher, & McCrosky, 1984). There have been a few small studies that have contributed to the knowledge of employer-sponsored child care policies and their effects, but most of the studies have focused on organizations with some type of policy already in existence based on a package benefit plan and not as an employee need (Aurebach, 1990). What is lacking is a study examining the employees who want to have a family-friendly policy based on their fundamental needs, and the employers who would like to take a proactive role in developing and implementing a policy. This is necessary for making any type of truthful generalizations about the likelihood of having family-friendly policies, such as employer-sponsored child care programs, and their implications on employees and work-related outcomes.

The purpose of this paper is twofold: (1) to enhance current research by examining the linkage of a family-friendly policy to major work-related variables that influence an organization's productivity (absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, and productivity); and (2) to provide business practitioners with a deeper understanding of why it is important to implement family-friendly policies by providing an institutional mechanism, the FLOOR Plan, that will influence decision making and the potential impact these policies have on an organization.

Non-Traditional Work Hours

The impact of nontraditional work hours for employees is a factor that carries through the work-family conflict domain. It is the changing configuration of working hours that increasingly challenges the employees' household decisions and their commitment to their organization (Preston, Rose, Norcliffe, & Holmes, 2000). The impact of the employee's schedule on the family domain will shape the employee's strategy with regards to child care and work-related outcomes. "Non-traditional work hours refers to a job schedule that is other than the standard hours between 8:00am [and] 5:00pm, and/or a schedule that consists of a non-standard work week that is not between Monday [and] Friday" (Grosswald, 2003, p. 45).

The study conducted by Brough, O'Driscoll, and Kalliath (2005) found employees utilizing organizational resources predicted positive outcomes with job and family satisfaction, which in turn greatly influenced the positive spillover to both work and family domains. *Spillover* "is defined as the reciprocal tension between the roles and obligations of being a parent or a spouse, on the one hand, and an employee, on the other" (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1994, p. 1023). The authors further proved that, in the relationships between the demographics of the employees and work-family spillover variables, the presence of dependents and work-family

conflict increased the employees' experiences of both work-family conflict and family-work spillover.

Family-Supportive Policies

As noted earlier, there has been little to no current research conducted on the benefits of a family-friendly policy, such as an employer-sponsored child care program, for the current employee. However, with the presence of family-supportive policies in organizations, researchers have found positive relationships toward the employees (O'Driscoll, Poelmans, Spector, Kalliath, Allen, Cooper, & Sanchez, 2003). The presence of these policies found increased satisfaction with work-family balance (Ezra & Deckman, 1996), reduced work-family conflict (Goff, Mount, & Jamison, 1990), increased commitment to the organization (Grover & Crooker, 1995), reduced turnover rates (Grover et al., 1995), increased job retention (Rodgers & Rodgers, 1989), and lowered job strain (Rodgers & Rodgers).

Work and family researchers are advocating the introduction of more family-supportive programs in the workplace and are extracting the variables that would affect employers' responsiveness to the development of family-supportive policies (Frone & Yardley, 1996). One of the many variables consistent with other research is the distinction of gender. Reviews of the literature make distinctions between women who are considered the "bread winners" as a distinct finding to developing an employer-sponsored child care policy (Major, 2001).

This paper will not make a gender distinction in the findings for an employer-sponsored child care system to be adopted by employers to reduce absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover and increase productivity. Little attention has been paid to the household employment configurations, such as single and/or dual-career employees who have to make strategic child care decisions. Furthermore, this paper will not provide a step-by-step plan to develop and implement an employer-sponsored child care program. It will provide organizations with the basic framework for a policy that will substantiate an employer-sponsored child care program.

By promoting the possibility of a well-designed family-supportive policy in an organization, there will be a beneficial influence on employed parents by improving work-related outcomes, advancing the development of positive work-family spillover, and reducing costs for organizations associated with work-related outcomes. It is important for organization leaders who are competing for the highly qualified employee to understand they are competing for the best employee who is willing to work for the organization that will meet his/her basic needs.

There is little to no current understanding of and research about child care needs across the different employee demographics, such as single and dual-earning couples. This disparity could be attributed to the changing definition of family and those family members who have joined the employment arena. Understanding how working mothers and fathers share in the parenting of their children is important because of the demands that juggling work and family responsibilities places on dual-earning couples (Ehrenberg, Gearing-Small, Hunter, & Small, 2001). However, it is not just understanding the demands that are placed on parents that is important; it is also the implications of how a new policy will influence the demands placed on parents in relationship to work, family, and the organization.

Value of an Employer-Sponsored Child Care Program

While it may be difficult to place value on the employees' needs as a function of the organization's success, it may be valuable to assess the worth of an employer-sponsored child care plan as a component of an employee benefit package, future public policy, and/or organizational success (Galinsky, 1989). It is difficult to quantify the value of an employee benefit, such as an employer-sponsored child care program, because most organizations do not offer this benefit due to the difficulty of calculating the benefit versus the cost. Looking at the actual cost of implementing a policy does not provide substantive evidence to prove that an employer-sponsored child care policy works. There has to be a myriad of actual and potential costs with fiscal and empirical value (Connelly, Degraff, & Willis, 2004).

Connelly et al. (2004) utilized the Contingent Valuation Method for calculating the value of an employer-sponsored child care program. The authors offered a method to calculate the value of an employer-sponsored child care benefit to employees that was based on origins in welfare economics. The authors' concept of developing the formula involved "the amount of money necessary to equal an individual's indirect utility across two states" (Connelly et al., p. 117). The contingent valuation allows the derivation of the dollar value to become a valued good through direct responses by the individual for the particular service provided by the employer. "The empirical application of the *Contingent Valuation Method* involves eliciting through a survey instrument responses to direct questions about the individuals' monetary valuation of a particular good" (Connelly et. al., p. 118).

Connelly et al. (2004) filled the gap as to why there is little empirical analysis of the value of an employer-sponsored child care policy. They proposed a method that assessed the value to individuals of having an employer-sponsored child care policy by using the Contingent Valuation Method. Their results supported the importance of having an employer-sponsored child care policy for employees and policy makers. Furthermore, the qualitative evidence suggested that both employees and organizations also benefit from improved worker performance and reduced absenteeism, turnover, and tardiness.

Employer-Sponsored Child Care

The definition of employer-sponsored child care encompasses several types of employer-sponsored child care programs, which fall into four categories: financial assistance, services made available to the employee via a referral program, employee assistance programs, and direct services. Financial assistance is a program that includes vendor arrangements, vouchers, flexible benefits, and corporate contributions to existing child care agencies; employee assistance programs include flextime, part-time, job sharing, and flexible parental-leave policies; referral programs include a list of child care agencies made available to the organization; and direct service provides actual space for either an on- or off-site child center, family day care networks, after-school programs, and summer camps (Auerbach, 1990).

On-site employer-sponsored child care is the physical set-up of child care on the work premises. Employers who have responded to child care needs of working parents often respond to the inadequacies of an existing child care market (Friedman, 2000). Most child care markets do not meet parents' needs because they don't offer available packages that fit the parents' working needs, such as care during nontraditional work hours. On-site employer-sponsored child care allows organizations to design programs that will conform to productivity demands with hours that accommodate both the organization and the employee.

The employer-sponsored child care plan can serve as a direct incentive for employees to enter the labor market, and it also has the potential to retain employees and place value on the organization. According to Connelly et al. (2004), employers offering this type of benefit reported positive impacts such as improved employee performance and a reduction in organizational costs. Demographic shifts have dictated organization's competencies, which have, in turn, molded organizations into what they are (Connelly et al., 2004). The American workforce is younger and more competitive than ever before, and many workers are of child-bearing age; so the needs of parents are critical. Forward-thinking companies need to develop cost-effective models for analyzing and meeting employees' child care needs (Kiger, 2004). Innovative approaches to this problem will place value to the organization's child care policy by not only calculating actual cost versus benefit, but also implementing empirical value (Kiger).

Work and Family Demands

Work and family demands are a critical and an unmeasured link in human resource studies (Kossek & Ozeki, 1990). Human resource policy research has been descriptive and has tried to assess the nature and extent of various work-family practices, programs, and policies. It also has tended to focus nearly exclusively on formal policies, giving little if any concern to work-related outcomes and new policies (Kossek, 1990). Given the increasing employer resources being allocated to work-family policies and the growing literature raising concerns about the effectiveness of these policies, the goal of research is to integrate policy development and implementation simultaneously (Kossek). Managing the integration of new policy development and its implementation for work and family demands is a critical challenge facing most employers (Brett, Stoh, & Reilly, 1992). Therefore, it is important to utilize a strategy that will create a policy with long-range plans effective for management (Wheelen & Hunger, 2004).

Work and family demands have become salient to organizations because of an increasingly diverse workforce (Galinsky & Hughes, 1999). The study by Galinsky et al. (1999) found that the major reasons organizations would like to have more policy commitment to work-family issues are to improve recruitment and retention, to increase morale, to reduce stress, and to keep up with the competition. However, there is a problem with organizations' lack of current research conducted on employee demographics and lack of family-supportive policies.

Parenting Demands

The dramatic increase in the number of dual-earning families and single parents in the labor force indicates that a growing number of workers are also responsible for the care of children (Galinsky & Stein, 1990). These changes have an impact on both family and work life. For families, such changes have meant high levels of work-family demands, while for employers they have meant attracting and retaining qualified workers while employees attempt to balance work and home lives (Galinsky et al., 1990).

The significance of a family-supportive policy, such as an employer-sponsored child care program, may be that it influences the amount of parenting demands to which an employee is exposed (Frone & Yardley, 1996). The characteristics that are likely to increase parenting-employee demands are the number of children who live in the home and the age of the youngest child. As the number of children who live in the home increases, so will the hours devoted to their daily needs (transportation, school activities, cooking, shopping, and supervision) (Wiley &

Noe, 2002). Likewise, the ages of the children who are not of school age will influence the demands of arranging and providing child care for those children.

Parental demands have been observed to interfere with daily job activities and occupational achievements (Glover, 1994). Therefore, there is an elicited need among employed parents to have a family-supportive policy, such as an employer-sponsored child care program, that will alleviate any negative influences on the organization's work-related outcomes: turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and productivity. In order to understand the dynamics of policy development, research cannot move forward without understanding the importance of the tool that will help implement policy. That tool is embedded in the Venn diagram found in Kossek's (1990) Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory and the author's proposed FLOOR plan, as an institutionalized mechanism that encompasses the creation of a new family-friendly policy conducted at the same time as the assessment and implementation phase.

Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory

The research diagram found in appendix A is Kossek's (1990) Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory, which outlines employee demographic background variables and work-related outcomes (tardiness, absenteeism, turnover, and productivity). The literature review of work-related outcomes that have influenced family-friendly policies has influenced the current study's recommendations for the employee-employer relationship in terms of child care needs and work-related outcomes for future policy. Kossek's map shows that work-related outcomes, such as turnover, tardiness, absenteeism, and productivity, can be matched to a finite number for the organization to determine success.

Work-related outcomes, such as those mentioned above, answer questions that are often asked by an organization's management regarding the organization's economic survival (Rusch, Rusch-Cahdsey, & Johnson, 1991). When addressing the organization's economic questions, having some sort of number defined by the work-related outcome has played a critical role in the design and evaluation of organizational policies (Rusch et al., 1991). The numbers are particularly important because the measurement of work-related outcomes enables the organization to design more effective employee policies (Rusch et al., 1989). At the individual level, the work-related outcomes of turnover, tardiness, absenteeism, and productivity are easily measured and deserve consideration because they also can be calculated as a whole for the organization (Rusch & Hughes, 1989).

However, the influence of organizational culture and individual strategies for managing the work-family role is still being overlooked. Insufficient attention has been paid to this subject and has not addressed the degree to which family-supportive policies influence the effectiveness of strategies and work-related outcomes (Kossek, Noe, & Demark, 1999). Kossek's (1990) Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory has been adjusted for this particular paper to demonstrate the effects of work-related variables when issues of child care arrangements exist. The logic behind choosing the work-related variables was based on the fact that employers would easily be able to assess these important factors that would affect the organization when implementing an employer-sponsored child care program.

Turnover and Absenteeism

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2006) unscheduled employee absenteeism has risen for the second consecutive year, reaching the highest level in 10 years, with the high cost of employee no-shows taking a toll on employers. While personal illness topped the list as the single most common reason for unscheduled absences (40%), 60% of the last-minute absences was related to reasons other than illness, while family issues accounted for 21% of these absences (United State Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006).

Research findings in this area reveal that absence control systems, such as employee rewards or punishments, can neutralize some forms of absence behaviors through the implementation of relevant organizational policies (Casale, 2006). Furthermore, management scholars have learned a lot about voluntary turnover over the years; thousands of research studies have been conducted on the topic of turnover (Casale). “Both the academic and practitioner literatures have made contributions to the knowledge and from all of this work comes clear and enduring reasons that have evolved to study the complex work variables of turnover and absenteeism” (Mitchell, Holtom, & Lee, 2001, p. 97).

There are many reasons why organizations are experiencing turnover and absenteeism. Employees change jobs or miss work for personal reasons, changes in family situation, a desire to learn a new skill or trade, family responsibilities, an unsolicited job offer, or illness (Mitchell et al., 2001). Turnover and absenteeism are a problem because they cause extensive costs for both the employee and the organization.

One research study, conducted by Griffeth, Home, and Gaerner (2000), estimated that the replacement costs for an employee alone are over \$10,000 for service-based jobs and \$30,000 for the 20% of all jobs that are management positions. Organizations of all sizes and types are recognizing that they are engaged in a struggle to retain talent, and they are actively trying to do something about it (Mitchell et al., 2001). A report conducted by Schellhart (2001) stated 10% of big businesses have a full-time person assigned to minimizing turnover and absenteeism. Furthermore, that same person concentrates on updating and creating policies that adhere to the employees’ needs related to turnover and absenteeism.

At the individual level, if a person leaves a job voluntarily or is absent, they believe, at that moment, that leaving the job or being absent from work is the right thing for them to do (Mitchell et al., 2001). At the organizational level, turnover and absenteeism impact numerous costs. Departing employees often take with them valuable knowledge and expertise that have been gained through experience. Organizations face many costs directly related to turnover, such as the administrative time required for exit interviews, the payout of unused vacation time, the cost of hiring a temporary worker, overtime pay for coworkers who are asked to fill in, the replacement costs of processing, interviewing, and selecting candidates, and, finally, the training costs for a new employee (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Turnover and absenteeism are associated with high replacement costs (Cascio, 2000) and the loss of highly-qualified employees (Trevor, Gerhart, & Boudreau, 1997). Organizations’ human resource management teams study turnover and absenteeism predictors by focusing on those employees who stay, specifically examining their desire to stay and the reasons they are present at work (Lee, Gerhart, & Trevor, 2008). However, there are multiple distinct paths for employees leaving jobs and becoming absent at work, and those paths are likely to differ from one employee to the next.

Considerable research has explored the relationship between turnover and absenteeism and job satisfaction. There are many causes of job satisfaction, such as job enrichment, good supervision, defined policy structure, the definition of job roles, the minimization of job stress

and personality conflicts, a manageable workload, satisfactory levels of pay, benefits, rewards, etc. (Mitchell et al., 2001). In terms of what initiates the turnover process, lack of job satisfaction has been described as the most important and frequent cause. It is a good business practice to manage what the organization is able to control and predict.

Managing job satisfaction is important for organizations because they can possibly prevent turnover by meeting the needs of their employees. However, organizations' collective efforts to predict turnover have not been very successful (Lee & Mauer, 1999). Turnover and absenteeism are variables that are difficult to predict, but they may be reduced by policies adhering to the needs of employees (Lee et al., 1999). Employees go through several stages during the time they are employed by an organization, and it is difficult to develop and adjust specific policies to meet the employees' changing needs. However, if management can develop a policy that meets the requirements of both family responsibilities and work demands, that policy can easily be adjusted as needed (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Tardiness

Employee tardiness manifests itself in many organizations. It has implications for the individual employee as well as for the organization as a whole (Dishon-Berkovits & Koslowsky, 2002). Employee tardiness leads to substantial financial costs, such as loss of productivity of the employee who is tardy, loss of productivity of fellow workers who work may depend on the employee who is tardy, and loss of time for management who have to deal with the issue of tardiness (Groeneveld & Shain, 1985). Furthermore, the employee who is tardy may disrupt the day's work schedule, because tasks may not take place on time or the work of other employees might depend on the connection to that employee who is tardy (Groeneveld et al., 1985).

The tardy employee's behavior may be viewed as negligence toward the organization and its values unless the organization takes the time to research why patterns of tardiness are so predominant in certain employees (Bolin & Heatherly, 2001). This is the first step in a chain of research that management must undertake when the value of the organization has diminished with the onset of employee tardiness (Dishon et al., 2002). The research conducted by an organization's management regarding tardiness mainly uncovers attitudes, affects, and demographic variables for purposes of predicting tardiness (Bolin et al., 2001).

Successful organizations have uncovered the individual reasons for tardiness and emphasized the different components that are possible causes for the behavior (Bolin et al., 2001). For one, family obligations may prevent an individual from arriving at work on time. Williams and Alliger (1994) reported that family obligations were perceived as interfering with one's work. Others have found that having children in the family was related to or influenced tardiness (Kaldenber, Becker, & Zvonkovic, 1995).

The existing literature on tardiness is profound in nature, with many perspectives on the behavior of tardiness. Organizations have explained tardiness as an economic function that interplays between policy and organizational resources allocated to work and family responsibility (Dishon et al., 2002). Furthermore, the factor of work-family conflict, which will be discussed later in this chapter, has provided a surge of interest among organizations and researchers because of its complex variables intertwined with work-related outcomes, such as tardiness (Bolin, 2001).

Productivity

Historically, it has been important to measure whether an employee is productive or not (Rusche et al., 1989). Careful measurement of job productivity enables the organization to design more effective policies and strategies that will enhance the productivity process (Agran, 2006). The most common dimension used to measure productivity is the frequency and rate of occurrence (Agran). Frequency recording typically is used to record the number of times a discrete number is identified with what the organization defines as productivity (Ross & Rusch, 1991). The other important measurement is duration. Duration measures become important if an employee can work accurately and rapidly (Agran). By using duration measures, the organization can document how long an employee works before pausing (Ross et al., 1991). “The important point to remember, is that employers require their employees to meet a particular productivity standard. Sometimes, this standard is conveyed to employees through policies as to what will be measured or what type of standard should be achieved” (Ross et al., 1991, p. 294).

The measurement of work-related outcomes is regarded as a straightforward endeavor in which the organization is able to measure success or failure. The measurement of meaningful work-related outcomes entails a balance between the goals of the organization and the organization’s policies (Chadsey-Rusch, 1990). It is important to bridge the organizational goals and work-related outcomes through policies that will be seen in actual practices (Gratton et al., 2003). The process of policy development begins with the organization’s strategic management incorporating written policies that will be enacted into business practice. It is within policy development that strategic management is able to identify the needs of the employees and the manner in which the policies will be implemented. Therefore, recognizing the current labor market will only enhance current family-friendly policies and allow the needs of employees to be understood.

Strategic Management

Research has revealed that organizations that engage in strategic management involving employees’ needs generally outperform those that do not provide this type of strategic management (Anderson, 2000). For example, a study done by Kossek (1999) found that work-family spillover and family attitudes measured outcomes that influenced policy, using work-family variables to measure the different types of attitudes and behaviors to influence the policy change. Furthermore, the study revealed that work-related outcomes, such as turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and productivity, had a greater impact on changes to human resource policy because of work-family conflict (Kossek et al., 1999).

The study of strategic management has been a major focus of policy initiatives for organizations. A range of policy developments comes from the phases taking place within strategic management in an organization. According to the general definition, strategic management is “the set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the long-run performance of an organization” (Wheelen et al., 2004, p. 2). It includes environmental scanning (both external and internal), strategy formulation (strategic or long-range planning), strategy implementation, evaluation, and control (Wheelen et al., 2004). It is in the strategic management process that policy development emerges.

There has been a trend among organizations to expand the number of policies that are responsive to work and family demands. In a survey conducted by the American Society for

Personnel Administration (1999), 50% of organizations reported planning the development of new family-friendly policies (Galinsky, 2000). Organizations are growing aware of work and family demands and they have identified some of their employees' family demands. However, the connection between creating a policy and implementing it is nonexistent because the time required to reach a solution is too long, and the cost of the strategies to the organization are not cost effective (Galinsky & Stein, 2000).

Furthermore, Galinsky, Bond, and Friedman (1996) identified ways in which employers can reach an agreement that satisfies employed parents' responsibilities as well as work policies. The study utilized an extension of the Quality of Employment Survey and randomly selected a national sample of 3,381 employed men and women, ages 18–64, who had dependent children. Results of the study found that the parent employees would rather work 36.7 hours per week, 10% had access to employer-sponsored child care on or near the work site, 32% (n = 427) of working parents would rather trade salary for on- or near-site child care assistance, and employed parents were consumed for caring for their children an average of 3.21 hours on workdays and 8.22 hours on nonworkdays (Galinsky et al., 1996).

To be effective, strategic management does not need always to be a formal process. The approach can involve different steps of the phases because the organization's policy issues may be complex. A formalized and more sophisticated system is needed to ensure that all decisions and plans fall within the concept of the necessary policy (Wheelen et al., 2004).

The reality is that an appropriate strategy varies according to organizational circumstances (Gratton et al., 2003). The key circumstances are business goals and strategies, for which the organizational policies must turn into practices that would support the organization's aims for their employees (Abrahamson, 2000). A strong linkage is needed between the overall vision of the organization in policy development and the organization's approach to the needs of the employees (Gratton et al., 2003). This linkage will ensure that policies can become creators, and not inhibitors, of sustained competitive advantages (Abrahamson).

As mentioned earlier, strategic management involves making decisions and creating strategies. It involves the development of long-range plans for the effective management of opportunities, threats, weakness, and strengths that will define the organization's objectives and policy-setting guidelines (Wheelen et al., 2004). It is important to understand the steps of policy development and policy implementation in order to introduce properly a new contemporary policy, such as a family-friendly policy, that will address work-related outcomes, such as tardiness, turnover, productivity, and absenteeism.

Environmental Scanning

Current environmental predictions for all organizations will become even more uncertain with every passing year (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990). "Environmental uncertainty is the degree of complexity plus the degree of change existing in an organization's external and internal environment" (Wheelen et al., 2004, p. 52). Environmental uncertainty is a threat to human resource management because it hampers the ability to develop long-range plans for strategic decisions that will keep the organization in equilibrium with its external environment (Chatterjee & Wernerfelt, 1991). Before an organization can begin policy development and move to the next step within strategic management, it must scan the environment to identify possible opportunities, threats, strengths, and weaknesses (Wheelen et al., 2004). Environmental scanning

is the monitoring, evaluating, and disseminating of information from the external and internal environments to key people within the organization (Wheelen et al., 2004).

In undertaking environmental scanning, it is important to be aware of the variables within the environment that will affect the policy—economic, technological, political-legal, and socio-cultural. Research on work and family policies has been criticized in terms of quality (Raabe, 1990). Few employers have conducted research strategically to assess the possible effects of work and family demands caused by the organization's environment, and the methodology of policy development is not parallel to the needs of the organization and its employees (Auerbach, 1990).

In terms of developing a family-friendly policy, the variables that are part of environmental scanning are economic variables such as the labor supply and the resources supply of the organization. For example, qualified employees will not commit to an organization that is not committed to them and their needs. Qualified employees will not have a problem leaving to go to another organization that will support their needs. Furthermore, the age and corresponding generation of the organization's employees will have an impact on what type of employee needs have to be addressed.

Technological variables include portable information devices or software that are convenient for employees interacting and communicating with one another in terms of work and family needs. Employees will look for outside resources, such as off-site child care programs, that will accommodate their family needs. Political-legal variables have a significant impact not only on the level of competition within the organization and its industry, but also on the strategies that might be successful (Wheelen et al., 2004). For example, local law, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act, may force organizations to adopt family-friendly policies in order to remain in the state, county, or city in which they are operating.

Finally, the population impacts a socio-cultural variable. Generations X and Y and changes in their standard household configurations (the number of children; being single, married, or divorced; having dual-income families; being married with one income; and having a single-parent income), are all influences that affect an organization's survival. The implementation and changing of conduct policy, the level of employee commitment, and the type of employee who like to work for the organization are all affected.

Scanning and analyzing the external environment for opportunities and threats is not enough to provide an organization with an advantage for policy development (Porter, 1980). Human resource management must also look within the organization itself to identify internal strategic factors that are critical strengths and weaknesses (Wheelen et al., 2004). Family-friendly policies are very unique to the organization, and the successful ones come from members of management who understand the organization (Kossek, 1990).

The internal scanning that takes place often includes the identification of the organization's resources. According to Grant (1991), "a resource is an asset, competency, process, skill, or knowledge controlled by the organization. It is a strength that provides the organization with a competitive advantage, it has the potential to do particularly well when the resource is unique to that organization" (p. 115). Just as a resource can be considered a strength to the organization, it can also be considered a weakness. A resource can be a weakness if it is something the organization does not have the capacity to support, or if the organization does not have enough time or manpower to utilize that resource (Wheelen et al., 2004).

Organizations that have failed to implement a family-friendly policy have recognized that their failure to do so comes not from failing to conduct sufficient research within their

organization, but from the organization being incapable of providing a family-friendly policy for its employees (Galinsky, 1990). Furthermore, some organizations have implemented family-friendly policies but have failed to research the number of employees who will benefit from such policies. Therefore, the family-friendly policy becomes underutilized and is eventually determined by the organization to be obsolete (Kossek, 1990).

Resource-Based Theory of Competitive Advantage

The link between strategic management and the organization's resources is the foundation to this paper and its recommendations. Strategic implications of an organization's internal environment, as mentioned before, are necessary for policy implementation and analysis for the organization that needs a family-friendly policy. According to Grant (1991), the resource-based theory for strategic management is not successful in organizations because organizations lack a framework that is unique to their organization's resources, and little effort is made to develop frameworks that answer a specific need. Grant's resource-based theory provides the framework for the development of family-friendly policies in unique organizations. An understanding of his resource-based theory for strategic formulation needs to be explained further.

The premise of resource-based theory lies in the resources and capabilities of the organization. The starting point lies within the strategic management of the organization, which, as mentioned earlier, involves decisions and strategies to be made. To become the guideline for defining the organization's objectives and policies, strategic management also involves the development of long-range plans for the effective management of opportunities, threats, weaknesses, and strengths (Wheelen et al., 2004).

Identifying resources is vital and, at times, is a major handicap for organizations because they only identify a fragment of their resources (Grant, 1991). Financial balance sheets are relied upon too much and do not represent the intangible resources, such as employees and their skills. Grant further helps organizations by providing a useful starting point for listing all the resources of the organization: financial resources, physical resources, human resources, technological resources, reputation, and organizational resources. It is around this set of resources that policy development will emerge and policy implementation will be conducted. The reluctance of policy developers lies in the boundaries they place on themselves that do not extend the boundaries of corporate balance sheets, and through which valuation is made difficult (Grant).

There is a direct link between resources and profitability, which raises the following two issues for the strategic management of resources:

- 1) What opportunities exist for economizing on the use of resources? This may involve using fewer outside resources to support a larger volume of business.
- 2) What are the possibilities for using existing assets more intensely and in more profitable employment? This entails that a large proportion of the resources can be put into more profitable use and a productive employment can be substantial. (Grant, 1991 p. 42)

The capabilities of an organization are what it can do as a result of the overall identification of all the resources, and all of them working together (Grant, 1991). An organization's capabilities can be identified using a standard classification of the organization's activities. The critical task is to assess capabilities relative to competitors. The organization's capabilities should be enhanced through its talent, on the basis of the organization's competitive

advantage. A successful policy will exploit the organization's strengths (Grant). Maximizing capabilities is not simply a matter of assembling a team of resources; capabilities involve complex patterns of coordinating people and their resources (Grant). The organization's ability to sustain its competitive advantage over time depends upon the speed with which other organizations can imitate its strategy with resources and capabilities. Harmonizing the existing resources with its capabilities in the development of policies creates a competitive advantage for the organization (Grant).

The resources and capabilities of an organization are the central considerations in formulating its strategy for an improved organizational policy. Strategy is an "integrated set of actions designed to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. In the long run, if the organization does not achieve a competitive advantage the core of effective decision-making will not be sustainable" (Drobis, 1991, p. 9). According to Grant (1991), resources and capabilities are primary constants with which an organization can establish its identity and frame its strategies for policy development. "The understanding of resources and capabilities will bring forth the mechanism of understanding for competitive advantage to be sustained over time. This requires the design of strategies which exploit the maximum effect each organization's unique characteristics" (Grant, p. 131). Once the identification of resources and capabilities is completed in a framework, the effect of policy development and implementation can be observed.

Policy

A policy is a broad guideline for decision making that links the formulation of strategy with its implementation (Wheelen et al., 2004). Companies use policies to make sure that employees throughout the organization make decisions and take actions that support the organization's objectives and strategies. Policies provide clear guidance to managers throughout the organization (Wheelen et al., 2004). The potential implications of different policies for the organization's outcomes can be derived from the organization's implemented strategies, which are all placed in a policy manual (Parker, 2002). The strategy that is implemented is based on policy development and the outcomes needed by the organization.

Policies are principles, a stance for a course of action that must be achieved by the organization (Cordele, 2003). A policy will generally be a high-level statement about the organization's stance on a particular issue, such as employer-sponsored child care. Policy statements must define clearly what needs to be done and who is responsible for doing it (Cordele).

Organizations call their policy manuals by different names—policy and procedures, operations manual, standard operating procedures, etc. Regardless of the name, the document provides management and employees with the guidance necessary to perform department operations (Cordele, 2003). Before developing policy, it is necessary to provide a baseline concerning how strategic management is a comprehensive application to policy development (Crompton, 2006).

Policies require a support system to be successful in relationship to the system in which they operate (Parker, 2002). The path that the organization must manage and coordinate, which will promote the policy through strategic management and the organization's competitive advantage, will be explained in depth.

It is important now to explore the variables that will influence family-friendly policies. It has been explained that family-friendly policies will be conceptualized through strategic

management to gain a competitive advantage. The identification of the researched variables, family-supportive programs, parenting demands, familial care, work-family conflict, spillover, and nontraditional work hours have been researched extensively and identified in different ways that have influenced work-related outcomes—tardiness, turnover, absenteeism, and productivity—along with the development of family-friendly policies.

Family-Supportive Programs

Establishing family-supportive programs (FSP) in an organization will provide the organization with a competitive edge. These programs establish a policy that will help the work-family spillover the organization's employees face, and they are good business practice (Kingston, 1990). Business researchers are currently supporting the development of family-supportive programs in the organization while examining the predictors that cause work-family spillover. In order to establish goals and policies that will enhance competitive advantage, it is important for the human resource department of the organization to understand these variables that affect work and family demands (Kingston).

There are several reasons, outlined by Frone and Yardley (1996), to pay attention to the importance of family-supportive programs: 1) changing employee demographics have sparked an interest in the desire of employees and potential employees for family-supportive programs; 2) it will help identify those employees who will benefit, as parents, from family-supportive programs; and 3) it will help in the evaluation and effectiveness of current policies that are in need of family-supportive programs. The findings of Frone and Yardley go further in identifying the current underutilized family-supportive programs that need to be established as tangible support systems in the organization's policies: flextime, compressed work weeks, job sharing, child care assistance, work at home, and reduced work hours. These programs are underutilized due to the insufficient research conducted by organizations.

What has emerged as part of the human resource analysis of family-supportive policies is the practical effect of two main types of personnel policy (Kingston, 1990). The first type of policy includes additions to the provisions of the family-supportive program, or additions to the policies and services that employers provide to employees. Those are:

support for child care, either through on-site provisions of care, some form of subsidized care, or information and referral service; more extensive accommodations to childbirth, such as, paid maternity leave; and flexible benefit plans where the employee will have the flexibility to work from home. (Kingston, p. 440)

The second type of personnel policy, according to Kingston (1990), involves modifications in work schedules. Most research has focused on the "standard" work schedule: 40 hours per week, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. Human resource policy analysts have added the following provisions: flextime that allows workers some discretion in determining arrival and departure times, permanent part-time work, job sharing, and more accommodating leave policies. According to Kingston, the above list by no means exhausts all other initiatives; it is an operational definition of the significant implications the provisions may have on future policy.

Research conducted by Mennino, Rubin, and Brayfield (2005) found that employee-based policies reduce negative employee spillover. The culture of the organization that supports family-supportive programs is what allows for positive work-family spillover. If a family-supportive program, such as an employer-sponsored child-care center, is offered to employees, it

will allow them the flexibility to balance the demands of work and family, and it will reduce negative work-related outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and decreased productivity. Therefore, the importance of having access to that particular family-supportive program is significant to the organization and employee (Mennino et al.).

There is a large amount of research that examines the relationship between tangible social support and the physical well-being of the parent; but no research has examined the relationship between a job characteristic, such as working nontraditional hours or a family-supportive policy (such as employer-sponsored child care), and work-related outcomes (turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and productivity) (Galinsky, 1990). By examining these relationships, an answer may be found concerning how it is possible to balance the work and family domains (Carlson et al., 1990).

Spillover

A number of studies have found that work and family demands move from one domain to another, being negotiated in order to survive (Polach, 2003). There is a perception of balance by the employee/parent who works hard to keep both domains positive and separated. However, spillover between domains exists, and it later creates tensions (Schor, 1992).

Spillover “is defined as the reciprocal tension between the roles and obligations of being a parent or a spouse, on the one hand, and an employee, on the other” (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992, p. 356). Research has shown the many links between work and family conflict. However, it fails to distinguish the different types of sources that affect the conflict of family dynamics and work outcomes (Glass & Estes, 1999). Dissecting the source of conflict that has affected work and family domains will only provide insight into how a solution can be implemented to avoid that source of conflict.

In a study by Rogers (1992) spillover from family obligations into work productivity resulted in wasted time and mistakes in 54% of the participants. When asked if work/family stress affected their concentration at work, 53% of women sampled from 20 Fortune 500 companies agreed that it did (Glass & Riley, 1996). When family responsibilities expand and are not resolved, this negatively spills over into work outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and productivity (Glass et al., 1996). The experiences of parents in the work and family domain combine will spillover in either a negative or positive form. By researching one of the many sources that affect work-to-family and family-to-work spillover, it would be possible to understand the mechanism of that source and adjust policies (Rogers, 1992).

It is clear that spillover and balance of work and family variables are linked. These two domains need to be explored in more depth, because the number of factors that affect the spillover and balance are too great (Capowski, 1996). Therefore, one of the factors that will be explored is the issue of working nontraditional hours and the effects of an employer-sponsored child-care system. This type of job characteristic may be an important predictor to the perceived work-family balance and outcomes.

Work-Family Conflict

Traditionally, work-family conflict studies focused on two domains, the individual employee and the organizational issues that were not met. Now, studies have begun focusing on

the interwoven domains of the individual, family, and employer that truly influence the work-family conflict variable and the organization. According to the definition by Stephen Goff, work-family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict where the demands of functioning in the two domains of work and family are mutually incompatible in some respect whereby participation in one role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the other. (1990, p. 796)

With two domains that parents have to balance and dominate, it is only a matter of time before the work and family domains blend and affect tardiness, absenteeism, turnover rates, the quality of work, and family relationships.

In the last 10 to 15 years, research has found that work-family conflict can occur in two directions with negative outcomes: work to family and family to work. Both of these directions make it difficult on the researcher because of the influence both domains have on work and family outcomes. It is difficult only to rationalize one direction of the conflict as the sole source of a negative outcome when both domains influence one another in some shape or form. According to Kossek (1999), many studies quantitatively measured work-family conflict with different results in both directions. Possible reasons for this may be that the wide range of variables affected cannot be measured and the difficulty of validating just one direction for the work-family conflict variable.

The meta-analysis conducted by Kossek et al. (1999) identified 38 studies related to work and family conflict, with six outcome variables: performance, turnover, absenteeism, organizational commitment, job involvement, and burnout. The authors summarized their findings on the relationship among human resource policies, work outcomes, and work-family conflict. The goal of the authors in the meta-analysis was to review the studies through a qualitative approach and look at their implications on human resource policy (Kossek et al., 1999).

Out of the 38 studies, only seven utilized a type of employer-sponsored child care as a human resource intervention related to the above outcomes. The authors further stated that more work needs to be done for human resource policies to be effective, and they emphasized the importance of understanding the effect of these policies on both employees and employers.

The meta-analysis conducted by Kossek et al. (1999) indicated that the seven studies utilizing a type of employer-sponsored child care as a human resource intervention involved small organizations that already had a form of family-friendly policy in place. Furthermore, the adaptability of implementing the family-friendly policy was successful due to the size of the organization, the commitment by the employees, the organization's need to retain the small number of employees, and the success of developing a family-friendly policy. Furthermore, Kossek et al. indicated that organizations and policy scholars have overlooked how the employees' family dynamics and demands have changed. Employers and human resource policy makers need to create ways to redesign policies that will allow employees better to meet their varying family demands (Kossek et al.). The meta-analysis also demonstrated that "greater conflict between work and family roles of any form is associated with higher turnover intentions, care-related absences, and lower commitment to organizations and career" (p. 25). Furthermore, they recommended that future research, in the form of a longitudinal study, regarding the use of specific family-supportive programs relating to the performance of employees could significantly contribute to the body of research.

Nontraditional Work Hours

Past research has been able to resolve the single job characteristic that will balance work-family conflict and outcomes (Keene & Quadagno, 2004). By resolving one factor that will balance the work-family spillover, the employed parent finds it easier to have a positive, fulfilling job and family. However, one single job characteristic cannot be the only factor that tips the balance. Researchers sometimes fail to understand that it is impossible to state that one factor is the cause of the imbalance between work and family (Keene & Quadagno). Rather, it is the combination of work and family characteristics that causes the balance to lean one way or another.

By taking one characteristic of a job factor, such as non-traditional working hours and the effects of implementing an employer-sponsored child care, it would create a better understanding to human resource policy makers to implement changes or introduce a strategy that would result in a positive effect. (Keene & Quadagno, 2004, p. 5)

It is important to look at nontraditional work hours or shift work as a job characteristic that influences work-family spillover. Employed parents who work nontraditional hours are taking away quality time from their children, who live by the standard hours of the day. Of the United States labor force, 45% works a form of nontraditional hours (United States Department of Labor, 2006).

According to the United States Department of Labor (2006), full-time wage employees become shift workers for several reasons: better arrangements for child care (8.2%), better pay (6.8%), to allow time for school (3.2%), and the nature of the job (54.6%). One of the many reasons that there has been a big increase in nontraditional work hours is the upsurge in employers seeking individuals for occupational fields in the service sector (Grosswald, 2003). The well-paid service sector employees, such as nurses, firefighters, police, paramedics, etc., are the contemporary nontraditional hour workers who are making decisions between family and work demands because of the 24-hour services they need to provide. On the other hand, nontraditional hour workers have been diminishing because of the low pay and the minimal amount of benefits that historically have been available (Hughes & Parkes, 2007).

Nontraditional work hour employees, as mentioned above, are employees who serve the public on a 24-hour basis, seven days a week. Consequently, this creates a conflict in family schedules that run by the traditional work week and hours. Costa's (1996) literature review found that shift work causes hardships on family relationships and children, and results in negative family-work spillover. Research conducted by White and Keith (1990) indicates that families of shift workers experience a higher percentage of divorces, lower marital satisfaction, lower satisfaction in relationships with children, and higher stress levels when the organization does not offer family support.

In order to understand, in depth, why nontraditional work hour employees have a difficult family and work adjustment domain, there has to be a clear understanding of their working hours. Nontraditional work hours refer to job schedules that are other than the standard hours between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., and/or schedules that consist of nonstandard work weeks (i.e., not between Monday and Friday) (Grosswald, 2003).

Nontraditional work hours always have been perceived as the most difficult times to work while living a family life (White, 1990). The economy is becoming a 24-hour, service-

based operation in which long-term service goals have led organizations to operate businesses during early mornings, evenings, nights, and weekends (Hughes & Parkes, 2007). For organizations that need to run 24-hours per day to serve the public, such as those in the public safety sector, employees are faced with the child care challenge of mismatches between their schedule and available child care services (Costa, 1996).

It is important for businesses to realize that public safety sector employees want to serve the public's needs, but they also need to know that those employees have families for whom they need to care (Hughes & Parkes, 2007). Research has to address the growing need for policy during nonstandard hours, as well as the need for the implementation of a program that creates stability for American families. While this process may be arduous, Congress has attempted to help families in the workforce by signing into law the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (Mello, 2006).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The rise of dual-earning families is associated with work-related outcomes, especially turnover, tardiness, absenteeism, and productivity, which are all issues and factors that drive families and organizations. As mentioned earlier, according to the United States Department of Labor (2006), the proportion of families that were dual-income couples and had children under the age of 6 years rose from 52.7 percent in 2005 to 54.6 percent in 2006 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006). Although this might not seem like a big percentage change between 2005 and 2006 (1.9 percent), it is important to acknowledge this change and respond to employees' potential interest to stay in an organization for a long time, especially in an organization that is willing to generate fundamental responses to their needs.

With the definition change of *family*, throughout the decades, there is a need for employers to redefine their family-supportive policies in order to attract and retain qualified employees. The traditional family definition of 30 years ago that consisted of a husband who worked, the mother who stayed at home, and the two children is now seen in less than 5.2% of United States households (United States Department of Labor, 2006). Furthermore, 73 million employees in the United States are presently in a dual-income relationship (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006). From those 73 million employees in the United States, the trepidation of how to balance family and careers is a concern that parents find themselves managing more than their work.

The parenting demands placed on employed parents require a balancing system between those parents involved in child care decision making and work-related outcomes. With the employee/parent concerned with child care during working hours, the quality of that employee's work productivity may be affected. Increases in absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover and decreases in productivity are all important outcomes that will affect the employee and the organization. The balance system that will help the relationship between parenting and employer demands can be designed within a policy.

Furthermore, to reduce the amount of conflict experienced by working parents and their organization, and to help organizations that are experiencing an increase in absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover rates and a decrease in productivity, having an employer-sponsored child care program as part of the organization's benefit system may be an effective policy to address all of the above issues.

As mentioned in the literature review, policy encompasses a number of decisions for an organization, and it requires steps to develop policy. It is a broad guideline for decision making that links the formulation of strategy with its implementation (Wheelen & Hunger, 2004). Organizations use policies to make sure that employees make decisions and take actions that support the organization's objectives and goals. It is within the policy development that research is needed.

According to Raabe (1990), work-family policy researchers are advocating for studies with stronger and unique methodologies. The interpretive framework of this paper includes the consideration of a number of parameters in relation to the potential or validation of additional characteristics that may influence work-related outcomes. It is just a matter of how those outcomes are delivered by the employee that will dictate the policy and what research design is needed to enhance positive work and family spillover.

Future Model

A growing number of organizations offer employees dependent-care resources and other family-friendly policies aimed at helping employees balance work and family responsibilities (Kossek et al., 1999). Given the increasing number of employer policies allocated to family-friendly programs and the growing literature raising concerns about their effectiveness, the goal of this cohort study was to use quantitative methods to examine the relationship between work-related outcomes and employee demographics in response to a family-friendly policy.

There is a call to the importance of developing new methodologies that will advance viable family-friendly policy, an improved conceptual and theoretical understanding of the work and family domains, and an understanding of the complexities of policies in relation to work-related outcomes (Raabe, 1990). The following recommendations contribute to those factors by providing a better foundation for improved policy analysis and an institutionalized mechanism in relation to the Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory found in figure 1 (appendix A).

Most organizations want to take the leap of faith for family-friendly policies, but they want to know the effects of these policies before implementation (Galinsky, 1989). Assessing policies early on, before achieving any significant results, makes it difficult to see whether or not organizations would really benefit from those policies. Family-friendly policies, such as employer-sponsored child care, are integrated with employee demographics, labor market trends, processes, outcomes, and characteristics that they may become a significant force in creating workplaces that are more family-friendly (Kammerman, 1991). The proposed model, the FLOOR Plan, is the result of the present data and analysis, and is a recommendation for policy makers. It is an institutionalized mechanism that encompasses the creation of the new policy (employer-sponsored child care) conducted at the same time as the assessment and implementation phase for the policy.

The FLOOR Plan

Work and family domains are a critical and an unmeasured link in human resource studies (Kossek et al., 1999). Increasing employer resources are being allocated to family-friendly policies, and there is a growing amount of literature raising concerns about their effectiveness. The FLOOR Plan integrates policy development and implementation simultaneously. Managing the integration of a new plan for policy development and

implementation for work and family demands is a critical challenge; however, the FLOOR Plan provides an institutional mechanism for managing the family-friendly policy.

The author proposes an institutionalized mechanism for the leaders of any organization who wish to implement a family-friendly policy, such as an employer-sponsored child care system. This proposal will serve as an addition to the Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory found in figure 1 (appendix A). The plan calls for the identification of four steps that an organization can conduct simultaneously while assessing the new policy along with its implementation. This framework will reduce the time the organization takes to create a family-friendly policy, such as a child care center, in relation to the organization's work-related outcomes; it will simultaneously create a visualization of the success and/or possible future failures of the policy through an immediate process; and it will reduce the intangible and tangible costs to the organization.

The basis of this plan utilizes Grant's (1991) resource-based theory of competitive advantage because it simultaneously connects strategic management and the organization's resources and capabilities. Grant stated that resource-based theory for strategic management is not successful in organizations because organizations lack a framework that is unique. The FLOOR Plan completes Kossek's (1991) Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory, and the plan can be utilized for any organization (appendix A, figure 2).

F-First the organization's leaders must assess their current available resources. Resources may encompass equipment (possible child care equipment such as small tables, chairs, lockers, refrigerators, writing utensils, chalkboards, etc.); skills of individual employees (employees may have formal education to be teachers, licenses as child caregivers, education to be administrators, or may want to volunteer their time to support the child care center); the organization's size (the more employees the organization has, the greater the possibilities of increasing the monetary reward of a grant, employees financing the low cost, and more of the employees' children needing to attend the child day-care center); financial resources (employees' direct financial costs may be low or high, and there is a possibility that employees are able to subsidize the cost); the manpower to create, assess, and implement the new policy; and the physical infrastructure of the organization (if the building is large enough or there are several sites, the physical placement of the child care center may be close, and the hierarchy of management will help develop and establish policies).

While utilizing Grant's (1991) resource-based theory, it is important to manage all related resources that will be part of the policy. These resources fall under the six classifications of resource-based theory (financial resources, physical resources, human resources, technological resources, reputation, and organizational resources) (Grant).

L-Looking within and outside of the organization's infrastructure to determine where physically to locate the child care center. This part of the plan answers Grant's (1991) direct link between resources and strategic management issues: "What are the possibilities for using existing assets more intensely and in more profitable employment?" (Grant, p. 119). The organization's asset is the infrastructure. If the organization does not have the physical space to accommodate a day care center, the organization's leaders must look within their surrounding community for availability. The community that surrounds the organization is an integral part of the organization's well-being because its employees live within the community. It is possible that some of the best solutions for child care during nontraditional work hours lie outside of the organization's infrastructure.

Organize all the resources in **order** for them to be implemented for the child care service. This will serve as an assessment phase for the policy to see how viable and cost-beneficial the child care center will be, regardless of whether or not the center will be on or off the organization's infrastructure. This is identified in Grant's (1991) organizational capabilities as what the organization can do as a result of teams of resources working together. The management team will be able to maintain objectivity by organizing the resources in the order of importance defined by the organization. This involves capabilities of complex patterns of coordination between people and between people and other resources (Grant).

Restructure, redesign, and revisit all the available resources that will best suit the organization's needs. This phase will make sure that the organization's costs related to work-related outcomes are being addressed. This is the support system that a family-friendly policy, such as an employer-sponsored child care system, needs in order to be successful in relationship to the organization.

Strategic management plays a crucial role in this plan because it allows the organization's leaders to formulate strategies through strategic decision making in regards to the FLO²R² Plan. The FLO²R² Plan allows the organization's leaders to:

- 1) Define their mission within the scope of the family-friendly policy they need to implement;
- 2) Set their objectives by assessing resources, opportunities, and threats and considering organizational assets, employee expertise, and experience;
- 3) Analyze the strategic factors in light of the current family-friendly policy;
- 4) Make a decision to move forward and organize the strategic factors in order of feasibility and business sense;
- 5) Generate a business plan that will be embedded in the organization's resources as part of the organization's objectives, strategies, and policies;
- 6) Implement the policy; and
- 7) Evaluate the policy through restructuring and redesigning the issues that need to be addressed, while revisiting the plan to consider future decisions that need to be made (Wheelen, 2004).

What do parents want? It is difficult to list all the needs that will change an organization's family policies, and it would be a taxing job to attempt to implement a policy to accommodate every employee's family. Therefore, it is important to realize that employees who have child-rearing responsibilities will be more committed to the organization based on job security.

Advocates of employer-sponsored child care claim that family-friendly policies reduce turnover, tardiness, and absenteeism. Mann (1984), Perry (1981), Burud (1984), and Alisberg (1984) reported decreases in employee turnover, tardiness, and absenteeism rates after an employer-sponsored child care system was introduced. Alisberg cited a survey of 58 companies with absentee rates that fell by 72% due to the addition of employer-sponsored child care. In another study, conducted by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (1989), researchers used a cost-benefit approach to quantify the gains organizations experienced from establishing on-site child care.

Implementing a well-designed employer-sponsored child care program in any organization will influence parents who are employed by that organization, favorably improving work-related outcomes, developing positive work-family spillover among employees, and lowering the costs to organizations associated with work-related outcomes. It is important for

organizations in competition to have the qualified, unique employees; and organizational leaders must understand that they are competing in a globalized market for the best employees willing to work for the organization that will meet their basic needs. Ultimately, value needs to be placed on a family-friendly workplace culture—a culture in which supportive management policies and action maximize employees' productive work time.

It is important to examine a few of the many possible areas where there are costs to the organization associated with work-related outcomes (turnover, tardiness, absenteeism, and productivity) as well as benefits associated with organizational management targeting strategic challenges within the development of policies. The FLO²R² plan contributes to a comprehensive audit of human resource policies at the level of employees and managers.

Finally, a family-friendly supportive policy is not something that exists as an option only for parents who are employed. It does not ask parents to choose between their jobs and children. Rather, such a policy offers significant relief from the conflicts and distractions of worrying about the care one's children are receiving while the parent is at work, enables the parent to concentrate more on work, helps the parent to work at a more productive and consistent pace, and also helps the parent to invest more thought in his/her own employment situation.

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APPENDIX A

Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory

FLOOR PLAN

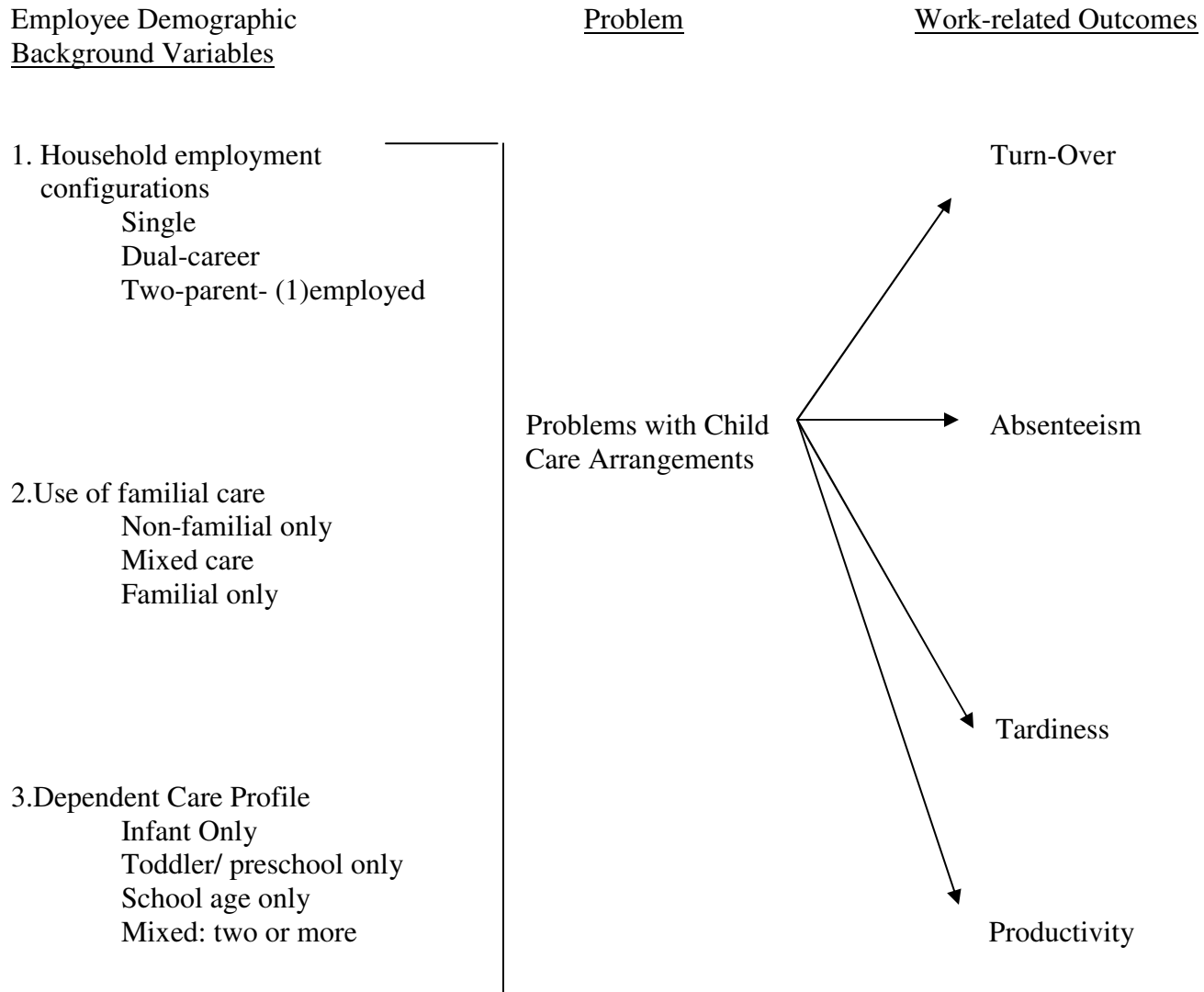


Figure 1. A Map of the Child Care Assistance Territory: Exploring the Relationship Between Employee Demographic Backgrounds, Problems with Care Arrangements, and Work-Related Outcomes (Kossek, 1990).

FLO□□R□□ Plan

Work-related OutcomesFLO□R□ Plan

Turn-Over

F-First assess the current resources
 This encompasses equipment (possible child care equipment such as small tables, chairs, lockers, refrigerators, writing utensils, chalkboard, etc), skills of individual employees (employees may have the education to be a teacher, license for a child care giver, may have the education to be an administrator, or may want to volunteer their time to support the child care center), organization's size (the more employees the organization has the possible increase of monetary reward that can be found with a grant, employees financing the low cost, and the need will be greater for more of the employees' children attending the child-day care center), financial resources (employees direct financial cost may be low or high, there is a possibility that employees are able to subsidize the cost), manpower to create, assess, and implement the new policy, and physical infrastructure of the organization (if the building is large enough or there are several sights, the physical placement of the child care center may be close, and hierarchy of management).

Absenteeism

L- Look within and our of the infrastructure
 The asset of the organization is the infrastructure. Physical space to accommodate a day care may be within or surrounding area.

Tardiness

O□-Organize all the resources in the **order** to be implemented in the policy

Productivity

R□- Restructure, redesign, and revisit the resources that will best suit the organization. At this portion of the framework it is important to revisit the implemented resources to make the work-related comes are either increased or decreased.

Figure 2. FLO□R□ Plan (Frausto, 2008).