

The Effectiveness of Flextime in Reducing
Time-based Work-family Conflict in Dual-Earner Families

by

Shannon L. Mansfield

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

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Dedication

This research project is dedicated to my nephew, Brian Walter Nider, and to the memory
of my Nana, Enid Strong.

Abstract

Identification of factors that help to decrease time-based work-family conflict will move organizations from having policies that are good “on paper” to having policies that are good “in practice.” A sample of 525 married or common-law, dual-earner families was studied using the General Social Survey on Time Use, Cycle 12. Logistic regression analysis was used to measure the moderating effect of flextime on gender on individuals’ experience of time-based work-family conflict controlling for number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, and work hours. A significant negative association was found between motherhood and experiencing consensus, as well as between work hours and the absence of flextime, and consensus. Flextime was found not to moderate the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict. Findings can be used by organizations in order to effect policies and changes that are meaningful to employees and contribute to decreasing their time-based work-family conflict.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Individuals devote substantial amounts of time to work and family. Organizations expect, and often require, their employees to work many hours in order for organizations to meet their goals and objectives. Families also expect and require their members to devote many hours to family life. Because work and family expect and require substantial amounts of time, and because time is finite, time-based work-family conflict occurs.

The expectations and requirements of organizations and families are not the only factors contributing to time-based work-family conflict; the changing composition of today's workforce is also a factor. One change, in particular, that has affected both work and family is women's increased labour force participation. According to the Canadian Council on Social Development (2001), in 1999, 80% of women who were raising school-aged children were also participating in the labour force, an increase of 42% from twenty years previously. Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, and Prottas (2002) have recognized that, for dual-earner families, "there is a significant *third job* that has to be done at home – family work" (p. 1). Caring for a family is a job in itself, and it is one that many people are doing in conjunction with paid work (Bond et al., 2002). The question is, what can be done to improve the balance between work and family? In other words, what tools are useful for decreasing time-based work-family conflict and for whom are they useful?

Many researchers have examined the factors affecting individuals' experiences of work-family conflict (Eagle, Miles, & Icenogle, 1997; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Higgins, Duxbury, & Lee, 1994; Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001), and many others have examined individuals' use of flextime (Sharpe, Hermsen, & Billings, 2002;

Ernst Kossek, Barber, & Winters, 1999). Work-family conflict and flextime are areas of interest to not only researchers, but also to many Canadian employees. For example, a recent article in the *Globe and Mail* (Galt, 2005) highlighted the results of a survey by Catalyst Canada. The survey of more than 1400 Canadian lawyers found that 86% of women and 66% of men rate the supportiveness of organizations regarding family and personal obligations as a key determinant in choosing to work at another law firm, and that many firms are offering flexible work arrangements to help employees balance the demands of work and family. The issue of work-family conflict is important to many firms, and flexible work arrangements are being offered by organizations wanting to help employees balance work and family.

In addition to the family-friendly policies and programs offered by organizations, the Canadian government has other provisions in place to help Canadians balance work and family. Examples of these programs include maternity, parental, and adoption leaves. Canada's Employment Insurance program ensures that eligible Canadians receive financial assistance when they are pregnant or are the caregiver to a newborn or adopted child (Government of Canada, 2004b). In Manitoba, for example, birth mothers receive 17 weeks of maternity leave, followed by 37 weeks of parental leave (Government of Canada, 2004c). In Canada, either the mother or father can use parental leave, or it can be shared by them (Government of Canada, 2004b). In Manitoba, individuals who adopt children are permitted to take a maximum of 37 weeks of leave. Individuals living in Manitoba must be employed for seven months prior to taking a leave to qualify for benefits, and must give their employer a minimum of four weeks notice prior to taking a leave (Government of Canada, 2004c).

In addition to programs directed at the care of children, the Canadian Government has a program in place intended to help individuals balance work and family during the medical crises of children or other family members. Through Canada's Compassionate Care policy, Canadians who are eligible for Employment Insurance may receive financial assistance while taking a leave from work for up to six weeks in order to provide care or support for a family member who has a risk of death within six months (Government of Canada, 2004a; Government of Canada, 2006a). In order to be eligible for this benefit, caregivers must apply for it and prove a decrease of more than 40% of regular weekly earnings due to caregiving responsibilities. In addition, caregivers must have worked 600 hours in the past year or since the start of the previous claim (Government of Canada, 2006b). Caregivers must be family members. Recently, the term "family members" was expanded; the term includes grandparents, parents, foster parents, spouses, children, foster children, and individuals whom the ill individual or the caregiver considers to be like a close relative -- regardless of blood, adoption, marriage, or common-law relationship (Government of Canada, 2006b). The Compassionate Care Benefit can be used by one individual, or shared by other eligible family members. Within the six-month period in which the individual is expected to die, family members decide when, and by whom, the six weeks of leave will be taken (Government of Canada, 2004a; Government of Canada, 2006a).

The jobs of those who use the Compassionate Care Benefit are protected under Canada's Labour Code. Employers cannot penalize employees for taking compassionate care leave. After taking the leave, employees must be reinstated in the same, or

comparable, position held prior to taking the leave and receive the same wages and benefits (Government of Canada, 2004a; Government of Canada, 2006a).

Many organizations are concerned about their employees' ability to balance work and family. In order to help employees balance work and family, some organizations offer employees the option of using a flexible work schedule, or flextime. In fact, flextime appears to be gaining in popularity. In a 1992 survey of approximately 3,500 wage, salaried, and self-employed individuals in the U.S. workforce, only 29% of employees surveyed were permitted to use flextime occasionally; in contrast, in 2002, 43% of employees were allowed to do so (Bond et al., 2002).

As with many forms of assistance offered to individuals, flextime is likely to benefit some employees more than others. If organizations are comprised of individuals for whom the use of flextime decreases their time-based work-family conflict, then the resources put into developing and implementing a flextime policy are well used. However, if organizations are made up of those for whom flextime is not effective in decreasing time-based work-family conflict, then the resources put into the development and implementation of the policy may be misspent. Depending upon the make up of the organization, the availability of flextime may be helpful for employees or may be merely ornamental.

Although drafting and implementing organizational policy that allows employees to use family-friendly programs is important, equally as important is creating an organizational culture that encourages use of the family-friendly programs outlined in the policy. An organizational policy that includes family-friendly programs and an organizational culture that encourages use of the programs synergistically produces

successful family-friendly organizations. Recently, Duxbury, Higgins, and Coghill (2003) compiled approximately 5,000 comments provided by respondents to Health Canada's 2001 National Work-Life Conflict Study. They found that 8% of respondents' comments focused on the extent to which the organization's culture worked against work-family balance. The idea of a disconnected culture, in which the organizational policy was good but the practice was poor, was expressed by respondents. Others suggested that family-friendly policies were available "on paper"; however, they were unavailable in practice.

Families, as well as organizations, may benefit from knowing for whom flextime decreases time-based work-family conflict. For example, the composition of families may affect the effectiveness of flextime in reducing individuals' time-based work-family conflict. As with organizations, if families with particular compositions (for example, families with only pre-school aged children) benefit from the use of flextime, then use of the policy makes sense for those families. However, if families with certain compositions (for example, families with only older school-aged children) benefit little from the use of flextime, then perhaps use of family-friendly policies other than flextime may be more beneficial in decreasing those individuals' time-based work-family conflict.

The purpose of the present study was to measure the extent to which flextime moderates the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict, given family structure, family resources, and parents' workplace characteristics. The importance of the role of gender cannot be overstated. Gender, in itself, is a factor in individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime. Because gender plays a substantial role in individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime,

examination of the extent to which flextime moderates the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict is warranted.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

The following literature review begins with an overview of the terms that are used often in the work-family conflict literature, including a detailed definition of flextime. Following the section on terminology, a summary of the current literature on flextime itself, and flextime as it relates to work-family conflict, is provided. Specifically, current research on the characteristics of family structure, family resources, and workplace characteristics as they relate to flextime and work-family conflict is reviewed. Research findings are similar in Canada and the United States; therefore findings from studies in both countries are reported.

Common Terms used in the Work-family Conflict Literature

Work-family conflict has been defined as pressure caused by inter-role incompatibility experienced by individuals attempting to balance their work and family lives (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, & Snoek, 1964). Although this definition of work-family conflict was proposed by Kahn et al. in 1964, Higgins and Duxbury (1992) note that it is a widely accepted and useful definition. Work-family conflict occurs when individuals perform multiple roles each involving time, energy, and dedication (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Work-family conflict was defined by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) as “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (p. 77). This definition is similar to Kahn et al.’s (1964) definition. Both definitions reflect the inter-role conflict experienced by men and women when they are attempting to balance the competing domains of work and family.

As with Kahn et al.'s definition of work-family conflict, Greenhaus and Beutell's definition is used often in the literature.

Time-based work-family conflict occurs because "time spent on activities within one role generally cannot be devoted to activities within another role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). For example, time pressures caused by participation in a role may make participation in other roles physically impossible, or pressures from a role may cause individuals to be pre-occupied with that role and not to be fully engaged in other roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Hochschild (1997) coined the term "time bind," which occurs when workers prefer to divide their time between work and family differently from how it is currently divided but are unable to change the current division or see it as too difficult to change. The perceived time-shortage factor is similar to time-based work-family conflict; it is operationally defined as individuals believing they spend too much time at work and do not have enough time for themselves or their families (Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984).

Many terms are used to describe the effects of work-family conflict on individuals, such as work-family spillover, overload, interference, and role strain. Almeida, Wethington, and Chandler (1999) defined work-family spillover as the transmission of moods and behaviours from one area of an individual's life to another. Work-family spillover is bidirectional, meaning work issues can spill into family and family activities can spill into work (Almeida et al., 1999). Overload occurs when the time and energy demands experienced by individuals are so overwhelming that they compromise individuals' abilities to perform all of their roles well (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Interference occurs when the activities performed by individuals are occurring at the same

time but in different locations (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985); for example, attending a business meeting means not attending a child's activity. Voydanoff (1980) (as cited in Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985) noted that both overload and interference are forms of role strain: Individuals perform many roles, and the demands of multiple roles can lead to two types of role strain, overload and interference. Job-family role strain was defined by Goode (1960) as the difficulty experienced by individuals because of obligations stemming from individuals' roles in their jobs and their families.

In contrast to work-family conflict, work-family balance has been defined as the balancing of work and family without stress (Lobel, 1991). Russell and Bowman (2000) suggested a definition of work-family balance that reflected earning and caring activities. Likewise, Beaujot (2000) recognized work and family as earning and caring activities, and that these activities compete for individuals' time. "Both caring and earning take up much time and introduce conflicting priorities in the use of time" (Beaujot, 2000, p. 24). According to Russell and Bowman (2000), work-family balance reflects "the desire to have access to employment opportunities and earn an adequate income while at the same time looking after the caring responsibilities of family life" (p. 5).

Some researchers use the term work-life balance rather than work-family balance. For example, Tausig and Fenwick (2001) measured work-life balance, rather than work-family balance, because they believe work-life balance is a more inclusive concept than work-family balance. Whereas the use of work-family balance often reflects the needs of one's spouse and children, work-life balance reflects the needs in any domain outside an individual's work. Work-life balance, because it does not consider specifically spouses

and children, can be measured regardless of individuals' marital or parental statuses (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001).

Alternative work arrangements is another term common in the work-family conflict literature. Marler (2004) suggests "a better label for alternative work arrangements would be alternative employment arrangements, which suggests both the alternative nature of these arrangements and that the focus is on the type of employment arrangement rather than the type of work schedule" (¶ 2). Independent contractors and on-call workers, such as substitute teachers, are examples of employees whose jobs are characterized by alternative work arrangements (Marler, 2004).

Alternative work arrangements reflect the organization of employment for particular occupations, such as substitute teachers. In contrast, family-friendly policies are those policies designed to accommodate the demands of employees' families in any occupation. Whereas alternative work arrangements are characteristic of the occupation and not necessarily the employee, family-friendly policies are those that are intended to help employees balance the demands of work and family, regardless of occupation. Cordeiro and Grandey (n.d.) defined family-friendly policies as those policies offered by organizations designed to help employees balance the demands of work and family.

Flextime, sometimes referred to as a flexible schedule, is one example of a family-friendly policy offered by some organizations. Flextime is an arrangement of employees' work hours characterized by three elements. First, employees choose the times at which they arrive at and leave work (Ernst Kossek et al., 1999; Hill et al., 2001; Scandura & Lankau, 1997; Sharpe et al., 2002); second, employees must be present during the organization's core hours (Hill et al., 2001; Scandura & Lankau, 1997; Sharpe et al.,

2002); and third, the total number of hours in paid employment is equal to the number spent in paid employment if flextime is not the arrangement of work hours (Ernst Kossek et al., 1999; Sharpe et al., 2002). Hyland (2003) noted that flextime does not alter the number of hours spent in paid employment by individuals nor does it alter the location in which work is performed. Flextime alters merely the times at which individuals' work days begin and end (Hyland, 2003). Golembiewski and Proehl (1978) noted that because individuals using flextime must be at work during an organization's core hours, longer core hours translate into less flexibility for employees.

The purpose of the present study was to measure the ability of flextime to decrease time-based work-family conflict in dual-earner families accounting for family structure, family resources, and workplace characteristics. A summary of the current research on flextime and its relationship to work-family conflict follows. The concepts and propositions of conflict theory are discussed. As evidenced by the following literature review, gender, in itself, is a factor that influences time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime. Because the effect of gender is substantial and far-reaching, a hypothesis measuring the effectiveness of flextime in moderating the influence of gender on time-based work-family conflict is proposed.

Family Structure

The structure of a family, including parents' genders, the presence and number of children, and the ages of children may affect a family's time use, experience of time-based work-family conflict, and the effectiveness of flextime in reducing this conflict.

Gender

Results regarding whether men or women more commonly use flexible work schedules are mixed. One study found that the majority of those who use flextime were male, and the likelihood of having a flexible work schedule was lower for women and those in female-dominated occupations (Sharpe et al., 2002). A later publication by Statistics Canada (2003) indicates that, holding constant occupation and industry, fewer women use flexible work arrangements, of which flextime is a component, than men. It is suggested that the tasks performed by women -- although in the same occupation and industry as men -- may make use of flextime more difficult (Statistics Canada, 2003). Results of another study found that women are less likely than men to be in jobs offering flexibility (Glass & Camarigg, 1992). Occupations dominated by women were found to be low in the organizational hierarchy and to provide little autonomy. In other words, the jobs held by women often serve the needs of others in the organization. In order to serve the needs of others, incumbents of occupations low in the hierarchy need to be available to others (Kanter, 1977). Because women's occupations have been found to be low in the organizational hierarchy and to be characterized by little flexibility, it is not unexpected that the percentage of women employed by an organization did not explain the presence of family-friendly policies (Milliken, Martins, & Morgan, 1998). Results of another study indicated that among women, single women, married women, and mothers of preschool aged children were no more or less likely to be employed by organizations offering flexibility (Glass & Camarigg, 1992).

Other researchers have found that women were more likely to use flexible work schedules than men. Female managers were more likely than males to have used, or

planned to use, flexible work schedules (Ernst Kossek et al., 1999). Results of a study by Karambayya and Reilly (1992) found that wives, more often than husbands, restructured their work for family reasons. In fact, more than twice as often as men, women changed their work hours, limited their weekend work, and rearranged travel plans for family demands. Over half of mothers and only one-third of fathers rearranged the times at which they arrived at work or left work in order to relieve childcare. The researchers found that women restructured work for family on a more regular basis than men. When men restructured work for family, it was often a special arrangement because of wives' work demands or children's particular needs (Karambayya & Reilly, 1992).

Similar results were found in a study by Presser (1995). With regard to work schedule behaviour, women were found to accommodate the caregiving of their children more so than men. Children's ages were found to affect the work schedule behaviour of women. Women with pre-school aged children were more likely than other women to work a non-day schedule citing childcare as the main reason (Presser, 1995).

Although many researchers have focused on the availability and use of flextime for men and women, few have focused on individuals' perceptions of flextime. A random household survey of 981 individuals living in South Carolina indicated support for the provision of flextime to fathers. Of women with or without children, and men with children, over 90% supported the provision of flextime for fathers. The majority of people surveyed believed organizations, through the provision of family-friendly policies, should support men's involvement with their families and demonstrate this support through the provision of flextime. The survey did not collect information regarding support for the

provision of flextime to mothers (Bowers Andrews, Luckey, Bolden, Whiting-Fickling, & Lind, 2004).

Results of studies on the effect of gender on work-family conflict and the factors affecting men's and women's work-family conflict are mixed. Work and family domains have been found to be asymmetrically permeable; specifically, work boundaries are less permeable than family boundaries (Eagle et al., 1997; Frone et al., 1992). Individuals allowed their workplaces to intrude upon their family lives; however, they did not let their family lives intrude upon their workplaces to the same extent. Perhaps most interesting is that no gender differences were found in the permeability of men's and women's work and family domains. Equally, men and women allowed their workplaces and their families to intrude on each other (Eagle et al., 1997; Frone et al., 1992). Frone et al. suggested that "gender differences do not account for a substantial amount of variance in the prevalence of conflict between work and family roles" (pp. 727-728). Perhaps, however, women have made adjustments when accepting positions that contribute to the finding of no gender differences in the permeability of men's and women's work and family domains.

Perceived job flexibility was found to be positively related to increased work-family balance equally for both men and women (Hill et al., 2001). Using a work and life issues survey, Hill et al. (2001) surveyed over 6,000 IBM employees in the United States. Of those who were employed 40 to 50 hours per week and had flextime and flexplace, defined as flexibility in the location of where individuals' paid work is performed, only 28% had work-family balance difficulties; whereas, of those who did not have flextime or flexplace, 46% had work-family balance difficulties. Similar differences were found in the percentages of employees who experienced difficulty when flextime and flexplace were

considered separately. Of those who had flextime, only 29% experienced work-family balance difficulties compared to 44% who did not have flextime. Of those who had flexplace, only 29% experienced work-family balance difficulties compared to 40% who did not have flexplace (Hill et al., 2001). These results indicate that both men and women benefit from the availability of flextime and flexplace (Hill et al., 2001). Using the 1991 Survey of Federal Employees, Ezra and Deckman (1996) found that parents who used flexible work schedules were more satisfied with their work-family balance than parents who did not use flexible work schedules (Ezra & Deckman, 1996). In contrast to Hill et al. (2001), who found that men and women benefited equally from perceived job flexibility, Ezra and Deckman (1996) ran separate regressions and found that only mothers' use of a flexible work schedule was associated significantly with satisfaction regarding work-family balance.

Parasuraman, Greenhaus, and Skromme Granrose (1992) found gender differences when they researched life stress, defined as "the psychological response state of disturbed affect in relation to stressors in one's life" (p. 342). Life stress was used to indicate individuals' overall well-being. Using a sample of dual-earner couples, they found that employment-related stressors were associated with increased life stress for both men and women. In addition to employment-related stressors, work-family conflict was found to be associated with increased life stress for men, whereas family-related stressors were associated with increased life stress for women. These findings suggest that the family role affects women's sense of life stress and overall balance more than men's (Parasuraman et al., 1992).

In a later study, Paden and Buehler (1995) examined the relationship between role overload, role conflict, and men's and women's emotional affect in dual-income couples. Emotional affect was measured using the Bradburn Affect Balance Scale, which includes measures of emotions such as excitement and interest. They found a strong association between role conflict and negative affect for women. The researchers suggested that incompatible role expectations, combined with women's difficulty in accessing workplace power resources, contribute to women's role conflict. For men, a strong association was found between role overload and negative affect, and the researchers suggested that men's feelings of role overload can be attributed to the demands on their time (Paden & Buehler, 1995).

A recent publication by Statistics Canada (2006) suggests women perform more household tasks than men, and that women are spending more hours in paid work than in previous years. Given these findings, it is not unexpected that women report feeling more time-crunched than men (Statistics Canada, 2006). Men's participation in household tasks is increasing; however, the increase in women's participation in paid work is substantially greater than the increase in men's participation in household tasks. The average number of hours worked in a day, including both paid and unpaid work, is increasing. For men, a substantial amount of this increase is attributed to their participation in unpaid work; for women, the increase is attributed solely to their participation in paid work (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Summary

Both men and women have been shown to experience time-based work-family conflict, and many use flextime. Although work and family domains appear to be

asymmetrically permeable regardless of gender, men's and women's sources of work-family conflict appear to be different. It is important to note that gender role ideologies may play a substantial role in the findings related to gender, flextime, and time-based work-family conflict. The effect of gender role ideologies, that is, how individuals identify themselves in their marriage and family roles -- roles that are traditionally associated with gender (Greenstein, 1996) -- may affect findings related to flextime and time-based work-family conflict. Other characteristics of family structure, such as the presence and number of children, and the ages of children, may affect individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime.

Presence and Number of Children

The presence of children affects levels of work-family conflict experienced by lone-parent and dual-parent families. The presence of children in the home has been found to increase both men's and women's work-family conflict; in other words, the presence of children decreased work-family balance (Voydanoff, 1988) and decreased work-life balance (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). A reduction in work-life balance due to the presence of children in the family was seen regardless of the number of earners in the family or the marital status of the parents (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). A reduction in work-life balance was experienced by single-earner parents, dual-career parents, and single parents (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). In contrast, a recent study of Canadian women indicates they experience more time crunch than men, regardless of whether they have children (Statistics Canada, 2006). For individuals without children, no gender differences in work-family balance were found (Ezra & Deckman, 1996).

The presence of children was found not to affect individuals' likelihood of using alternative work arrangements. Although certain characteristics of children affected the likelihood of parents using a flexible work schedule (Sharpe et al., 2002), the mere presence of children was not found to be associated with the use of a flexible work schedule. The presence of dependent children was not associated with the use of an alternative work arrangement, such as flextime or flexplace (Secret, 2000).

The presence of children appears to affect work-family conflict, and so too does the number of children in a family. Among those who did paid work at home at least two days per week, a significant positive relationship was found between the number of children and time-based work interference with family and time-based family interference with work (Madsen, 2003), measured using a scale devised by Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000). Time-based work interference with family reflects the idea that time dedicated to work affects participation in household and family activities and that paid work keeps individuals from family activities (Carlson et al., 2000). Time-based family interference with work reflects the extent to which family keeps individuals from work responsibilities, and that time dedicated to family affects participation in work activities (Carlson et al., 2000). In contrast, among those whose work is office-based, the number of children was not associated with any of the work-family conflict variables measured in this study (Madsen, 2003).

Sharpe et al. (2002) found that increased family size was associated with a decreased use of flextime for married men and women. Billings and Sharpe (1999) found that the number of household members was not significantly related to women's use of flextime. Sharpe et al. (2002) suggested that members of large families perform household

tasks in addition to caring for themselves, and that this explains, in part, why increased family size appears not to increase flextime use. In addition, perhaps mothers with larger families reduce their number of hours in paid work.

Ages of Children

Children's ages were found to affect parents' levels of work-family balance and use of flexible work schedules. Single mothers with pre-school aged children were found to be less satisfied with their work-family balance than single mothers with older children (Campbell & Moen, 1992). Specifically, Campbell and Moen (1992) found that single mothers of older pre-school aged children experienced greater job-family role strain than did single mothers of younger pre-school aged children.

Using a sample in which 88% of respondents were married, Voydanoff and Kelly (1984) found that the presence of pre-school aged children and school-aged children was positively associated with parents' reporting of increased demands on time. Voydanoff and Kelly (1984) suggested that pre-school aged children require parents' close supervision and that school-aged children's activities often conflict with parents' work schedules. Interestingly, fathers' work-family balance was found to be unaffected by the ages of their children. Fathers with pre-school aged children were not less satisfied with their work-family balance than fathers with older children (Ezra & Deckman, 1996).

Similar results were found when examining the levels of role overload, interference from work to family, and interference from family to work experienced by mothers and fathers. Higgins et al., (1994) identified three life-cycle stages operationally defined by children's ages. The results indicated that men experience similar levels of role overload, interference from work to family, and interference from family to work regardless of

children's ages. In contrast, women's levels of role overload were significantly lower when all of their children were between ages 13 and 19, compared to the other life-cycle stages in which children were younger. Men and women experienced similar levels of interference from family to work during only the last life-cycle stage when all children were between 13 and 19 years old (Higgins et al., 1994). Likewise, Kelly and Voydanoff (1985) found a positive association between the presence of a child under age 6 and family-job tension among 468 working parents. In contrast, Voydanoff (1988) found that, regardless of parents' gender, children's ages did not affect work-family conflict; instead, only the presence of children increased conflict.

Sharpe et al. (2002) found that the majority of those who use flextime were parenting a pre-school aged child. Having the youngest child between 6-11 and 12-17 was not found to be significantly related to a woman's likelihood of using a flexible schedule (Billings & Sharpe, 1999). Although use of flextime was found to be associated with parenting a pre-school aged child (Sharpe et al., 2002), Hughes and Galinsky (1994) found that low levels of job flexibility were problematic for not only those with pre-school aged children, but also for those with children under age 13 living in the home.

The availability of flexible work schedules appears not to affect the organizational commitments and job satisfaction of men and women without children under age 18 living at home; however, the availability of such schedules affects the organizational commitment and job satisfaction of mothers with children under age 18 living at home (Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Mothers with children under age 18 living at home for whom flexible work hours were available were more dedicated and loyal to their employer and derived

more fulfillment from their work than those in the same family circumstance for whom flexible work hours were unavailable (Scandura & Lankau, 1997).

Summary

The presence, number, and ages of children in a family have been found to affect parents' work-family conflict and use of flextime. From the literature, it appears that the presence of younger children increases women's work-family conflict more than men's and that the presence of younger children increases work-family conflict more than the presence of older children. Findings are mixed regarding the effects of number of children on work-family conflict. In addition to the influence that family structure has on time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime, family resources also appear to affect time-based work-family conflict and individuals' use of flextime.

Family Resources

Income

In terms of perceived time shortage, individuals with higher incomes have been found to experience less time shortage than those with lower incomes (Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984). Voydanoff and Kelly (1984) suggested that other resources, such as skills and human capital assets, may be associated with higher incomes and may help those with higher incomes to meet their time demands. In particular, they suggested that perhaps there was an association between high income and flexibility needed to meet time demands, and that this association helped individuals with high incomes to meet time demands (Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984).

More recent studies have found results that affirm Voydanoff and Kelly's (1984) suggestion that there is an association between high income and flexibility. The majority

of those who used flextime have been found to earn high incomes (Sharpe et al., 2002); for example, having a household income above \$75,000 (compared to between \$10,000 and \$74,999) was found to increase a woman's likelihood of using a flexible work schedule (Billings & Sharpe, 1999). Spouse's income was also found to affect the extent to which men and women restructured work for family. Work restructuring, of which a change in the times at which individuals arrive at and leave work is a component, is used by many families to accommodate family obligations (Karambayya & Reilly, 1992). Wives of men with higher incomes did more restructuring than those whose husbands had lower incomes (Karambayya & Reilly, 1992). Interestingly, this finding was framed by the suggestion that perhaps men with high incomes were in occupations offering less flexibility. Earning a high income has been found to be associated with the use of a flexible work schedule for women (Billings & Sharpe, 1999; Sharpe et al., 2002). The finding that higher income lends itself to increased flexibility is not carried over to men; rather, men, it is suggested, have less flexibility when they earn high incomes.

Education

In a 1999 US study, Billings and Sharpe (1999) found that married mothers were more likely to use a flexible work schedule if they had a higher level of education, with those using flextime usually having either college or professional degrees (Sharpe et al., 2002). Billings and Sharpe (1999) postulated that employed women with high levels of education and large household incomes might be in occupations offering greater autonomy. They suggested that job autonomy lends itself to the use of a flexible work schedule. Individuals employed at lower levels within an organization are expected to be accommodating to those at higher levels, and often those at lower levels work directly for

those at higher levels. Occupations dominated by females were found to be low in the organizational hierarchy and to provide little autonomy (Kanter, 1977). Billings and Sharpe (1999) suggested that a high level of job autonomy could result in a decreased likelihood that individuals must be flexible to others' schedules and the greater the likelihood of using flextime.

Summary

Income and education appear to affect the amount of work-family conflict experienced by families and the extent to which individuals have flextime available to them. Individuals who have high incomes and advanced educations often work in occupations that provide more autonomy than low paying occupations requiring little education. While income and education appear to affect individuals' use of flextime, so too do factors related to the characteristics of parents' workplaces.

Workplace Characteristics

Supervisor Support

Supervisor support, in the form of supervisors offering flexibility to employees, has been found to be positively associated with increased satisfaction with work-family balance. In contrast, supervisor sensitivity was found not to be significantly related to decreased work-family role strain; strain was decreased only if the supervisor was able to assist employees (Warren & Johnson, 1995). Warren and Johnson (1995) examined specifically the characteristics of supervisor flexibility that contributed to reducing work-family role strain. They found that flexibility in work scheduling and allowing employees to adjust the times at which they arrived at and left work contributed to employees' reduced work-family role strain (Warren & Johnson, 1995).

In a study of 116 women, although nearly 90% of the women had one or more family-friendly benefit available to them, the mere availability of benefits did not reduce their work-family role strain (Warren & Johnson, 1995). Rather, the number of family-friendly benefits used by employees was associated with decreased work-family role strain. Employed mothers who used benefits experienced decreased strain (Warren & Johnson, 1995). Not unexpectedly, perceiving oneself as having schedule control, of which flextime was one component, was found to increase perceptions of work-life balance (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001).

Glass and Camarigg (1992) found that the relationship between supervisors and employees was affected by organizational size. They found that the extent to which managers related to and communicated with employees in small and large organizations varied. Often in small organizations, managers were more accessible to employees and knew more about their employees' particular family circumstances than managers in large organizations. Glass and Camarigg (1992) suggested that the organizational culture in small organizations may increase the legitimacy of family responsibilities and that infraction of rules regarding, for example, the alteration of the end of one's work day, may be accepted. A study of female bank employees found that perceived availability and accessibility of benefits depended upon organizational size (MacDermid, Williams, Marks, & Heilbrun, 1994). The researchers found that women who were employed by organizations with fewer than 100 employees believed benefits were more readily available and accessible compared to women who were employed by larger organizations (MacDermid et al., 1994). The researchers suggested that low levels of bureaucracy in smaller organizations make benefits more accessible.

Summary

The mere availability of family-friendly benefits such as flextime appears to be insufficient in reducing individuals' work-family conflict. Instead, individuals' use of benefits was found to decrease work-family conflict. Organizational size was found to contribute to the likelihood of individuals using family-friendly benefits. Other workplace factors, such as the number of hours spent in paid work, have been found to affect work-family conflict and the use of flextime.

Number of Hours Spent in Paid Work and Part-time Work

Men and women spend different amounts of time in paid work (Statistics Canada, 2006). On average, in 2005, men aged 25-54 spent 6.3 hours per day in paid work; women aged 25-54 spent 4.4 hours per day in paid work. It is not unexpected then, that the findings regarding the effect of number of hours in paid work on individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime are influenced by gender.

Results of some older studies found a positive association between weekly work hours and work-family conflict for men and women (Voydanoff, 1988) and a positive association between work hours and increased demands on time (Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984). Work hours were positively associated with job-family role strain in a study of single mothers of pre-schoolers living in Manitoba (Campbell & Moen, 1992), and in a study of employed parents a positive association between the number of hours spent in paid work and job tension was found (Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985). Moen and Dempster-McClain (1987) found, among those who were employed full-time or more and who preferred to work fewer hours, that the majority were mothers. In addition, husbands were

more likely than wives to want their spouses to work fewer hours (Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987).

Flextime was not found to be associated with individuals' preference for working fewer hours (Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987); however, flextime was found to be associated with preferences for spouses to work reduced hours. Men whose work schedules did not offer flexibility were more likely to prefer their wives work fewer hours than men whose work schedules offered flexibility (Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987). In contrast to these older studies, a recent study by Madsen (2003) found no relationship between number of hours in paid employment and work-family conflict for workers who are office-based. Of those who did paid work from home at least two days per week, a significant positive relationship was found between the number of hours in paid work and level of time-based work interference with family (Madsen, 2003). Time-based work interference with family reflects the idea that the time dedicated to work affects participation in household and family activities and the extent to which paid work keeps individuals from family activities (Carlson et al., 2000).

Research by Tausig and Fenwick (2001) indicated that part-time work affects individuals' work-life balance. Individuals who were employed part-time reported less work-life balance compared to those who were employed full-time, even after controlling for the number of hours in paid work. Tausig and Fenwick (2001) suggested that although part-time work allows individuals more time to spend at home, it has many disadvantages such as jeopardizing an individual's career advancement. The disadvantages may be greater than the advantages, leading to decreased work-life balance for those employed part-time (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001).

A later study by Statistics Canada (2003) suggests the effects of part-time work go beyond work-family balance. Data from the 1999 Workplace and Employee Survey indicate the proportion of women earning less than \$9.00 per hour is nearly double for those working part-time compared to those working full-time. In addition, compared to women who work full-time, women who work part-time are less likely to have non-wage benefits (Statistics Canada, 2003).

Occupational Level

The extent to which employees' occupations affect organizational productivity has been found to be associated with their use of flextime, and the extent to which organizational productivity is affected by employees' use of flextime has been found to affect the organization's decision to offer flextime. Results of research have indicated that managers were more likely to have used, or planned to use, flextime if the productivity levels of the organization were not of great concern to them (Ernst Kossek et al., 1999). Research results have indicated that organizations were more likely to offer family-friendly policies, such as flextime, if not doing so was believed to affect the organization's performance negatively (Milliken et al., 1998). Organizations were more likely to have work-family policies, including flexible work options, if changing family structures were believed to have an effect on productivity (Milliken et al., 1998).

Perceived job flexibility, that is changeability in the timing and location of work, was found to be positively associated with work-family balance, even after controlling for occupational level (Hill et al., 2001); however, individuals working at particular occupational levels were found to be more likely to use flextime. Individuals were more likely to be using a flexible work schedule if they were in managerial (Billings & Sharpe,

1999; Secret, 2000; Sharpe et al. 2002), professional (Billings & Sharpe, 1999; Secret, 2000; Sharpe, et al., 2002), technical (Sharpe et al., 2002), sales (Billings & Sharpe, 1999; Sharpe et al., 2002), administrative (Sharpe et al., 2002), or salaried (Secret, 2000) positions. Employment in service-related occupations was not found to be significant (Billings & Sharpe, 1999).

Summary

The results regarding the effect that number of hours spent in paid work has on time-based work-family conflict are mixed, with some studies finding a positive association between number of hours in paid work and time-based work-family conflict and others finding no relationship. Although working part-time intuitively should increase work-family balance, the opposite has been found. Organizational productivity has been found to be associated with both employees' use of flextime and an organization's willingness to offer flextime. Individuals in particular occupational levels have been found to be more likely to use a flexible work schedule than others.

Purpose of the Present Study

Many theories have been used to explain time-based work-family conflict. The present study used conflict theory to provide a context for the analysis and results of the effect of flextime on individuals' time-based work-family conflict in dual-earner families. The purpose of the present study was to measure the extent to which flextime moderated the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict, given family structure, family resources, and parents' workplace characteristics. Because of its strong and far-reaching influence, examination of the extent to which flextime moderates the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict was warranted. According to Ezra and Deckman (1996),

“few empirical studies have been completed concerning flexible scheduling and even fewer address the impact of flextime on workers’ family lives” (p. 175).

Theoretical Framework

“The key focus of conflict theory is on both conflict within groups ... and conflict between groups” (White & Klein, 2002, p. 147). Conflict theory is a useful theory for the study of time-based work-family conflict. Unlike exchange theory, which states that individuals’ resources are somewhat equal, conflict theory makes no such assumption (White & Klein, 2002). Conflict theory is useful particularly in situations where resources are unequal (White & Klein, 2002). “The ideas of resources and power have become central to what many consider to be the true nature of conflict in the family” (White & Klein, 2002, p. 146).

Conflict theory is useful for the study of flextime and its role in reducing individuals’ time-based work-family conflict. White and Klein (2002) state that conflict within and between groups is inevitable; however, the contribution of conflict theory is its focus on the management of conflict. Flextime may have a role in reducing individuals’ time-based work-family conflict. According to conflict theory, disagreement is expected in the domains of life where individuals devote the most time and expect the most togetherness (White & Klein, 2002). Individuals spend substantial amounts of time in the domains of work and family; accordingly, it is understandable that conflict exists between work and family.

The key concepts of conflict theory are conflict, structure, resources, negotiation, and consensus. Sprey (1979) defined conflict as “a confrontation between individuals, or groups, over scarce resources, controversial means, incompatible goals, or combinations of

these” (p. 134). Another concept of conflict theory is structure. Structure of the group has three dimensions: gender of group members, number of members of a particular group, and ages of the group members. The structure of the group affects that group’s resource management and the ways in which the group manages conflict. The concept of resources is key to conflict theory. “Resources include all the knowledge, skills, techniques, and materials that are at the ready disposal of a person or group” (White & Klein, 2002, p. 150-151). Examples of resources include an individual’s education, income, and time. Resources are linked closely with power, defined as individuals’ abilities to control others and things. An increase in resources is associated with an increase in power (White & Klein, 2002). Negotiation is a tool used by families to manage conflict (White & Klein, 2002). The use of negotiation is limited to those situations in which the achievement of a goal depends upon more than one individual or group (White and Klein, 2002). In order for negotiation to occur, an individual must have someone with whom to negotiate.

Finally, consensus is “the preferable outcome of negotiation” (White & Klein, 2002, p. 151). Consensus is agreement among individuals (White & Klein, 2002). Thus, key factors that have been found to affect individuals’ experience of time-based work-family conflict can be understood within the context of conflict theory.

Conflict theory has several hypotheses that are particularly useful in the study of time-based work-family conflict and the role of flextime in managing this conflict. The hypothesis used in the present study is based on the integration of the literature review and the concepts and hypotheses of conflict theory. The structure of the group affects its ability to manage conflict; therefore, close examination of the effect of parents’ gender is

important. The following hypothesis is based on a characteristic of the structure of the group -- parent's gender. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

H: Flextime will moderate the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict; mothers with flextime will experience greater reductions in time-based work-family conflict attributed to flextime than fathers with flextime.

The hypothesis is based on the rationale that although mothers and fathers may spend a similar number of hours in paid work, mothers assume greater responsibility for childcare and devote a greater number of hours to childcare than fathers. Canadian fathers who are working full-time, who are either married or common-law, and whose youngest child is under five years of age were found to spend only 1.4 hours in childcare per day in 1998. In contrast, mothers with the same characteristics were found to spend 2.1 hours per day in childcare (Gauthier, Smeeding, & Furstenberg, 2004). Children have been found to spend, on average, more time with their mothers than fathers regardless of family type (Sandberg & Hofferth, 2001). Sandberg and Hofferth (2001) found that in 1997 children spent, on average, 28.58 hours per week with their mothers, compared to only 18.57 hours per week with their fathers.

The paramount importance of gender in individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime is clear. Because other structural factors (number of children and ages of children), family resources (income and education), and negotiation (use of a flexible work schedule) also affect time-based work-family conflict, these variables will also be included in the model to test the hypothesis. According to conflict theory, negotiation is a technique used to manage conflict (White & Klein, 2002). Use of flextime is a technique that may help families to reduce their time-based work-family

conflict; accordingly, flextime can be seen as reflecting negotiation between employers and employees.

The findings are mixed with regard to the effect of number of children and ages of children on individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict, making prediction of an association and its direction difficult. The findings with regard to the effect of income, education, and hours spent in paid work on time-based work-family conflict are less uncertain. It is expected that as income and education increase, individuals' likelihood of experiencing consensus will increase. Individuals with higher incomes and advanced educations may have other skills and human capital assets, as suggested by Voydanoff and Kelly (1984), that help them to meet their time demands. It is expected that as hours spent in paid employment increase, individuals' likelihood of experiencing consensus will decrease. As individuals spend an increasing number of hours in paid work, they may spend a decreasing number of hours with their families. The increasing time spent in paid work, and potential decreasing time spent with families, may decrease their likelihood of experiencing consensus.

Summary

Conflict theory is useful for the study of flextime and its role in reducing individuals' time-based work-family conflict. The concepts of conflict theory -- conflict, structure, resources, negotiation, and consensus -- provide an organization that is useful for evaluating the effectiveness of flextime in reducing time-based work-family conflict. The factors identified in the literature review as affecting time-based work-family conflict can be understood within the propositions of conflict theory; integration of these factors with the concepts and propositions of conflict theory leads to the hypothesis that the effect of

gender on time-based work-family conflict was moderated by the use of a flexible work schedule.

CHAPTER III

Method

Source of Data

Data for this study are from the public use micro data file of the 1998 General Social Survey (GSS) (Cycle 12) conducted by Statistics Canada. The GSS has two primary objectives. First, it seeks to gather information on social trends for the purpose of monitoring changes in Canadians' living conditions and overall wellbeing. Second, the GSS seeks to provide immediate information on current social issues and those for which emerging interest is evident (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]). The GSS is a continuing program; however, only one topic is surveyed each year. In 1998, the focal topic was time use. The GSS (Cycle 12) is divided into two components: the Selection Control Questionnaire and the Time Use Questionnaire (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]).

Selection Control Questionnaire. An individual at every telephone number in the sample completed the selection control questionnaire. Upon contacting a household, its members were enumerated and information on individuals' names, ages, and sex was collected. Using a computer algorithm, one eligible individual age 15 or over in each household was selected to answer the Time Use Questionnaire (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]).

Time Use Questionnaire. The Time Use Questionnaire was designed to collect information on various subject areas, such as individuals' perceptions of time, individuals' paid work and educational activities, the work and educational activities of partners or spouses, and the enjoyment of activities in which individuals participated (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]). For the present study, individuals' time use was used to infer behaviour.

As noted by Gershuny and Robinson (1988), the time individuals spend in activities is their behaviour.

Participants

The target population for the GSS was Canadian residents 15 years of age or older. Residents of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, and full-time residents of institutions, were excluded. The response rate for Cycle 12 was 77.6%; 10,749 respondents provided usable diary information (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]).

For the purposes of the present study, a sub-sample of individuals was taken from the original sample. Family type may affect family resource management. For example, lone parent families have different levels of resources and may manage their resources differently from dual-parent families. As Dooley, Gascon, Lefebvre, and Merrigan (2000) noted, female lone parent families are the second largest group relying on welfare income in Canada, only behind disabled individuals. In order to control for differences in resource management associated with family type, dual-parent families were selected for this study. In addition, only those families with all children under age 13, and in which both parents were employed either full or part-time, were included in the final sample.

Sample Design

Data regarding the time use of Canadians were collected monthly from February 1998 to January 1999 inclusive. Data collection was distributed evenly over a 12-month period in order to get an accurate representation of the seasonal variations affecting time use. Not only is an accurate representation of the seasonal variation in the information important, but also an accurate representation of the daily variation in individuals' activities is imperative. For this reason, care was taken to ensure representation of each

day of the week. Telephone numbers were assigned to particular days and households were deemed eligible for collection for two days after their designated day (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]).

Data Collection

Since 1994, data collection for the GSS has used Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Using CATI, the survey questions appear on the interviewer's monitor, and responses are entered into the computer. Calls were placed to households from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., Monday to Friday inclusive, and from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]).

Measures

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in the present study is time-based work-family conflict; it represents either conflict or consensus. Time-based work-family conflict is one, overarching variable with conflict at one end of the time-based work-family conflict continuum, and consensus at the other end of the continuum. According to conflict theory, conflict is characterized by disagreement, whereas consensus is characterized by agreement (White & Klein, 2002). Areas characterized by consensus are areas that have been managed successfully (White & Klein, 2002).

In the GSS (Cycle 12), "time crunch" was measured by ten questions. The responses to these ten questions are dichotomous (see Appendix). Responding affirmatively to seven or more questions is indicative of individuals being extremely time crunched (Frederick, 1995). Accordingly, responding affirmatively to six or fewer questions is indicative of individuals not being extremely time crunched.

In the present study, responding affirmatively to seven or more time crunch questions is considered indicative of individuals experiencing conflict, whereas responding affirmatively to four or fewer questions is considered indicative of individuals experiencing consensus. Respondents who answered affirmatively to five or six questions were not included in the sample, as they were not seen as experiencing extreme time crunch, nor were they seen as having achieved consensus. Respondents who answered affirmatively to seven or more questions were assigned a score of zero (conflict), and those who responded affirmatively to four or fewer questions were assigned a score of one (consensus).

Independent Variables

Structure

Three variables were used to measure the structure of the family: the gender of the parent, the number of children, and the ages of children. Information on each of these variables was recorded.

Gender. Gender was measured by the sex of the respondent and is a dichotomous variable. Men were assigned a score of zero, and women were assigned a score of one.

Number of children. Respondents were asked how many members lived in their household. Because only two-parent households were selected for inclusion in the study, the variable number of children in the household was calculated by subtracting two from the household size. For example, households with three members were coded as having one child. Number of children was used as a continuous measure.

Ages of children. A set of dummy variables was created from information on children of particular ages living in the respondents' household in order to distinguish

among those families with all younger children, all older children, and both younger and older children. Families with all young children (that is, those with all children between 0-4 years of age) were assigned a score of one; others were assigned a score of zero.

Families with all older children (that is, those with all children between ages 5-12) were assigned a score of one; others were assigned a score of zero. The reference group is comprised of those families with both younger and older children (children ages 0-12).

Resources

Two variables were used to measure a family's resources: respondent's score on the Blishen socio-economic index and respondent's time spent in paid work. The public use micro data file includes information on education and income; however, it includes respondents' scores on the Blishen socio-economic index as well. Although education and income variables could be used, Blishen values are viewed as a more comprehensive measure of resources. The socio-economic index is a "unidimensional contextual indicator which locates individuals in the Canadian occupational structure" (Blishen, Carroll, & Moore, 1987, p. 465). The Blishen socio-economic index for occupations is an integration of income and education levels for occupations; in the index, education and income are weighted equally (Blishen et al., 1987). For this reason, scores on the Blishen socio-economic index were used instead of income and education to measure resources.

Socio-economic status. The information gathered in response to the questions pertaining to respondents' job titles and work-related tasks was analyzed by Statistics Canada and respondents were assigned values on the Blishen socio-economic index for occupations. In the public use micro data file, this information is provided in ordinal-level

categories. In order to create a continuous measure from the ordinal-level data, the midpoint of each category was used.

Time spent in paid work. Respondents were asked how many hours of paid work they performed in the past week. The number of hours of paid work was used as a continuous measure.

Negotiation

Negotiation is a technique used by many families to manage their conflict (White & Klein, 2002). The use of negotiation is limited to those situations in which the achievement of a goal depends upon more than one individual or group (White and Klein, 2002). In order for negotiation to occur, an individual must have someone with whom to negotiate. Employees and employers negotiate the use of flextime. In the present study negotiation was represented and measured by its outcome: use or non-use of a flexible work schedule. In the GSS (Cycle 12), respondents were asked if they had a flexible work schedule. A variable on use of flextime was created from the question “do you have a flexible schedule that allows you to choose the time you begin and end your work day” (Statistics Canada, [n.d.], p. D-232). Respondents who did not use a flexible work schedule were assigned a score of one, and those who used a flexible work schedule were assigned a score of zero.

Data Analysis

To measure the effectiveness of flextime in moderating the effect of gender on individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict, given their number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, and number of hours spent in paid employment, an interaction term was used. The main effects of number of children, ages of children,

socio-economic status, and number of hours spent in paid employment were included in the model to control for their strong influence on individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime. Logistic regression was used to analyze the significance of the predictor variables. As noted by Wright (1995), the assumptions of logistic regression must be considered.

Various assumptions must be met in order to conduct logistic regression (Wright, 1995). First, it is assumed that the dependent variable is dichotomous. For the purposes of this study, individuals are categorized as experiencing conflict or consensus; therefore, the first assumption was met. Second, only one outcome can be recorded for every individual in the data. In other words, "a single case can be represented in the data set only once" (Wright, 1995, p. 220). Third, all categories must be mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. Finally, the model must contain all relevant, and no irrelevant, predictors. This assumption, however, is met rarely. The predictors identified as relevant in the literature, and measurable by the data available, were included in the analysis.

There are no specific, agreed-upon rules regarding the adequacy of sample sizes in logistic regression (Peng, So, Stage, & St. John, 2002). Peng, Lee, and Ingersoll (2002) have suggested using formulas for calculating sample size used in multivariate analyses, such as those provided by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). Tabachnick and Fidell have provided two formulas for calculating sample size in multiple regression: $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (used to test multiple correlation) and $N \geq 104 + m$ (used to test the significance of individual predictors). They suggested calculating the N using both formulas and choosing the larger N as the minimum number of cases (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). These formulas were employed and no problems were found.

Multicollinearity among predictor variables is a concern in regression analysis. Tests of association among predictor variables were conducted for the model and no problems were encountered. In addition to the multicollinearity concerns that exist in regression analysis, additional concerns arise from the use of interaction terms (Jaccard, 2001). Specifically, multicollinearity may exist among the interaction terms and the individual components from which they are created; this is seen as problematic when the correlation among them is .98 or greater (Jaccard, 2001). In most cases, multicollinearity among interaction terms and the components from which they are created does not exist (Jaccard, 2001); however, tests of association among interaction terms and their individual components were conducted and problems were handled appropriately.

Statistics Canada cautions users of the Time Use data against performing analyses and releasing results performed on unweighted data (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]). A sample weight variable was provided in the data set. This weight variable was rescaled by calculating the average weight and dividing the weight for each observation by the average. Survey weights are used to account for geographic over representation and under representation. They are also used to account for the over representation and under representation of age-sex groups, months of the year, or days of the week in the unweighted file (Statistics Canada, [n.d.]).

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Description of Sample

In this chapter, characteristics of the sample of respondents experiencing conflict and consensus will be presented. Characteristics of the sample are discussed and compared to those of the Canadian population. In addition, the results of the correlation analysis and logistic regression analysis will be discussed.

Of the 10,749 individuals who responded to the GSS, Cycle 12, only those meeting the sample selection criteria were included in the analysis; that is, only those respondents who were married or living common-law, from intact or step-families with at least one child aged 0 – 12, and who worked either full-time or part-time and whose partner worked either full-time or part-time were included in the sample, for a sample size of 525. The median age of respondents in the sample was 35 years, with the youngest individuals aged 20 years and the oldest individuals aged 57 years. The majority of the sample, 89.8%, was 25 to 44 years old. In comparison, the median age of the Canadian population is 37.6 years (Statistics Canada, 2004). The majority of the sample, 82.2%, was married and only 17.8% were living common-law. Of Canadians who are married to, or living common-law with, a partner of the opposite sex, 83.6% are married and 16.4% are living common-law (Statistics Canada, 2005). With regard to housing, 423 respondents (80.7%) in the sample lived in single-detached housing, and for 85.5% of respondents, a member of the respondent's dwelling owned the residence. Of the Canadian population, only 57.3 % live in single-detached housing (Statistics Canada, 2002b). In this dual-earner sample, the majority of respondents in the sample lived in Ontario (37.5%) and Quebec (31.0%), compared to 38.0% and 24.1% respectively, of the Canadian population. Few respondents

lived in the Prairie region, 15.1% compared to 16.9% nationally, and fewer still lived in British Columbia (9.6%, compared to 13.0% nationally) and the Atlantic region of Canada (6.8%, compared to 7.6% nationally) (Statistics Canada, 2002a).

Time-based work-family conflict

Differences were apparent in the number of individuals experiencing conflict and consensus. Of those meeting the selection criteria for the present study, 42% were experiencing conflict. The majority of respondents, 58%, were experiencing consensus.

Gender

Differences were apparent in the percentage of men and women experiencing conflict and those experiencing consensus. Of those respondents experiencing conflict, a small majority were women (58.0%). In contrast, of those experiencing consensus, a small majority were men (55.9%) (Table 1).

Number of Children

Substantial differences were not apparent between those experiencing conflict, or experiencing consensus, and number of children. The majority of those experiencing conflict and those experiencing consensus had one or two children. Of those experiencing conflict, 51.1% had two children and 29.2% had one child. Similarly, of those experiencing consensus, 51.0% had two children, and 35.6% had one child. Of those experiencing conflict, 19.7% had three to five children. Of those experiencing consensus, 13.3% had three to five children (Table 1).

Table 1

Determinants of Time-based Work-family Conflict by Conflict and Consensus (n=525)

Variables	<u>Time-based Work-family Conflict</u>			
	<u>Conflict</u>		<u>Consensus</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Respondents	219	100.0	306	100.0
Gender				
Men	92	42.0	171	55.9
Women	127	58.0	135	44.1
Total	219	100.0	306	100.0
Missing cases (0)				
Number of children				
One child	64	29.2	109	35.6
Two children	112	51.1	156	51.0
Three children	38	17.4	31	10.1
Four children	4	1.8	9	2.9
Five children	1	.5	1	.3
Total	219	100.0	306	100.0
Missing cases (0)	0		0	
Ages of children				
All young children	65	29.8	111	36.2
All older children	100	45.9	139	45.4
Young and older children	53	24.2	57	18.6
Total	218	99.9	307	100.0
Missing cases (0)				
Socio-economic status				
Mean	45.9		45.1	
Time spent in paid work				
Mean	41.1		38.3	

Variables	<u>Time-based Work-family Conflict</u>			
	<u>Conflict</u>		<u>Consensus</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Flexitime				
No	152	69.7	167	54.6
Yes	66	30.3	139	45.4
Total	218	100.0	306	100.0
Missing cases (1)	1			

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Ages of Children

Differences were apparent among respondents experiencing conflict or consensus and ages of children. Of those experiencing conflict, 29.8% had all young children, defined as children under five years old. Of those experiencing consensus, 36.2% had all young children. There was little difference in the percentage of respondents experiencing conflict or consensus and having all older children, defined as children between five and twelve years old: Of those experiencing conflict, 45.9% had all older children; of those experiencing consensus, 45.4% had all older children. Differences were again apparent in the percentage of respondents experiencing conflict or consensus and having both young and older children, defined as children aged 0-12. Of those experiencing conflict, 24.2% had both young and older children. Of those experiencing consensus, 18.6% had both young and older children (Table 1).

Socio-economic status

Substantial differences are not apparent in the percentages of those experiencing conflict or consensus and socio-economic status. Fifty-three percent of those who experienced conflict, compared to 49.8% of those who experienced consensus, had a socio-economic status below the mean. The distribution of socio-economic status was bimodal, with peaks of the distribution occurring at 32 and 57 on the Blisshen index (Table 1).

Time spent in paid work

Nearly 41% of those who experienced conflict, compared to 42.2% of those who experienced consensus, spent less than the mean number of hours per week in paid work. In contrast to the distribution of socio-economic status, time spent in paid work had a

unimodal distribution with one quarter of respondents (24.9%) spending 40 hours per week in paid work.

Flexitime

Substantial differences were apparent in the percentage of respondents using a flexible work schedule. Of those who experienced conflict, 30.3% used a flexible work schedule. In contrast, of those who experienced consensus, 45.4% used a flexible work schedule.

Logistic Regression Analysis

Pearson's r was used to measure multicollinearity among the predictor variables. Multicollinearity is problematic when the intercorrelations among a set of independent variables is .85 or higher (Polit, 1996). Although many correlations were found to be significant, none was found to be at a level of .8 or greater (Table 2). Multicollinearity among interaction terms and the terms from which they were created is viewed as problematic when the correlation among them is .98 or greater (Jaccard, 2001). The correlation among the interaction term and the terms from which it was created was less than .98 (Table 2).

The results of the logistic regression analysis are shown in Table 3. Logistic regression analysis was used to measure the moderating effect of flexitime on gender on individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict, controlling for number and ages of children, socio-economic status, and number of hours spent in paid employment. All of the predictor variables were entered into the model simultaneously.

Table 2

Bivariate Correlations for Predictor Variables

Variables	Gender	Number of children	All younger children	All older children	Both younger and older children	Socio-economic status	Work hours	Flexitime	Gender by flexitime
Gender	1	-.064	.017	-.084	.083	-.144**	-.442**	.124**	.711**
Number of children		1	-.399**	.039	.416**	.048	.086*	-.005	-.027
All younger Children			1	-.651**	-.364**	-.039	-.104*	.071	.045
All older Children				1	-.470**	-.003	.075	-.042	-.055
Both younger and older children					1	.049	.029	-.031	.016
Socio-economic status						1	.192*	-.174**	-.131**
Work hours							1	-.038	-.278**
Flexitime								1	.567**
Gender by flexitime									1

N = 525.

* p < 0.05, two-tailed test, ** p < 0.01, two tailed test.

Table 3

Logistic Regression Results of the Moderating Effects of Flextime on Time-based Work-family Conflict given Family Structure, Family Resources, and Parents' Workplace Characteristics

Variable Category	β Log Odds	SE	Wald	p Value	e^{β} Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio 95% CI
Gender						
Female	-1.118	0.338	10.937	0.001	0.327	0.168-0.634
Male	0.000				1.000	
Number of children	-0.166	0.142	1.360	0.244	0.847	0.641-1.119
All younger children						
Yes	0.214	0.296	0.520	0.471	1.238	0.693-2.213
No	0.000				0.000	
All older children						
Yes	0.064	0.256	0.062	0.803	1.066	0.646-1.760
No	0.000				1.000	
Socio-economic status	-0.006	0.006	1.242	0.265	0.994	0.982-1.005
Work hours	-0.028	0.008	12.454	0.000	0.972	0.957-0.988
Flextime						
Yes	-0.832	0.279	8.865	0.003	0.435	0.252-0.752
No	0.000				1.000	
Gender by flextime	0.353	.390	0.818	0.366	1.423	0.662-3.059
Intercept	3.256	0.858	14.396	0.000	25.943	
-2 Log likelihood	671.224					
χ^2	34.093					
Number of cases	525					

A total of 347 individuals were classified correctly and 177 individuals were classified incorrectly. In total, 66.2% of the respondents were classified correctly. Of those experiencing conflict, 44.0% were classified correctly and of those experiencing consensus 81.9% were classified correctly. The proportion of explained variance for this model was low. Only 10.2% of the observed variability in time-based work-family conflict was explained by the independent variables.

Gender

For individuals with flextime, the odds of experiencing consensus were significantly less for mothers than fathers (Odds Ratio [OR] = 0.327; 95% Confidence Interval [CI] = .168- .634; $p = .001$). The variable “gender” is part of an interaction term in the model; therefore, the coefficient for gender represents a factor by which the odds of consensus decrease for mothers compared to fathers, but only for those scored zero on variables included in the interaction term, that is only for those with flextime. For those with flextime, women, as opposed to men, have significantly decreased odds of experiencing consensus.

Gender by flextime was not a statistically significant predictor of time-based work-family conflict (Odds Ratio [OR] = 1.423; 95% Confidence Interval = .662 – 3.059; $p = .366$). Flextime was not found to significantly moderate the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict.

Number of Children

Number of children was not a statistically significant predictor of time-based work-family conflict. The odds of experiencing consensus decreased as the number of children increased, holding constant the other variables in the model (OR = .847; 95% CI = .641 –

1.119; $p = .244$). No direction was predicted for the association between number of children and time-based work-family conflict, as results of previous studies are mixed.

Ages of Children

The presence of all younger children was not a statistically significant predictor of time-based work-family conflict. The odds of experiencing consensus were greater for those with all younger children compared to those without all younger children, holding constant the other variables in the model (OR = 1.238; 95% CI = .693 – 2.213; $p = .471$). No direction was predicted for the association between presence of all younger children and time-based work-family conflict because results of previous research are mixed.

The presence of all older children was not a statistically significant predictor of time-based work-family conflict. The odds of experiencing consensus were greater for those with all older children compared to those without all older children, holding constant the other variables in the model (OR = 1.066; 95% CI = .646 – 1.760; $p = .803$). No direction was predicted for the association between presence of all older children and time-based work-family conflict because results of previous research are mixed.

The significance of these predictor variables was assessed using the likelihood ratio test, a test of significance using the chi-square distribution. “The log likelihood value reflects the likelihood that the data would be observed given the parameter estimates” (Pampel, 2000, p. 45). The calculated chi-square value (3.466) did not reach the critical chi-square value (Table 4).

Table 4

Likelihood Ratio Test Results for Variable Ages of Children

Variable	-2 Log Likelihood		
	Full Model	Reduced Model	χ^2 value ^a
Ages of children	709.188	712.654	3.466

Note: Using 95% CI, the critical χ^2 value with two degrees of freedom = 5.99.

^a The difference between $-2 \log$ likelihood for the full model and the $-2 \log$ likelihood for the reduced model.

Socio-economic Status

Respondent's socio-economic status was not a statistically significant predictor of time-based work-family conflict. The odds of experiencing consensus decreased as socio-economic status increased, holding constant the other variables in the model (OR = 0.994; 95% CI = .982 – 1.005; $p = .265$). The finding was not in the expected direction. It was expected that as socio-economic status increased, individuals' likelihood of experiencing consensus would increase.

Number of hours of paid work

Number of hours of paid work was a statistically significant predictor of time-based work-family conflict. The odds of experiencing consensus decreased significantly as number of hours in paid work increased, holding other variables in the model constant (OR = 0.972; 95% CI = .957 - .988; $p = .000$). The finding was in the expected direction. It was expected that as number of hours in paid work increased, individuals' likelihood of experiencing consensus would decrease.

Flextime

The variable "flextime" was part of an interaction term in the model; therefore, the coefficient for flextime represents a factor by which the odds of consensus decrease for those without flextime compared to those with flextime, but only for those scored zero on variables included in the interaction term, that is, for fathers. The odds of experiencing consensus were significantly less for fathers without flextime compared to fathers with flextime (Odds Ratio [OR] = 0.435; 95% Confidence Interval [CI] = .252 - .752; $p = .003$).

Summary

The purpose of the present study was to measure the extent to which flextime moderates the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict in dual-earner families holding constant number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, and number of hours in paid work. In the following chapter, the results of the logistic regression analysis presented in this chapter will be discussed.

CHAPTER V

Discussion and Conclusions

Previous research indicates that many factors affect the experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime. The purpose of the present study was to measure the extent to which flextime moderates the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict in dual-earner families holding constant number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, and number of hours in paid work. In this chapter, the results of the logistic regression are discussed. In addition, the limitations of the study, directions for future research, and conclusions are presented.

Logistic Regression Results

Gender

In past research, women have been found to experience greater time-based work-family conflict than men (Eagle et al., 1997; Frone et al., 1992; Hill et al., 2001; Ezra & Deckman, 1996; Parasuraman et al., 1992; Paden & Buehler, 1995). Results of previous research on the relationship between gender and flextime are mixed (Sharpe et al., 2002; Glass & Camarigg, 1992; Milliken et al., 1998; Ernst Kossek et al., 1999; Karambayya & Reilly, 1992; Presser, 1995; Bowers Andrew et al., 2004; Hill et al., 2001; Ezra & Deckman, 1996). Results of the logistic regression analysis conducted for the present study showed that, for individuals with flextime, the odds of experiencing consensus were significantly less for mothers than fathers. The result was unexpected. It was hypothesized that use of flextime would help mothers to balance work and family, therefore increasing their odds of experiencing consensus compared to fathers. The hypothesis was based on the rationale that mothers assume greater responsibility for

childcare and devote a greater number of hours to childcare than fathers. Previous research has found that mothers spend more time in childcare than fathers (Gauthier, Smeeding, & Fursternberg, Jr., 2004) and that children spend more time with their mothers than fathers (Sandberg & Hofferth, 2001). It was thought that use of a flexible work schedule would help mothers to balance this greater responsibility and greater number of hours more so than fathers.

The interaction term “gender by flextime” is not significant, indicating the relationship between gender and time-based work-family conflict was not moderated significantly by flextime.

Number of Children

Results of previous research on the relationship between number of children and work-family conflict are mixed (Voydanoff, 1988; Tausig & Fenwick, 2001; Madsen, 2003) and number of children and flextime (Sharpe et al., 2002). Results of the logistic regression analysis indicated that as the number of children increased, the odds of experiencing consensus decreased, although not significantly. This finding is in agreement with previous research (Madsen, 2003). Madsen (2003) found, of those who did paid work at home at least two days per week, a significant positive relationship between number of children and time-based work interference with family and time-based family interference with work.

Ages of Children

Previous research demonstrates mixed results on the effect of ages of children on the experience of time-based work-family conflict (Campbell & Moen, 1992; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984; Higgins et al., 1994), and ages of children and flextime (Sharpe et al., 2002;

Billings & Sharpe, 1999; Hughes & Galinsky, 1994; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Results of the logistic regression analysis indicated that the odds of experiencing consensus were greater for those with all younger children compared to those without all younger children; in addition, they indicated that the odds of experiencing consensus were greater for those with all older children compared to those without all older children, although neither effect was significant. The reference group for the variable “ages of children” was families with both younger and older children. These findings raise questions as to the effect of the presence of children in different age groups on parents’ experience of time-based work-family conflict. Voydanoff and Kelly (1984) suggested that pre-school aged children require close supervision and that school-aged children’s activities often conflict with parents’ work schedules. The finding of the present study suggests neither of these scenarios, on their own, affects parents’ experience of time-based work-family conflict. Rather, perhaps the combination of closely supervising pre-school aged children and coordinating school-aged children’s activities around work schedules is problematic. Further investigation into the effect of having both pre-school and school-aged children on time-based work-family conflict is warranted, in light of the finding of the present study.

Socio-economic Status

Previous research reveals a negative association between education and income, and experience of time-based work-family conflict (Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984) and a positive association between education and income, and flextime (Sharpe et al., 2002; Billings & Sharpe, 1999; Karambayya & Reilly, 1992). In the present study, the effects of income and education were reflected in occupational status as measured by the Blisshen socio-economic index for occupations, where higher values on the index indicate higher

occupational status. Results of the logistic regression analysis indicated the odds of experiencing consensus decrease as socio-economic status increased. Although this finding is unexpected, it was not significant. Voydanoff and Kelly (1984) found that in terms of perceived time shortage, individuals with higher incomes have been found to experience less time shortage than those with lower incomes. Voydanoff and Kelly (1984) suggested other resources, such as skills and human capital assets, may be associated with higher incomes and may help those with higher incomes to meet their time demands. The finding of the present study suggests perhaps the skills and human capital assets suggested by Voydanoff and Kelly are not associated with income for dual-earner families.

Number of hours in paid work

Results of previous research indicate a positive relationship between number of hours in paid work and time-based work-family conflict (Campbell & Moen, 1992; Voydanoff, 1988; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984) and a relationship between number of hours of paid work and flextime (Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987). Results of the logistic regression analysis suggest that the odds of experiencing consensus decrease significantly as number of hours in paid work increase; this finding was expected and is in agreement with previous research (Voydanoff, 1988; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984; Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985). Perhaps as individuals spend an increasing number of hours in paid work, the time they are spending with their families is decreasing, leading to a decreased likelihood of experiencing consensus.

Flextime

Previous research shows a negative relationship between flextime and time-based work-family conflict (Bond et al., 2002; Duxbury, Higgins, & Coghill, 2003; Ernst Kossek

et al., 1999). Results of the logistic regression analysis suggested that, for fathers, the odds of experiencing consensus were significantly less for those without flextime compared to those with flextime. The finding is in contrast to previous research (Ezra & Deckman, 1996). Ezra and Deckman found no association between fathers' use of a flexible work schedule and satisfaction regarding work-family balance.

The purpose of this research was to measure the extent to which flextime moderates the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict in dual-earner families given number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, and number of hours in paid work. Gender, number of hours in paid work, and use of flextime were the only statistically significant predictors of time-based work-family conflict among the variables in this study. A statistically significant relationship was not found between time-based work-family conflict and the following predictor variables: number of children, ages of children, and socio-economic status. In addition, no statistically significant relationship was found between the interaction term, gender by flextime, and time-based work-family conflict. The results of this study indicate that flextime did not significantly moderate the effects of gender on the odds of experiencing consensus.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations characterized the study. One limitation was the limitation to the variables in the GSS, Cycle 12. Several variables were identified in the literature review as affecting individuals' use of flextime and experience of time-based work-family conflict. Six main effects -- gender, number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, number of hours in paid work, and use of flextime -- and one interaction term, gender by flextime, were examined. The main effects and the interaction term are not the only

variables that have been found to affect time-based work-family conflict; however, only these variables were available in the data set and therefore used.

Information regarding the time use of the respondent's spouse and children may help to explain the time-based work-family conflict experienced by respondents. Information regarding the time spent by respondents and their partners in household tasks and childcare was collected and available in the public use micro data file. Although a substantial amount of research has been conducted regarding time spent in household tasks and childcare, these ideas were not common in the literature on flextime and time-based work-family conflict; therefore this information was not used. The number of hours spent in paid work was used in the present study; therefore an accounting of time spent in an activity (paid work) was used. No information regarding children's time use was available. In Cycle 12, only one individual aged 15 or over in each household was selected to answer the Time Use Questionnaire (GSS, 1998). Because no information was collected regarding children's time use, the amount of time children spend on household tasks and the amount of time they spend caring for other family members is unknown. The extent to which children perform household tasks and care for other family members may affect parents' experience of time-based work-family conflict and use of flextime; therefore, use of this information may have strengthened the present study.

The data set contained information on the time-based work-family conflict experienced by only one family member in each household (the respondent), and contained information regarding the use of flextime by only the respondent. Questions regarding the respondent's partner's use of flextime or experience of time-based work-family conflict were not included in the survey. It is believed that the present study would have been

made stronger by this information. This information may have provided insight into whether a partner's use of a flexible work schedule affects an individual's experience of time-based work-family conflict.

Second, the study was limited by the measurement of the variables. The variable socio-economic status was used to measure a family's resources. In the public use micro data file, the information on individuals' socio-economic status was measured using the Blishen socio-economic index and this information was provided in ordinal level categories. These ordinal level categories were recoded to the mid-point in order to create an interval level variable. Using individuals' actual Blishen values, rather than the mid-point of an ordinal level category would be preferable. Ordinal-level categories do not discern between individuals at the lower and higher ends of the category, and recoding ordinal-level categories does not help to distinguish between those at the lower and higher ends of the category.

The variable "time-based work-family conflict" was created from the ten questions comprising the "time crunch" variable. Although this information was provided in the public use micro data file at an interval level of measurement, it was recoded to a dichotomous level of measurement. Recoding this variable to a dichotomous level of measurement is an accepted practice (Frederick, 1995). Perhaps more informed results than were presented in the present study would have resulted from use of this variable at an interval level of measurement.

The model used in the present study has several main effects, one interaction term, and a dichotomous dependent variable. Several other models, with additional interaction terms, were attempted. Multicollinearity was problematic in these models. Use of a

dichotomous dependent variable necessitated the use of logistic regression and limited the number of interaction terms that could be included in the model without multicollinearity becoming problematic. Perhaps use of the variable “time-based work-family conflict” as continuous rather than dichotomous would allow for use of additional interaction terms.

Third, the sample selected for the present study was narrowly defined. A subsample was created using several variables and specific criteria had to be met for inclusion in the sample. Perhaps a less narrowly defined sample including, for example, three-generation families and lone parent families, may make the findings of the study more meaningful.

Implications of the Study and Directions for Future Research

The findings of the present study indicate a need for additional research into the relationship between flextime and time-based work-family conflict. There are factors other than those examined here that affect individuals’ use of flextime and experience of time-based work-family conflict, for example the amount of supervisor support given to employees, as well as employees’ occupational level, may affect the effectiveness of flextime in reducing time-based work-family conflict. In addition, part-time work may affect the effectiveness of flextime. Part-time work was not prevalent in the literature review conducted for this study; however, investigation into its effects on time-based work-family conflict may be warranted. Future research should examine the moderating effect of flextime on other variables, including those identified in the literature review but not included in the equation of the present study, on the effectiveness of flextime in reducing time-based work-family conflict.

The finding that the odds of experiencing consensus decrease as socio-economic status increases should be explored further. The finding contradicts that of previous studies and was therefore unexpected. It was thought that individuals with higher Blisshen values would have other skills and human capital assets that would help them to manage their time. This idea is neither supported nor negated by the findings of the present study and further research into this area is warranted.

The finding that the effects of gender on the odds of consensus appear not to be moderated significantly by the use of flextime should be explored further. This finding raises questions from an individual, a family, and an organizational standpoint. Future research should examine the effects of gender role ideology on individuals' use of flextime and experience of time-based work-family conflict. The ways in which individuals identify themselves with regard to their family and marital roles, and the extent to which individuals adopt traditional gender roles, may affect their use of flextime and their time-based work-family conflict.

From a family perspective, the effectiveness of flextime in reducing time-based work-family conflict may be affected by the time spent in household or childcare tasks. Flextime may help people to complete particular time-sensitive household or childcare tasks, such as bringing children to school, more so than it helps them to complete non time-sensitive tasks, such as laundry. The effectiveness of flextime in reducing time-based work-family conflict may be dependent upon the time-sensitivity of the tasks for which people are responsible, not their gender. Further research into the tasks completed during the time away from work afforded by flextime is warranted.

The finding that the effects of gender on the odds of consensus appear not to be moderated significantly by the use of flextime has implications for organizations as well as families. Many organizations offer flextime to their employees to help them balance work and family. As the study results indicate, gender is significantly related to individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict; however, flextime appears not to moderate the effect of gender on time-based work-family conflict. Organizations offer employees flextime to help them balance work and family; however, use of flextime may not be helping all employees equally. Future research should look at the effectiveness of family-friendly policies other than flextime and at the effectiveness of flextime in combination with other family-friendly policies, such as flex place.

The findings of this study underscore the need to collect data on the time use of all individuals within a household, not only one person. The information provided by one individual represents only a snapshot of the activities occurring in a household from that individual's perspective. Future research should look not only at the time use, experience of time-based work-family conflict, and use of flextime of the respondent, but also of other family members. Perhaps an individual's time-based work-family conflict is not moderated by the use of flextime; however, his or her spouse's time-based work-family conflict is moderated by the individual's use of flextime. Perhaps children's time use, specifically their time spent in household or childcare tasks, affects the effectiveness of flextime in reducing time-based work-family conflict. Questions such as these cannot be answered without collecting data from all family members within a household.

Conclusions

The results of this study contribute to the understanding of the factors affecting time-based work-family conflict and the role of flextime in reducing this conflict. The effect of several factors -- gender, number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, work hours, and use of flextime -- and the moderating effects of gender by flextime, were examined. Data from Statistics Canada were used and results are generalizable to the Canadian population aged 15 and over in dual-earner families with children aged 0-12. Gender, work hours, and flextime were found to be associated, significantly, with individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict; number of children, ages of children, socio-economic status, and gender by flextime were not found to be significantly associated with individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict. Additional research is needed to examine other factors associated with the experience of time-based work-family conflict. Flextime was not found to moderate the effect of gender on individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict; however, flextime may moderate the effects of other factors that affect the experience of time-based work-family conflict. Additional research into the moderating effects of flextime is warranted.

Many individuals experience difficulty balancing work and family. There are no signs of this difficulty diminishing and, therefore, this area of study is important. Identification of the factors that decrease individuals' experience of time-based work-family conflict remains an important challenge for researchers. Identification of the factors that help to decrease time-based work-family conflict will help and guide those responsible for creating family-friendly organizational policies to write and implement policies that are effective in reducing employees' time-based work-family conflict. Identification of the

factors that help to decrease time-based work-family conflict will move organizations from having policies that are good “on paper” to having policies that are good “in practice.”

Appendix

Questions Constituting the Time Crunch Variable

The following 10 questions were used to measure the extent to which respondents are time crunched.

1. Do you plan to slow down in the coming year?
2. Do you consider yourself a workaholic?
3. When you need more time, do you tend to cut back on your sleep?
4. At the end of the day, do you often feel that you have not accomplished what you had set out to do?
5. Do you worry that you don't spend enough time with your family or friends?
6. Do you feel that you're constantly under stress trying to accomplish more than you can handle?
7. Do you feel trapped in a daily routine?
8. Do you feel that you just don't have time for fun anymore?
9. Do you often feel under stress when you don't have enough time?
10. Would you like to spend more time alone?

(Statistics Canada. [n.d.]. *General Social Survey: 1998 – Cycle 12 – Time use survey:*

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