EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF SUPPORT FOR FAMILY FRIENDLY INITIATIVES IN THE WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

The present research investigated the relationships between levels of work-family/family-work conflict, the use of family friendly initiatives, and levels of perceived supervisor, co-worker, and overall organisational support. It has been suggested that the use and effectiveness of family friendly initiatives may be compromised due to unsupportive supervisor attitudes, co-workers, and organisational cultures. Thus, the relative importance of family friendly initiatives and informal workplace supports for the reduction of work-family conflict, and the influence of informal workplace supports on the use of these initiatives were of particular interest. Participants were employees in four medium to large organisations that were members of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, Work and Family Network. A questionnaire was developed that included existing scales as well as original items. Overall, 279 male and female employees returned useable questionnaires (a response rate of 37%). No significant relationships were found between the use of family friendly initiatives and work-family or family-work conflict. However, significant relationships were found between levels of work-family conflict and supervisor, co-worker, and overall workplace support. These informal workplace supportive variables were also shown to be more important to the prediction of work-family and family-work conflict, than was the use of family friendly initiatives. Levels of work-family conflict were greater for men than for women, and men's use of family friendly initiatives was significantly related to their perceptions of informal workplace support. No such relationship was found for women. The research demonstrated that informal workplace support was more important to the reduction of work-family and family-work conflict than the number of initiatives used. The importance of work-family conflict to men was highlighted, demonstrating the relevance of family friendly initiatives for both genders. The attitudes and expectations in the workplace that limit the use of initiatives, particularly by men, need to be changed. When introducing a family friendly programme, the needs of employees, the quality of the initiatives, the attitudes of supervisors and co-workers, and the expectations and structure of work within the organisation, must all be addressed to ensure that employees feel able to make use of the family friendly initiatives available.

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History of the Work-Family Interface

Since the industrial revolution when the separation of public and private domains occurred, women have been placed in the private domain taking care of the home and children, and men have been in the public domain earning money to support the family (Cott, 1977). These roles were clearly defined as separate spheres, and there was no need to consider an interaction between them. The structure of work in the public sphere was built around the ideal of the man at work who had a wife at home to care for the family and private events. However, the changes that have occurred in the last 30 to 40 years, have included more women entering the workforce, and men beginning to take a more active role in the care of children. These changes have lead to the emergence of the interaction or interface between work and family domains as an important issue.

The number of women entering the workforce has been one of the most significant changes over the last forty years. In 1951, 18% of the New Zealand female population over the age of 15 years were employed, in comparison to 52% in 1996 (Census & Statistics Department, 1951; Statistics New Zealand, 1996). From 1981 to 1991, the percentage of mothers in the workforce with children aged one to four increased from 30% to 45%. Single parent and dual-earner families are also common in the New Zealand labour force. In 1991, one in five pre-school children were living with a single parent, and 42% of children aged one to four had two parents in paid employment (Statistics New Zealand, 1981-1991, cited in Davey & Callister, 1994). These workforce statistics reflect a global workplace trend. Ontario's Ministry of Community and Social Services (1991) described the workforce of the 1990's and beyond as including a greater number of dual-earner families, more single parent families, more women, a greater proportion of women with children (especially young children), more men with direct responsibility for family tasks, and a greater number of employees caring for the elderly or for people with disabilities. These workforce trends illustrate that the interaction of family and work life is inescapable.

Recent research has documented positive and negative outcomes of the interface between work and family, such as increased domain satisfaction and conflict (Andrews & Bailyn, 1993; Ishii-Kuntz, 1994; Kirchmeyer, 1993). Andrews and Bailyn discuss two models of possible interaction between work and family - segmentation and synergy.

The segmentation model reflects the dominant model in today's workforce, where work and family spheres are viewed as separate and distinct. Andrews and Bailyn (1993) suggest that this model "stems from and reinforces the cultural separation of spheres into public and private" (*p*. 264), and in today's world this separation is likely to lead to conflict as an outcome. The synergistic model details a form of interaction between work and family where the individual finds ways to integrate the public and private arenas, perhaps by changing aspirations and personal definitions of success to accommodate both areas. The synergistic model is characterised by a perception of a positive relationship between domains, in contrast to the segmentation model that is characterised by either no relationship, or a negative relationship between work and family life. As might be expected, individuals who approach work and family with a synergistic outlook are less likely to suffer from conflict and are more likely to experience greater satisfaction in both areas.

Unfortunately, it is the segmentation model that predominates in the literature, and in the workforce. From the research literature, it is apparent that the structure of work has not changed sufficiently from what it was 30 or 40 years ago to accommodate the vastly different workforce today. Despite the existence of this changed workforce, the majority of workplaces can be characterised by work patterns, time commitments, and expectations of employees that are based on the assumption that there is someone at home to take care of domestic responsibilities (Schein, 1993). In the majority of households today, this assumption is incorrect and, as a result, employees must continuously juggle the demands on their time and energy.

According to Andrews and Bailyn (1993), the segmentation model not only dominates in the workplace, but also still dominates male cognitions. Sixty five percent of the men in their research applied the segmentation model to questions about work and family. However, in the female sample, the synergistic model was dominant (applied by 67%). This situation has the potential to be detrimental for both genders. According to these results, men find it more difficult to develop synergy between work and family life than do their female counterparts and, subsequently, are more likely to experience conflict. However, the synergistic model, which predominates for women, is not consistent with the segmentation model in the workplace. As a result, women may experience difficulty in their career advancement unless they are prepared to segment their approach to work and family.

The proposition that women must segment their lives to be successful in the workplace is consistent with marriage and childbirth statistics for male and female managers. These statistics suggest that many successful women have segmented their lives to the extreme in order to achieve this success. Schein (1993, *p*. 22) reported that female executives in the United States were found to remain single (26%), to be divorced or separated (16%), and to have no children (52%), in greater numbers than the national norms. In contrast, 94% of male executives are married.

Consistent with the dominance of the segmentation model in the workplace, most research in this area has concentrated on the negative side of the work-family interface. Kirchmeyer (1993) claimed that this concentration upon negative outcomes could be particularly damaging to the advancement of women in non-traditional occupations. Because women are responsible for the majority of family tasks, concentration on the negative effects this responsibility has upon work may support the low representation of women in senior positions. Kirchmeyer suggests that researchers consider the positive outcomes associated with multiple domain participation, such as enhanced status security and personality enrichment (Thoits, 1983), as well negative spillover, so that the positive aspects are not overlooked in the attempt to combat the negative.

Although the focus on the negative aspects of the work-family interface may perpetuate the low representation of women in senior positions, Schein (1993) argues that it is the very structure of work that makes the combination of work and family lives difficult. She suggests that aspects of this structure, such as performance evaluations based on working long hours, are merely convenient for the organisation and because they are not necessarily job related, they should be changed.

Thus, it can be seen that the interface between work and family lives has become a pertinent and unavoidable issue due to the changes in the workforce and the lack of change in the structure of work. Positive effects have been associated with the combination of multiple roles, including the combination of work and family responsibilities (Thoits, 1983). However, there is great potential in the current situation for conflict or negative spillover from the work to family domain and from the family to work domain. Due to the significant potential for conflict between work and family lives, this remains the focus of the present investigation.

Work-Family Conflict

A definition of work-family conflict that is cited extensively in the literature (Goff, Mount, & Jamison, 1990; Higgins, Duxbury, & Irving, 1992; Loerch, Russell, & Rush, 1989; and Thomas & Ganster, 1995) is that proposed by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964). Kahn et al.'s definition explains work-family conflict as a form of inter-role conflict where the role pressures from the work domain and the family domain are mutually incompatible in some respect. However, a more comprehensive definition of work-family conflict, and one which has received much empirical support, is a bi-directional definition such as that used by Netemeyer, Boles, and McMurrian (1996):

> Work-Family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict in which the general demands of, time devoted to, and strain created by the job interfere with performing family-related responsibilities. Family-Work conflict is a form of inter-role conflict in which the general demands of, time devoted to, and strain created by the family interfere with performing work-related responsibilities (*p.* 401).

The prevalence of work-family conflict is demonstrated by the results of a New York Times poll (Cohen, 1989, cited in Thompson, Thomas & Maier, 1992). The poll showed that 83% of working mothers and 72% of working fathers said they were torn between the conflicting demands of their jobs and the desire to spend more time with their families. This rate of prevalence suggests profound consequences for working parents, particularly when considered in relation to the outcomes that have been associated with work-family conflict.

The consequences of work-family conflict reported in the research are vast. Many researchers have documented the negative effects of work-family conflict on general outcomes such as quality of work life, quality of family life, and overall life satisfaction (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Ayree, 1992; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Higgins et al., 1992; Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Rice, Frone & McFarlin, 1992; Weigel, Weigel, Berger, Cook, & DelCampo, 1995). However, more specific measures of distress have also been related to work-family conflict. Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1992) and Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997) found job distress

and family distress to be positively related to work-family and family-work conflict. In an assessment of the daily consequences of work-family/family-work interference positive relationships were found between these two variables and marital withdrawal, marital anger, and withdrawal from family and work (MacEwen & Barling, 1994). Psychological outcomes, such as depression and anxiety, have been related to work-family conflict (Frone, Russell, & Barnes, 1996; Frone et al., 1992; MacEwen & Barling, 1994; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), as have physical health outcomes such as poor overall health, heavy alcohol use (Frone et al., 1996), blood pressure problems, and somatic complaints (Thomas & Ganster).

In addition to the negative individual outcomes that result from work-family conflict, organisations and workplaces also incur damaging consequences. Crouter (1984) concluded that the impact of conflict between work and family lives may result in employees being "absent, tardy, inattentive, inefficient, or unable to accept new responsibilities at work" (p. 436). This conclusion is supported by further research evidence. Frone et al. (1997) reported that both work-family and family-work conflict were negatively related to work performance. Aryee (1992) found a significant negative relationship between role conflict and work quality, and a significant positive relationship between role conflict and the intention to withdraw from the labour force. Similarly, MacEwen and Barling (1994) found that withdrawal from work was associated with work-family interference.

Work-family conflict has been examined within a number of theoretical frameworks, and these frameworks have received varying degrees of empirical support. Support exists for the application of many of these frameworks to work-family conflict. However, no one theoretical framework entirely accounts for all aspects of work-family conflict.

The Spillover Perspective

"The spillover perspective posits that the structure, values, and experiences in the work arena can either facilitate or undermine a person's ability to discharge responsibilities at home, and vice versa" (Bowen, 1988, p. 185). Therefore, the spillover perspective recognises that the domains of work and family influence each other and cannot be viewed in isolation (Chow & Berheide, 1988). Experiences at work such as job overload or dissatisfaction may lead to work-family conflict as a result of

negative spillover into the family domain and vice versa. Crouter (1984) suggested that research has focused upon the impact of work on family and has neglected the spillover from family to work life. She found that mothers with young children were the most likely group to perceive negative spillover from family to work.

Rational View

The rational view explains the amount of work-family conflict experienced by an individual as a product of the amount of time they spend in both the work and the family domains (Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994; Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991). The amount of time spent in the work domain increases work interference with family, and the amount of time spent in the family domain increases family interference with work. The rational view predicts that because women generally spend more time on family activities and men generally spend more time on work activities, women will experience more family interference with work and men will experience more work interference with family. Research tends to provide some, but not complete, support for the rational model of work-family conflict (Duxbury et al.; Gutek et al.). Gutek et al. reported medium sized correlations between the number of hours spent in a domain and conflict originating from that domain. Findings that women spent more time, overall, in work and family activities than men and experienced more work/family conflict, and that women spent more time in family activities and experienced more family-work conflict (Duxbury et al.), were consistent with the rational model. However, Duxbury et al. also found that women experienced more work-family conflict, despite spending less time in work activities than men.

Gender Role Expectations

Work and family role expectations are "internalised beliefs and attitudes about (a) the personal relevance of a role, (b) the standards of performance of the role, and (c) the manner in which personal resources...are to be committed to performance of the role" (Amatea, Cross, Clark, & Bobby, 1986, *p.* 831).

Traditional gender roles place men outside the home in paid work and women at home caring for the family. According to the gender role model of work-family conflict, the expectations associated with these roles moderate perceptions of work-

family and family-work conflict. Specifically, extra time involved in one's own gender role will be less likely to incite conflict than will extra time in the gender role associated with the opposite sex. For men, the time spent in paid work will not be related to work-family conflict, but time spent in family work will increase their family-work conflict. For women the opposite is true, with no family-work conflict resulting from time spent in family activities, but work-family conflict resulting from time spent in paid work (Gutek et al., 1991)

Thus, whereas the rational view predicts equal levels of conflict for men and women with equal time commitments, the gender role model predicts that women will experience more work-family conflict and men will experience more family-work conflict. The gender role model was generally not supported by Gutek et al.'s (1991) findings.

Role Identity Salience

Wiley (1991) asserted that "An identity is a meaning one attributes to oneself by virtue of occupying a particular position. The self is made up of a collection of identities that are linked to the person's role relationships" (*p.* 496).

An increase in the salience of a role for an individual will be associated with increased investment in that role. Role identity salience predicts that stress will result when conflict occurs between behaviours and/or values that confirm different identities of similar salience, and as a result of inadequate performance of behaviours that confirm highly salient identities (Lobel, 1991; Wiley, 1991). Work-family conflict is likely to occur, for example, if caring for others is a dominant value in the parenting role but conformity to rules and regulations is a dominant value in the work role, particularly when the two roles are equally salient (Lobel).

Utilitarian Approach

The utilitarian approach emphasises the importance of role rewards and costs in determining an individual's investment in a role. An individual's investment in a role will increase as the net rewards associated with that role increase, so long as the rewards are appropriate to the individual's needs (Lobel, 1991). In regard to work-family conflict, the utilitarian approach predicts that conflict will increase as the equality of net

work rewards and net family rewards increases (Lobel). Some support has been found for the application of the utilitarian approach to work and family roles. For example, Amatea et al. (1986) reported that a positive relationship existed between occupational and parental role rewards and measures of role commitment.

Karasek's Job Strain Model

Karasek's (1979, cited in Duxbury et al., 1994) job strain model proposes a structure for understanding the relationship between perceived control and stress. The model asserts that jobs with similar demands may differ in the degree of stress produced in relation to the degree of control the individual has over their work demands (Duxbury et al.). According to this model, having little control over a job that is highly demanding will induce the greatest amount of stress. Research by Duxbury et al. provided some empirical support for this model in relation to work-family conflict. The researchers reported that individuals with little control over their work situation had significantly higher levels of work-family and family-work interference than individuals with more control.

The theoretical frameworks discussed above provide some insight into the possible causes of work-family conflict. However, as with the consequences of work-family conflict, empirical research has identified a vast number of variables that contribute to the occurrence of this type of conflict. Parental commitment, role ambiguity, task complexity, parental demands, and the number of hours worked per week are only some of the variables that have been significantly associated with measures of work-family conflict (e.g., Aryee, 1992). Many other variables, such as job involvement and number of children have also been found to be significantly associated with work-family conflict (Adams et al., 1996; Frone et al., 1992; Loerch et al., 1989).

A number of models of work-family conflict have been proposed that take account of these many antecedents and consequences (e.g., Adams et al., 1996; MacEwen & Barling, 1994; Frone et al., 1992; Higgins et al., 1992; Kopelman et al., 1983; Weigel et al., 1995). An up to date and integrative model of work-family and family-work conflict is shown in Figure 1.
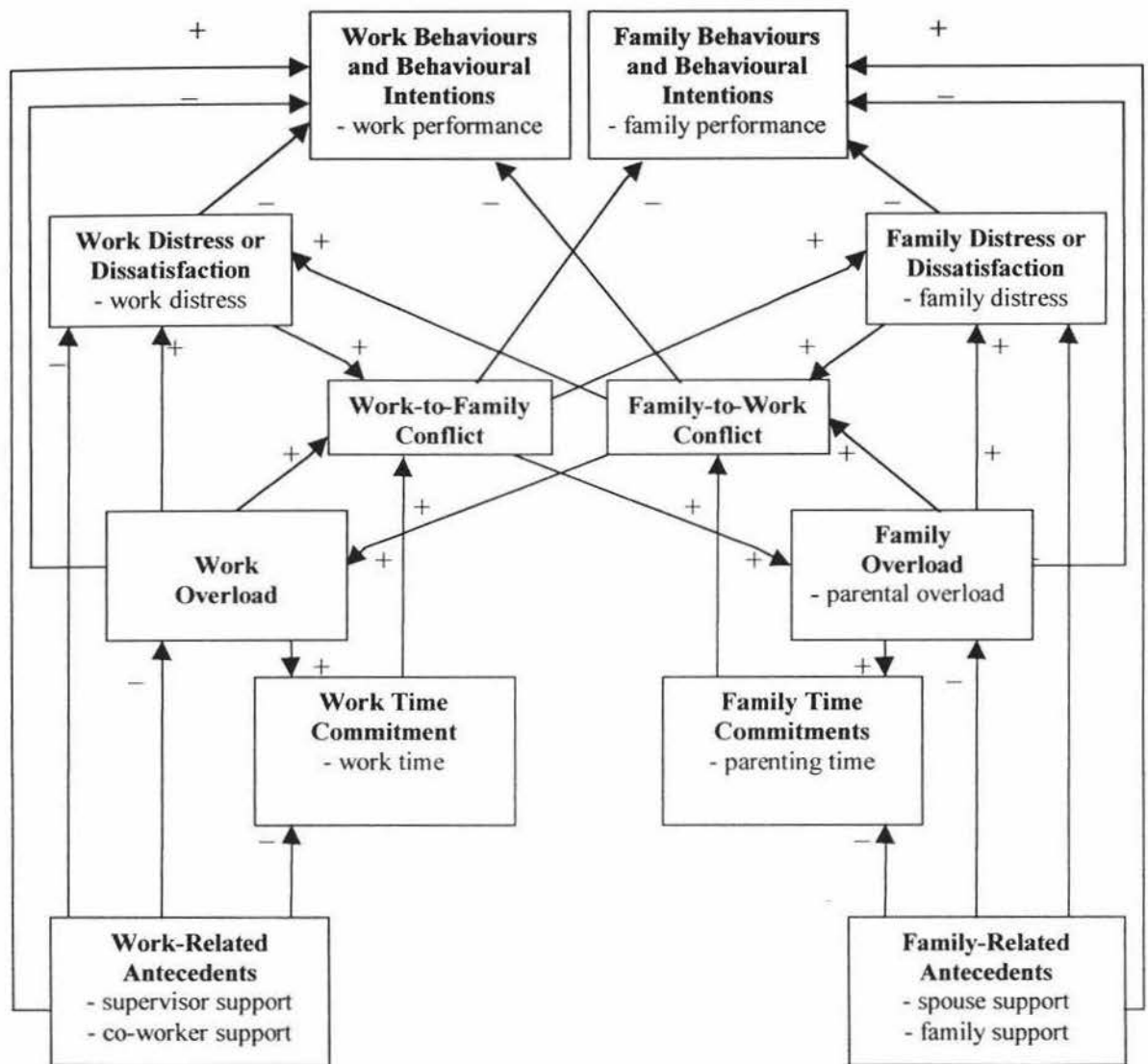
Figure 1: A conceptual model of the work-family interface. Pluses and minuses represent the direction of hypothesised relationships (Frone et al., 1997, *p.* 147).

The model in Figure 1, which was developed and tested by Frone et al. (1997), emphasises reciprocal relations between work and family lives, as well as proximal (direct) and distal (indirect) predictors of work-family conflict. The model is based on a bi-directional conceptualisation of work-family conflict. However, despite Frone et al.'s (1992) findings of a direct, positive reciprocal relationship between the two types of work-family conflict, Frone et al. (1997) hypothesised that this relationship would be indirect. The rationale for this was that increased levels of work-family conflict would lead to an increase in parental overload and family distress. This predicted increase is due to work-related demands, preoccupation, or time commitments which reduce the time and energy an individual has to fulfil parenting and other family duties. The

increase in levels of parental overload and family distress in turn leads to an increase in family-work conflict. The converse relationship is moderated by work overload and work distress.

Frone et al. (1997) distinguished between proximal and distal predictors claiming that proximal or direct predictors mediate the relationship between distal or indirect predictors and work-family conflict. The direct predictors included in Frone et al.'s model were work time commitment, which was hypothesised to have a positive relationship with work-family conflict, and family time commitment, which was hypothesised to be positively related to family-work conflict. Additionally, role related distress or dissatisfaction was purported to have a direct relationship to work-family conflict, so that work related distress was positively related to work-family conflict and family related distress to family-work conflict. Frone et al. pointed out that although this hypothesis is consistent with models such as that developed by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), prior research has treated work and family distress or dissatisfaction as outcomes of work-family conflict.

Role overload was the third direct predictor of work-family conflict and, as with time commitment and distress, was hypothesised to have positive, domain specific relationships with work-family and family-work conflict. However, role overload was also hypothesised to influence work-family conflict indirectly through its relationships with role-related time commitment and role-related distress. Work overload was hypothesised to be positively related to work time commitment and work distress, and identical relationships were predicted for the family domain variables (Frone et al., 1997).

Two types of distal (indirect) predictors were hypothesised for each domain and were purported to influence work-family conflict via distress, time commitment and overload. The first of these distal predictors were work and family related antecedents, which were represented in the model by instrumental social support, defined as "the provision of direct assistance or advice with the intent of helping an individual meet his or her responsibilities or direct needs" (Frone et al., 1997, *p.* 151). Thus, supervisor and co-worker instrumental supports were hypothesised to be negatively related to work overload, work time commitment, and work distress. Spouse and family instrumental supports were likewise related to parental overload, parental time commitment, and family distress. The second type of distal predictor was, as noted earlier, the bi-directional nature of work-family conflict.

Work and family performance were also included in the model. Role-related overload and distress were hypothesised to be negatively related to domain specific performance. Work-family conflict was hypothesised to have a direct, negative relationship with family performance, similar to the relationship between family-work conflict and work performance. Work and family performance were hypothesised to be positively influenced by domain specific support.

Frone et al. (1997) tested their model using a sample of 372 employed adults from a company in Canada, who were married and/or had children living at home. Overall, the results were supportive of the model. However, the hypothesised relationship between work-family conflict and family distress was not statistically significant. The four measures of social support were related to their domain specific measures of distress, but not to the measures of performance. The direct relationship between parental overload and family performance was not statistically significant, although an indirect relationship, via family distress, was significant. Moreover, the relationship between work distress and work performance was also not statistically significant. Despite the non-significant results for a number of the hypothesised relationships within Frone et al.'s model, the majority of the hypothesised relationships were found to be statistically significant. Although caution should be taken when applying Frone et al.'s model to other samples it is the most comprehensive and up to date model available for work-family and family-work conflict.

The interference and conflict experienced by many individuals between the work domain and the family domain can have far reaching consequences for the health of the individuals concerned, their families, and the functioning of the organisations these individuals work for.

Antecedents associated with this conflict have been highlighted in many areas and as a result a variety of factors have been investigated to help reduce work-family conflict. For example, individuals' use of problem focused coping strategies, such as planning and organisation, has been found to be positively related to parental well being (Shinn, Wong, Simko, & Oritz-Torres, 1989). Positive influences have also been related to social support, such as that from a spouse, friends, relatives, or supervisors (Shinn et al.). However, an area that has received a great deal of attention is the influence of organisational initiatives on the work-family conflict experienced by employees.

Family Friendly Initiatives

Due to the consequences associated with work-family conflict, the interference between work and family domains has become a strategic issue for organisations and for human resource management. Although there may be a few organisations that address work-family concerns due to altruistic motivations, for the majority of organisations it comes down to the 'bottom line'. Changes in the labour force, increasing employee expectations, and threats to organisational productivity mean that it may be more financially viable for organisations to address the work-family concerns of their employees than to ignore them (Friedman & Galinsky, 1992). Family friendly initiatives (FFIs), or work arrangements that make it easier for individuals to manage the competing domains of work and family (Moore, 1996), have been proposed as solutions to the problems organisations and individuals experience in relation to work-family conflict.

Reasons for Organisational Involvement in Family Friendly Initiatives

The Labour Force and Employee Expectations

Growth in the labour force is declining and is projected to continue declining in the 21st century (Berry-Lound, 1990; Friedman & Galinsky, 1992). This decline may make it difficult for organisations to recruit and retain employees, and if employers are unable to tap into the available labour supply they will lose competitive advantage. Thus, the ability to attract employees and then to maintain their performance is becoming increasingly crucial for organisations.

The incompatibility between traditional work demands and care commitments and the lack of suitable and available care can limit the ability of those involved in family care to participate fully in the labour market (Berry-Lound, 1990). Because the number of dual-career families is increasing (Davey & Callister, 1994) and men are taking a more active role in care giving, FFIs will not only be attractive to women, but will also become increasingly attractive to male employees. Goldberg, Greenberger, Koch-Jones, O'Neil, and Hamill (1989) found that a large number of both male and female employees would change jobs because a new employer offered initiatives such as a shorter workweek, flexible hours, and/or financial contributions to child care. In fact, Thomas (1988) reported that the percentage of men who wanted part-time work to

allow more time to be with their children increased from 18% in 1985 to 33% in 1988. These findings suggest that the provision of FFIs may facilitate the participation of both men and women in the workplace.

As it becomes more important for organisations to attract and retain employees, the employees themselves will be in a position to seek and demand support for their family needs. Even without a labour shortage. employers will wish to retain valued employees. To do so, organisations must meet employee expectations and fulfil their work-family needs (Friedman & Galinsky, 1992).

Productivity

Productivity loss due to work-family conflict may eventuate in a number of ways. The first is productivity loss due to the practical responsibilities of employees. If family supportive initiatives are not available. an employee may be forced to take time off work when a child is sick or may not be able to accept a promotion because of family responsibilities (Friedman & Galinsky, 1992). Productivity loss may also result from the emotional and psychological effects of work-family conflict. If employees are under stress from the demands of balancing family and work, they may be less productive when they are at work (Friedman & Galinsky). Moreover, stress related illness may lead to increased absenteeism and, if work-family conflict becomes severe, turnover may result (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991).

Abbot, De Cieri, and Iverson (1998) claimed that work-family conflict influences employee turnover, absenteeism, commitment, and motivation, which can cost the organisation in terms of recruiting, training, and replacing employees, as well as the costs associated with losses in productivity and quality. All of these outcomes have potential impacts on the organisation's competitive advantage. Abbott et al. estimated that the total costs to an organisation associated with turnover, including separation, replacement, and training approximates A$75,000 (approximately NZ$88,500) per employee.

Pressures are being placed upon organisations due to impending labour force shortages, increased pressures to improve productivity particularly with regard to international competition, and escalating family pressures on workers. These pressures must be addressed if organisations are to recruit, retain, and ensure the commitment and productivity of valuable employees, in a market where human resources are the key to

competitive advantage. FFIs have been cited extensively as a means to address these concerns (e.g., Abbot et al., 1998; Goff et al., 1990; Hall & Parker, 1993; Moore, 1996; Schmidt & Scott, 1987; Stipeck & McCroskey, 1989; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

<p style="text-align:center;">Provision of Family Friendly Initiatives</p>

Consistent with Karasek's (1979, cited in Duxbury et al., 1994). Job Strain model, Thomas and Ganster (1995) emphasise that, to be viewed as supportive FFIs must give employees enough control over their job or home life that more rewarding circumstances result. Thomas and Ganster's assertion is supported by New Zealand research conducted by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (1993) showing that employees with greater influence over their working lives were better able to create work and family balance.

A wide range of FFIs has been identified in the literature. These initiatives can generally be divided into four main categories: (1) Dependent care benefits; (2) leave benefits; (3) flexible work schedules; and (4) relocation assistance benefits. The following section provides a discussion of a selection of initiatives that may be offered within each of these categories.

Dependent Care Benefits

Dependent care benefits, such as child and elder-care, provide employees with varying degrees of assistance with their responsibilities for the care of dependants (Schwartz, 1994).

Child-care

The proportion of pre-school children in New Zealand with mothers in paid work increased from 28% in 1981 to 37% in 1991. In the same period, the proportion of pre-school children in a sole parent family doubled, increasing to one in five. Stauntberg (1987) suggested that finding reliable child-care is the most difficult and stressful problem for parents. The lack of affordable, quality child-care makes it difficult for parents to find appropriate care for their children and may limit the workforce participation of some parents and/or lead to negative outcomes for children (Stipek & McCroskey, 1989). The combination of work and parenting may lead to

conflict, particularly when the child is ill, or when regular child-care arrangements fall through (Stipek & McCroskey; Ziegler & Lang, 1991).

Employee problems with child-care do impact upon the organisation. An American study found that among two parent families with young children, a number of negative consequences were associated with child-care difficulties. Parents who experienced difficulty with child-care arrangements were more likely to be absent from work, arrive at work late and leave early, and were more likely than other parents to experience high levels of stress and negative physiological symptoms (Love, Galinsky, & Hughes, 1987, cited in Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Zigler and Lang (1991) suggested that organisations might benefit from providing child-care assistance through increased employee loyalty, increased productivity, and improved morale and company image.

Organisational involvement in child-care varies in the degree of support provided. Involvement may vary from on-site or near-site child-care programmes, to organisational assistance to parents for the cost of child-care, to the provision of information on issues surrounding child-care and parenting (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990; Zigler & Lang, 1991).

On-site/near site child-care

A day-care facility at or near the workplace was at one time the only type of child-care assistance offered by organisations (Friedman & Galinsky, 1992). In addition to convenience of access, an on-site child-care programme means that finding reliable child-care is not such a problem for employees because the quality of care is guaranteed by the organisation (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

Helping parents pay

American statistics show that parents in the United States pay about (US)$3,000 a year in child-care costs for one child. This is about one tenth of an average family's income and about one third to one half of a single mother's income (Stipek & McCroskey, 1989). As such, the cost of child-care obviously has the potential to cause stress for working parents.

Organisations can help parents in the payment of child-care costs through voucher systems, where parents are reimbursed or subsidised for child-care costs, and through salary reduction programmes which allow parents to use pre-tax dollars to pay for child-care (Thompson et al., 1992). As might be expected, the latter option is

considerably more common than the former. A United States survey found that 53% of organisations used pre-tax spending compared to 16% who used vouchers, subsidies, or allowances (Mirvis, 1993).

Provision of information

Providing employees with information on child-care is the least expensive and one of the most popular supportive policies available to organisations. Louis Harris and Associates (Mirvis, 1993) found that 53% of the businesses they surveyed provided this type of assistance to their employees. Information is provided in a variety of ways, from referral services, parenting seminars, distribution of written material, employee support groups, parent resource libraries, and family newsletters. Information may also be shared through employee assistance programmes (Friedman & Galinsky, 1992). Provision of information is a practical FFI for smaller organisations that may not be able to afford more involved practices.

Elder-care

Elder-care refers to the provision of assistance to an elderly relative who is frail, ill, or disabled (Galinsky & Stein, 1990). More people today are living into their eighties and nineties, consequently their adult children will increasingly be expected to provide for their care. Friedman (1991, cited in Friedman & Galinsky, 1992) suggested that 20% of American workers care for elderly relatives. The time when adult children may need to care for elderly parents or relatives may coincide with employees moving into more responsible positions (e.g., leadership and senior management positions). Therefore, the personal involvement of senior managers may act as an impetus in increasing the provision of organisational elder-care support (Friedman & Galinsky). For a number of employees, the physical and emotional drain of caring for elderly parents leads them to reduce their working hours or to leave their jobs altogether (Voydanoff, 1989, cited in Thompson et al., 1992). As elder-care appears to be an increasing drain on employees' resources, organisations need to deal with the conflict that will inevitably arise between work and care for employees in this situation. Although elder-care supportive policies are not as common as those for child-care, they are on the increase. Mirvis (1993) reported that 28% of organisations offered elder-care information assistance.

Leave benefits

Leave benefits provide employees with the time away from work that is necessary to fulfil care-giving responsibilities (Schwartz, 1994).

Maternity and paternity leave

The number of women who will become pregnant during the course of their careers is increasing (Galinsky, Friedman, & Hernandez, 1991). As a greater proportion of women return to work following the birth of a child, and as a greater proportion of fathers acknowledge the importance of bonding with their children, the provision of parental leave has become highly pertinent. It is widely acknowledged that the presence of the primary caregiver at home during the first few months of an infant's life has large positive benefits such as, development of the caregivers sensitivity and self-confidence, and bonding between the caregiver and the infant (Stipek & McCroskey, 1989). Thus, it is desirable that the care-giving responsibilities of new parents are not neglected due to their participation in paid work. The provision of parental leave is fundamental to the fulfilment of these care-giving responsibilities.

Minimum parental leave provisions are stipulated by law but vary considerably between countries. In New Zealand, *The Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987* provides for 14 consecutive weeks of leave which may be extended to 52 weeks and is determined by the length of employment and appropriate application. The Act does not provide for any payment associated with the leave but does propose leave for either parent (Glending, 1992; Urlich, Rainsbury, & Sutherland, 1996). Australian law provides 12 weeks of leave on full pay and additional unpaid leave until the child is one year old. In the United States, only 6 to 8 weeks of unpaid leave are provided, and then only in some States (Urlich et al.). By comparison, Sweden has provisions for 15 months of paid parental leave, where the state provides 90% of the lost income. Alternatively, the parental leave benefit can be taken at half or quarter of the rate until the child is four years of age. Parents of children under eight years are also entitled to reduce their work day by two hours without pay (Glending). Although ahead of the United States in terms of minimum parental leave provisions, New Zealand still has a long way to go to provide adequate support for the equitable participation of men and women in the workforce. Further parental leave provisions, that stipulate some form of payment associated with this leave, are necessary to ensure that caregivers have the opportunity for adequate contact with infants in the first months of life.

As noted above, the legal provisions for parental leave are minimum provisions. Organisations are free to supplement these provisions should they choose to do so. For example, Galinsky and Stein (1990) found that IBM's 3-year parental leave plan entitled employees to continued health benefits, however, after the first year, employees were expected to do some work to maintain his or her skills. A New Zealand Ministry of Women's Affairs (1993) phone-in and written questionnaire survey of New Zealand employers found that 18% of employers provided some form of paid parental leave.

Family leave/dependent leave

Galinsky and Stein (1990) note that the most commonly requested provisions in terms of work-family benefits were personal days. The provision of days off when children are ill or when child-care arrangements fall through means that employees are not forced to lie about their work-family difficulties and are able to legitimately take the time off work.

Flexible work arrangements

Flexible work arrangements give employees varying degrees of control over their work schedules and/or place of work (Schwartz, 1994). Flexible work practices cover a wide range of alternatives and include flexitime, part-time work, job-sharing, and flexplace (Friedman & Galinsky, 1992; Hall & Parker, 1993; Stipek & McCroskey, 1989; Thompson et al., 1992; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). The aim of flexible work practices is to enhance the fit between the individual and their work role (Hall & Parker). Conventional work schedules can cause problems for employees by preventing them from spending sufficient time with their families, because the work day starts or finishes at inconvenient times, or because work schedules and child-care arrangements do not fit in with each other (Stipek & McCroskey).

Flexitime

The most common conceptualisation of flexitime is where all workers must be at work during the specified core hours, but can begin or end their work day earlier or later (Zigler & Lang, 1991). However, as is the case with most FFIs there are a variety of ways in which flexitime can be arranged. *Flexitour* is at the bottom of the flexitime scale, with employees pre-selecting a start time that remains set for a certain period. *The gliding schedule* allows employees to vary their starting times each day. At the top

of the flexitime scale is the *variable day or variable week schedule*, which allows employees to vary the length of the work day or week and to carry hours over to subsequent days, often referred to as 'banking hours' (Stoper, 1982; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Seventy seven percent of organisations surveyed by Louis Harris and Associates (Mirvis, 1993) offered flexitime. The New Zealand Ministry of Women's Affairs (1993) found that 58% of employers allowed flexible start and finish times, and 42% allowed staff discretion over the hours and days worked.

The popularity of flexitime may reflect the minimal cost to the organisation and the positive benefits that many organisations relate to this initiative. The benefits of flexible work schedules have been claimed to include increased productivity and decreased absenteeism and tardiness (Christensen & Staines, 1990; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Stoper (1982) claimed that flexitime encourages self-management in routine office work since it is incompatible with moment to moment supervision.

Part-time work

Part-time work is generally considered to be work of less than 35 hours per week (Thompson et al., 1992) and is offered as a solution to balancing work and family demands because of the greater amount of time available for family tasks (Adams, 1995). Part-time work is more often available for lower level workers than for managers and professionals. American statistics (Mirvis, 1993) showed that part-time work was offered to lower level employees by 85% of the organisations surveyed, whereas only 53% of organisations offered part-time work to managers and professionals. Part-time work was offered by 58% of New Zealand employers (Ministry of Women's Affairs, 1993).

For the organisation, permanent part-time staff may solve scheduling difficulties and, once again, has been claimed to influence productivity, absenteeism, turnover, and tardiness (Nollen, 1980). For employees, part-time work allows career involvement as well as spending a significant amount of time with family (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

Job Sharing

Job sharing is a work arrangement whereby two people share a full-time job. The wages and benefits are split between the workers. The organisation gains the input and increased energy of two individuals, a position that is continuously staffed, and the ability to call on job sharing workers for emergency or temporary jobs (Stoper, 1982;

Thompson et al., 1992). The benefits associated with job sharing for individuals are similar to those associated with part-time work.

Flexplace

Flexplace programmes allow employees to work from a non-office site, often at home through telecommuting. Friedman and Galinsky (1992) claim that working at home provides employees with maximum flexibility (e.g., parents can continue to work after children have gone to bed). Telecommuting offers employees greater autonomy, more flexible work hours, fewer interruptions, greater job opportunities, and potential savings in work related costs such as food, clothing, and transportation (Anapol, 1986, and Bureau of National Affairs, 1986, cited in Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). The organisation can benefit from telecommuting through more efficient use of time and space, reduction of absences and turnover, and increased employee commitment (Cross & Raizman, 1986, cited in Zedeck & Mosier; Olsen & Primps, 1984).

Relocation Assistance

Due to the large number of women and dual-career couples in the workforce, organisations are experiencing difficulty finding employees willing to relocate to other cities. This reluctance appears to be due largely to family reasons (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Galinsky and Stein (1990) reported the findings of an unpublished needs assessment study (Rodgers, 1988, cited in Galinsky & Stein) that found that over 20% of men and approximately 40% of women with children had turned down jobs that involved relocation. In response, organisations are offering financial assistance, such as relocation aid as well as family and spouse assistance (Sekas, 1984) to encourage employees to consider relocation and to help them and their families with the move.

Meeting Individual Needs

The cafeteria benefit plan is a FFI that appears popular both with organisations and employees (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990; Schmidt & Scott, 1987). In the cafeteria benefit plan, employers usually provide some 'core' benefits such as medical insurance as well as a range of optional benefits (Schmidt & Scott; Zedeck & Mosier). The optional benefits may include a range of FFIs. Employees gain the advantages of having FFIs that meet their individual needs. Organisations gain the image and

recruiting power associated with offering FFIs, at the same time as satisfying the need for equity among employees.

The implementation of FFIs may entail an additional expense for organisations such as child-care costs, recruitment costs for parental leave replacements, and additional administrative costs for flexible schedules. However, advocates of FFIs claim that these costs should be viewed as an investment rather than a cost, due to the benefits alleged by participating organisations such as: Improved recruitment, improved employee retention, higher productivity, lower incidence of stress among employees, reduced absenteeism, and improved image (Berry-Lound, 1990).

A Model of the Linkages between Family Friendly Initiatives and Work and Family Outcomes

Bowen (1988) proposed a conceptual model for examining the role of FFIs in helping employees to balance work and family lives. This model, illustrated in Figure 2, is based on a spillover perspective of the linkages between work and family. Bowen proposed that organisational culture and philosophy shape the work environment and this in turn influences outcomes both at work and at home. The work environment is composed of both structural (formal) and dynamic (informal) components and the influence of the work environment on work and home outcomes is mediated by the perceptions and circumstances of the employee. The outcomes at work and at home are reciprocal and they in turn influence the organisation's culture and philosophy.

Bowen's (1988) model suggests that if the corporate culture and philosophy is such that FFIs are implemented then, depending on the dynamic aspects of the work environment and the employees' perceptions and circumstances, positive outcomes at work and at home can result. The empirical findings concerning the use and the success of FFIs are considered in the following section.
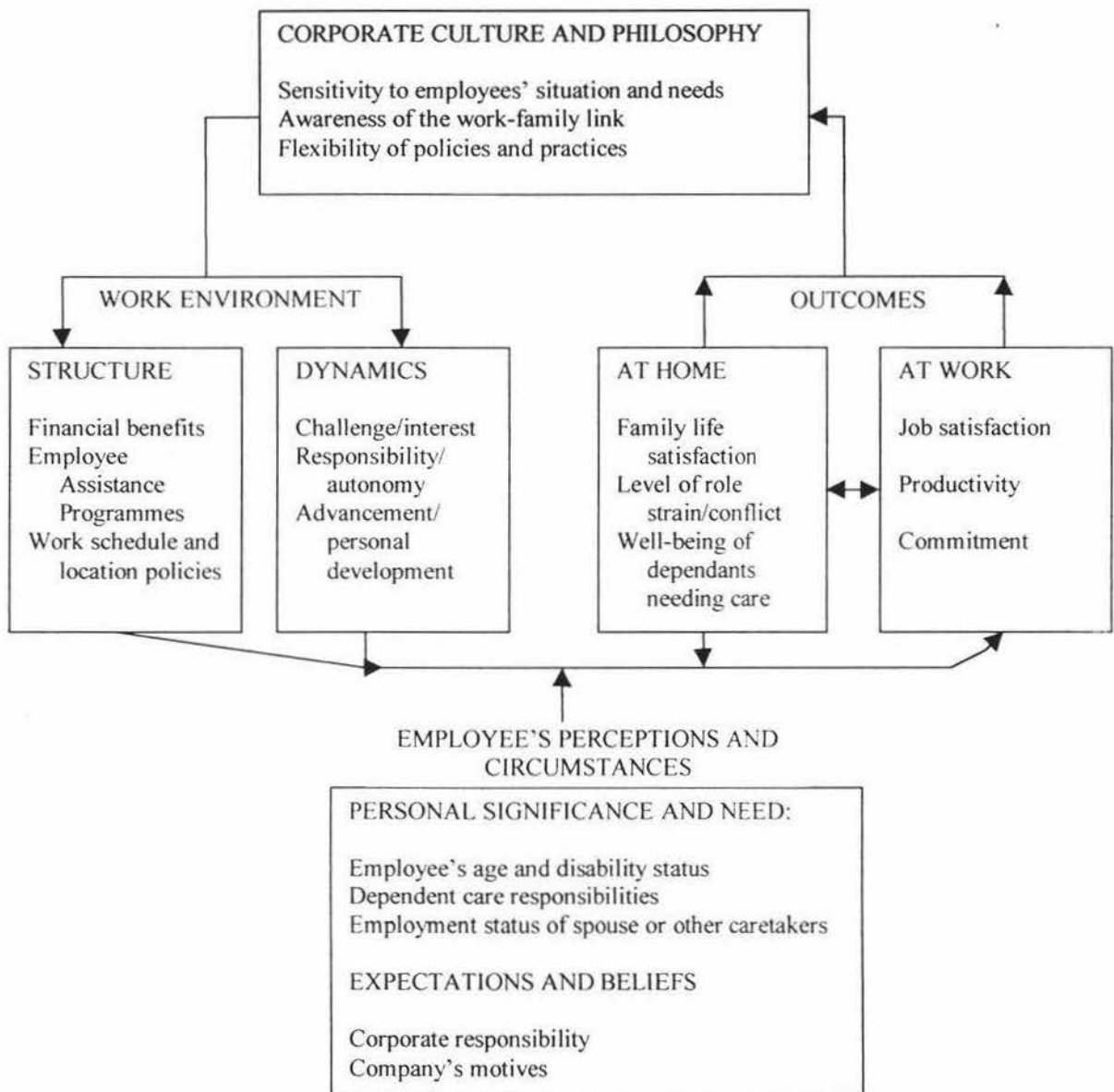
Figure 2: A conceptual model of the relationship between corporate support mechanisms and the work family lives of employees (Bowen, 1988, *p.* 185).

The Use and Success of Family Friendly Initiatives

The availability of FFIs in the workplace is slowly increasing. Although still not widely available, organisations, particularly those that strive to create equal opportunities, are providing their employees with family friendly benefits. Moore (1996) found that out of a sample of 72 organisations Australia wide, family friendly practices were commonly available. Eighty six percent of organisations offered part-time work or shorter hours, 74% offered flexible working hours, and 69% offered paid

child/elder-care leave. A Great Britain survey of 1,800 organisations found that 26% of respondents offered child-care support (Berry-Lound, 1990). However, these statistics, and the New Zealand and American statistics cited earlier, may give unrealistically high estimations of the prevalence of FFIs. In the survey conducted by the New Zealand Ministry of Women's Affairs (1993), questionnaires were sent only to employers who were members of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust and this may reflect some bias toward the provision of equal opportunities and, therefore, a higher prevalence of FFIs.

An American survey of the FFIs provided by employers (Seyler, Monroe, & Garand, 1995) found a considerably lower prevalence of FFIs than reported above. Only 17% of organisations offered flexitime, 20% offered pre-tax child-care subsidies, and 2% offered child-care information and referral services. Researchers have noted a general lack of interest by many employers toward FFIs. Aldous (1990) proposed that "U.S. employers have been laggards with respect to supplying benefits that would ease the conflicts between employees' work and family responsibilities" (*p.* 358).

The prevailing explanation for the scarcity of employer interest in FFIs is the lack of quality evaluation research for their impact on organisational outcomes (Aldous, 1990; Christensen & Staines, 1990; Galinsky & Stein, 1990; Raabe, 1990). Organisations that have implemented family friendly work practices, such as child-care programmes and flexible work schedules, have reported increases in recruiting potential, morale, productivity, and quality, and decreases in levels of absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, accident rates and employee stress (Goff et al., 1990; Hall & Parker, 1993). However, despite these claims, there is a paucity of good empirical evidence demonstrating the benefits of family friendly work practices. The lack of formal evaluation research by employers who have implemented initiatives, inadequate research design, and the reliance on perceptions of effects rather than the use of actual behavioural measures, are some of the criticisms that have been directed at existing evaluation research (Raabe).

The National Council for Jewish Women (1987, cited in Galinsky & Stein, 1990), however, conducted a sound evaluation of the effects of a family friendly work environment on the work related behaviours of pregnant women. The investigation looked at nearly 2,000 women who were in their last trimester of pregnancy and repeated interviews at 4 to 7 months after giving birth. The women's workplaces were rated as accommodating according to criteria such as the provision of sick leave,

disability leave, parental leave, a supportive supervisor, health insurance, flexible scheduling, and some form of child-care assistance. The study found that the women who worked for the most 'family friendly' organisations were the most satisfied with their jobs, took fewer sick days, were sick less often, worked more in their own time, worked later into their pregnancies, and were more likely to return to work following childbirth (Galinsky & Stein).

Evaluation research has also investigated the effects of FFIs on individual outcomes. Thomas and Ganster (1995) found that flexible scheduling practices showed significant direct effects on somatic health complaints and significant indirect effects on attitudes and mental and physical health outcomes. Greenberger et al. (1989) reported a statistically significant relationship between the use of FFIs and levels of role strain experienced by women. However, other findings have not been so positive. Nelson, Quick, and Moesel (1990) found that organisational resources were not an effective resolution to work-family conflict, and Goff et al. (1990) failed to find any evidence that the use of a child care centre at work reduced work-family conflict. Research on flexitime (e.g., Shinn et al., 1989) found that perceived flexibility in job scheduling was of some help to parents, despite little benefit from formal flexitime programmes. Shinn et al.'s results support Thomas and Ganster's assertion that perceived control is an important factor in the success of a family supportive programme.

However, the large amount of research that has found no association between FFIs and positive outcomes, does not provide a rationale to discredit the potential impact of FFIs. The lack of positive findings can, to some degree, be attributed to other factors. Bowen (1988) asserted that one reason for the lack of an effective data base in this area is "the lack of an overarching model of work and family linkages which specifies the nature and potential impacts of corporate support mechanisms on these linkages" (*p.* 183). Raabe (1990) outlined some clarifications that advance the foundations for evaluation research. These clarifications include the recognition that: The availability of initiatives is only one component of analysis, the extent of coverage and the quality of the initiatives are equally as important; FFIs have important combined and interrelated effects; organisational outcomes are influenced by other variables; and supportive supervisors and workplace cultures are crucial to the success of initiatives.

The belief by management that work-family issues are important seems to be an important contributing factor to the implementation of FFIs in the absence of conclusive empirical evidence on their effectiveness (Aldous, 1990; Friedman, 1987). In addition

to the support of top management, there are a number of organisational characteristics that have been associated with the implementation of FFIs. The number of women employed by an organisation is related to the availability of FFIs. The increased demand for FFIs in these organisations is due to the fact that women often have primary responsibility for child-care and family tasks, irrespective of their involvement in full-time paid work (Auerbach, 1990; Seyler et al., 1995). It has been suggested that the size of the organisation is also a variable influencing the availability of FFIs, largely due to the costs involved. Smaller organisations are more likely to have flexible work schedules and alternative work patterns, whereas larger organisations are more likely to implement child-care benefits (Hayghe, 1988). Other factors that have been related to the availability of FFIs are the age and education level of employees (Seyler et al.).

The availability of FFIs, however, does not guarantee their use by employees. Employees may not take advantage of certain FFIs because they do not consider that the initiatives will be useful. For instance, on-site child-care appears to be relatively unpopular among working parents. When asked what would make balancing work and family life easier, only 7% of Australian working mothers responded that work based child-care would be helpful (Ochiltree & Greenblat, 1991). In a United States study, 62% of family members said that on-site child-care would be virtually no help (General Mills, 1981, cited in Thompson et al., 1992).

Employees may also avoid using certain FFIs because of the potential for the initiative to result in negative consequences. For example, although telecommuting has the potential to benefit the employee, it can also introduce negative psychological effects. Telecommuting may increase stress in some employees through social isolation (Hamilton, 1987) and may increase work-family conflict because physical boundaries between the two domains are eliminated (Shamir & Salomon, 1985). The potential for these negative impacts highlights the importance of individual differences in the use and success of FFIs.

The potential for negative consequences as a result of using FFIs, however, is not limited to possible social isolation resulting from telecommuting. Negative repercussions for career success and advancement have been associated with the use of FFIs, largely as a result of non-supportive supervisor attitudes and organisational culture (Schwartz, 1994). The importance of organisational culture and supervisor attitudes to the impact of FFIs is highlighted by Bowen's (1988) model of the relationship between corporate support mechanisms and the work-family lives of

employees. The influence of supervisor attitudes and organisational culture on the use and success of FFIs is investigated further in the following section.

Family Oriented Workplace Support

The number of organisations that are implementing FFIs is increasing. Organisations are implementing these initiatives in an attempt to reduce the negative influences of work-family conflict on productivity and efficiency, and on the wellbeing of employees. However, the effectiveness of FFIs for achieving these ends remains questionable. A large body of literature (e.g., Bruce & Reed, 1994; Galinsky, 1988; Greenberger et al., 1989; Perlow, 1995; Raabe & Gessner, 1988; Schwartz, 1994; Starrels, 1992; Tudhope, 1994; Warren & Johnson, 1995) argues that this lack of effectiveness is related to the non-supportive attitudes of supervisors, co-workers, and the corporate culture, that either limit the availability of the initiatives, or create the perceptions that negative repercussions will result for employees who use them.

Tudhope (1994) found that a large amount of supervisor discretion was related to the use of FFIs, and that supervisors had varying levels of knowledge regarding these initiatives. The predominance of supervisor discretion in the use of FFIs highlights the pertinence of the finding that non-supportive supervisor attitudes existed in an organisation that was highly regarded for its commitment to family-responsive programmes (Galinsky, Ruop, & Blum, 1986, cited in Galinsky, 1988). In a related study, it was found that employees who did not feel that they had a supportive supervisor were more likely to suffer from work-family interference, stress, and stress related health outcomes (Galinsky, Hughes, & Shinn, 1986, cited in Galinsky). The implications of these findings are that the use of FFIs, and their effectiveness, may be influenced by supervisor attitudes. Raabe and Gessner (1988) concluded that although important, formal policies should constitute only one aspect of an "organisation's supportive commitment" (*p.* 200), as supervisor support is an equally important component.

Bruce and Reed (1994) argued that a belief in the work/family dichotomy[1] often leads supervisors into forcing employees to make a choice between domains, rather than

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[1] The belief that work and family represent separate spheres and that responsibilities in the family domain compete with responsibilities in the organisational domain.

helping them to balance work and family roles. These researchers claimed that despite the availability of FFIs, supervisors may not authorise employees' requests for their use, or may be reluctant in their authorisation. These responses communicate to the employee that their supervisor views the use of FFIs as evidence that they are not committed to their job.

Bruce and Reed (1994) also asserted that many family friendly programmes are an attempt by organisations to maintain the dichotomy between work and family lives. They provided an example of a hospital that opened a sick child-care centre for employees accompanied by the suggestion that staff would now have fewer legitimate excuses for missing their shifts because of 'family emergencies'. They concluded that FFIs are useless if employees are not encouraged to use them.

Supervisor support and attitudes have not been the sole focus of discussions related to the influences on FFIs. Organisational culture and co-workers have also been identified as influential factors in their use. Although less commonly discussed, Swiss and Walker (1993) identified co-workers as possible sources of support or discouragement for employees using FFIs. Lurie, Galinsky, and Hughes (1988, cited in Galinsky, 1988) found corporate culture to be a variable that influenced employees' abilities to balance their work and family lives.

Warren and Johnson (1995) defined organisational culture as:

The philosophy or set of expectations or beliefs characteristic of the business organisation. The classification of an organisation's culture as family friendly implies that its overarching philosophy or belief structure is sensitive to the family needs of its employees and is supportive of employees who are combining paid work and family roles (p. 163).

Schwartz's (1994) proposed definition demonstrates the mechanisms through which organisational culture influences the balance of work and family lives, that is, the components that contribute to an organisations culture "Corporate culture - the norms and values that are communicated through supervisor's attitudes, career paths, and organisational practices for assessing and developing the potential of employees" (p. 29). These norms and values were proposed by Schwartz to have a strong influence on the use of FFIs, and on the perceptions of employees with regard to the consequences associated with their use. Similar arguments were made by Swiss and Walker, who

claimed that despite increasing evidence for the existence of FFIs, steps toward a family friendly work culture are stilted.

The negative consequences associated with the use of FFIs relate to the persistence of traditional beliefs surrounding work, and commitment to work (Perlow, 1995; Schwartz, 1994; Swiss & Walker, 1993). The belief that users of FFIs pay for their attempts to gain work and family balance with damaged careers is well documented. Schwartz asserted that there has been little direct research on the career advancement of employees who use FFIs, but acknowledges the wide spread belief of negative consequences. This belief is due to the assumption by employers and supervisors that employees who use FFIs, particularly women, are not committed to their careers and should not, therefore, be eligible for promotion (Schwartz; Swiss & Walker).

Perlow (1995) found evidence to support the existence of the beliefs outlined above, and suggested that:

The problem with work-family policies and programmes is that they create new ways of working without addressing the underlying assumptions that reward only the old ways of working. People who take advantage of these new ways tend to be negatively affected (*p.* 228).

In her six-month field study of engineers Perlow (1995) identified three barriers in the workplace that prevented current work family initiatives from being effective. The first barrier was that "to be 'seen' as working one must be seen at work" (Perlow, *p.* 231). This barrier was identified through observation of individuals who took advantage of alternative work times and locations. On every occasion, rewards were given only for work at the office. The second barrier to the success of work-family initiatives, that was identified, was that "to demonstrate one's commitment to work one not only has to do one's work at the work place, but one has to be at work over extended periods of time" (*p.* 232). The amount of time spent at work was found to be more salient for recognition than the amount or quality of work produced. The third barrier, identified by Perlow, was that "work is expected to be one's top priority"(*p.* 233).

Underlying all three barriers to the success of work-family initiatives, that were identified by Perlow (1995), is the cultural assumption that there is a direct relationship between one's presence at work and one's contribution to work. Starrels (1992) also

highlighted barriers to the use of FFIs that exist within manager's attitudes. The incompatibility of these assumptions and attitudes with FFIs such as teleworking, flexitime, and parental leave, is apparent. Perlow suggested that to remove the barriers to the success of work-family initiatives, rewards for being present should be minimised and recognition should be given to the importance of the work process. As Perlow's research was based on an investigation of a single organisation, these findings must be viewed accordingly. However, the findings are consistent with Swiss and Walker's (1993) observations of the value of 'face time'.

The label 'family friendly workplace' assumes that the provisions of FFIs accurately reflect practice within these organisations. This assumption has been questioned within a substantial body of literature (e.g., Bruce & Reed, 1994; Galinsky, 1988; Greenberger et al., 1989; Perlow, 1995; Raabe & Gessner, 1988; Schwartz, 1994; Tudhope, 1994; Warren & Johnson, 1995). The assertions of these researchers are summarised by Tudhope "The existence of policies in and of themselves does not denote a 'family friendly workplace'... 'family friendly' policies remain simply policy if their availability is restricted to a minority of employees, or if their use is seen to have negative consequences" (*p.* 4).

The restricted availability of FFIs, and the perception of negative consequences associated with their use, is largely related to supervisor attitudes and organisational culture. Schwartz (1994) proposed that FFIs would not be effective while attitudes of supervisors, co-workers, corporate cultures and traditional career practices remain unchanged.

The Present Research

The importance of supervisor attitudes and organisational culture to the balance between work and family lives, and the reports from employees that supervisor support influences the use of FFIs, warrants further investigation. As discussed earlier, work-family conflict entails many negative influences for both individuals and organisations, and it appears that attempts to reduce this conflict, through the introduction of FFIs, are being hampered by non-supportive supervisors and organisational cultures. It is proposed that a comprehensive assessment of the influences of supervisor, co-worker, and organisational support on levels of work-family conflict, family-work conflict, and the use of FFIs is necessary. Investigation of the relative contributions of FFIs, and

supervisor, co-worker, and organisational support to work-family and family-work conflict is also vital.

Studies by Greenberger et al. (1989) and Warren and Johnson (1995) have investigated a number of these issues. They investigated the relationship between informal and formal workplace supports and levels of role strain. Greenberger et al. also investigated the relative contributions of these variables to employee's role strain.

Greenberger et al. (1989) found significant relationships between perceptions of supervisor support, supervisor flexibility, and co-worker support, with objective levels of role strain. The relationship of supervisor flexibility with levels of work-family role strain received further support from Warren and Johnson (1995), who also found support for a significant relationship between organisational culture and work-family role strain.

Greenberger et al. (1989) investigated the independent and unique contributions of formal and informal support at work to job-related attitudes and well being. They discovered that, for men, co-worker support contributed independently to lower levels of role-strain. For married women, higher role strain was associated with a greater readiness to leave for improved family benefits, lower supervisor flexibility, and, unexpectedly, usage of family benefits. For single women, the usage of family benefits was related to lower levels of strain, as was greater support from co-workers. Although Greenberger et al. did not provide an explanation for the positive relationship between FFIs and role strain for married women, it is proposed that the use of FFIs in the absence of informal workplace support, could be a possible reason for this association.

In their examination of the relative contributions of formal and informal support, Greenberger et al. (1989) discovered that informal workplace support had unique effects for men's wellbeing, whereas, formal support had a unique effect for the wellbeing of married women. Greenberger et al. concluded that both types of support were important and that their contributions to well being were additive, not redundant.

Despite the significant findings of Greenberger et al. (1989) and Warren and Johnson (1995), there are a number of pertinent relationships that were not investigated in these studies. The influence of informal support upon the use of FFIs has not been objectively measured. The only evidence that has been offered in this regard are the self-reports of employees that their perceptions of supervisor support influence their use of initiatives. The relative importance of support and FFIs to levels of work-family and family-work conflict needed to be addressed, including overall workplace support (or

family friendly organisational culture), which was not included in Greenberger et al.'s investigation. Also needing investigation was the differential effect of workplace support upon work-family and family-work conflict.

Thus, the present research examined employee perceptions and use of the FFIs in their organisations, and assessed employees' work-family and family-work conflict. Employee perceptions of supervisor support, co-worker support, and overall workplace support for work/family balance were also assessed. These variables were evaluated to investigate:

1) Relationships between the use of FFIs and levels of work-family conflict.

2) Relationships between the use of FFIs and perceived supervisor, co-worker, and overall organisational support.

3) The relative influence of FFIs, and perceived supervisor, co-worker, and overall organisational support, on levels of work-family and family-work conflict.

The above interactions were investigated using a bi-directional measure of work-family conflict. The present research, therefore, extended previous findings (Greenberger et al. 1989; Warren & Johnson, 1995) that did not acknowledge the bi-directional nature of work-family conflict, and as such did not support the current conceptualisations of this construct in the literature (e.g., Netemeyer et al., 1996).

As well as extending overseas research in the area of workplace support and FFIs, the present research represents a significant extension of New Zealand research in this area. The most significant study to date conducted in New Zealand on FFIs is that conducted by Tudhope (1994). Tudhope investigated a number of issues surrounding the use and implementation of FFIs. Included in this investigation were issues such as whether there was 'general encouragement' within the organisation toward FFIs, and if the use of initiatives influenced progress in the organisation. Tudhope suggested that barriers related to attitudes and assumptions do exist within organisations and that these barriers influence the effectiveness of FFIs.

METHOD

Participants

Auckland-based organisations that were members of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, Work and Family Network were approached and asked to participate in the research. Four organisations duly agreed; three government organisations and one private manufacturing organisation.

Following the dissemination of additional participation information, the contact person within each organisation distributed questionnaires and information sheets. The number of employees who received questionnaires varied within each organisation according to the size of the organisation and how many employees the contact person agreed to make available. In Organisation 1, 200 employees received questionnaires. 350 employees received questionnaires in Organisation 2, 100 in Organisation 3, and 70 in Organisation 4.

Two hundred and sixty nine useable questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 37%. When broken down by organisation, Organisations 1, 3. and 4 had response rates of approximately 50% (47, 50, and 59, respectively), whereas Organisation 2 had a response rate of only 25%. The fact that there was a change of contact person in Organisation 2 at the time the questionnaires were to be distributed, may have contributed to this poor response rate. Moreover, the contact people in Organisations 1, 3, and 4 had a personal interest in the topic area and, as a result, may have acted as advocates for returning questionnaires within their organisation.

Of those who returned questionnaires, 45% were female and 55% were male. This response was consistent with the breakdown of gender in the organisations' workforce. The average percentage of female employees across the four organisations was 46%.

Four participants did not give their age, however, for the 265 participants who did respond to this question, 37% were aged 30 to 39 and 44% were over 40. Almost 60% of the sample had children, with an average of 1.2 children each and an average age of 13.9. Of those with children, 66% had children aged up to and including 15 years, and 23% had children of pre-school age.

Measures

Rationale for Measures

<u>Work-family Conflict</u>

The measure of work-family conflict used in the present research was one developed by Netemeyer, Boles, and McMurrian (1996). This measure was selected largely because it was a bi-directional measure of work-family conflict, measuring both work-family and family-work conflict, and therefore acknowledged the current conceptualisation of these constructs in the literature. Additionally, thorough procedures were used in the development and validation of this scale. A three sample study was conducted to develop and validate the short, self report scales of work-family conflict (WFC) and family-work conflict (FWC), reporting acceptable values for test dimensionality, internal consistency, and construct validity (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

<u>Supervisor Support</u>

The measure of supervisor support used in the present research was taken from a study by Warren and Johnson (1995). This measure was chosen because it addressed an important distinction between general supervisor support, supervisor sensitivity, and supervisor flexibility. "Although a supervisor may act as a resource to the employee by providing emotional support for work role performance, if she or he is insensitive or inflexible regarding employees' work-family issues, difficulties associated with meeting work and family demands may be exacerbated" (Warren & Johnson, 1995, *p.* 164).

Warren and Johnson's (1995) supervisor support scale distinguished the constructs that comprise supervisor support by including three sub-scales. A measure of General Supervisor Support was the first sub-scale and was originally developed by Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, and Pinneau (1975) to measure the instrumental and emotional support an employee receives from a supervisor. Supervisor sensitivity was the second sub-scale and was developed by Warren and Johnson to measure the degree to which employees felt their supervisors were understanding of their family commitments. The third sub-scale was a measure of supervisor flexibility developed by Greenberger, Goldberg, Hamill, O'Neil, and Payne (1989), and was designed to measure a supervisor's instrumental support in relation to work and family issues.

Co-worker Support/Sensitivity

The co-worker support and sensitivity scales were adapted by the researcher from the general supervisor support and supervisor sensitivity scales used by Warren and Johnson (1995). A similar method of scale construction was used successfully by Greenberger et al. (1989) to measure general co-worker support.

Overall Workplace Support

Due to the absence of an appropriate existing measure, the researcher developed the measure of overall workplace support used in the present research. Although labelled as 'organisational culture', this construct has been measured in previous research (e.g., Warren & Johnson, 1995; Lurie, Galinsky, & Hughes, 1988, cited in Galinsky, 1988). However, the existing measures of this construct are of only limited use, for example, the measure by Warren and Johnson included the number of initiatives offered in the workplace as part of the scale for organisational culture. Warren and Johnson acknowledged that measurement of this construct needed further attention.

Job and Family Involvement

A scale originally developed by Kanugo (1982), and employed by other researchers (e.g., Adams, King, & King, 1996; Frone, Russel, & Cooper, 1992) in a shortened form, was used to measure job involvement. Kanugo's scale included items that were judged and compiled by 10 graduate students and that "directly reflected a cognitive state of psychological identification" (Kanugo). For the family involvement scale, all references to the 'job' were replaced by references to the 'family'. The scale was shortened from ten items to five due to concerns over the length of the questionnaire and the desire to ensure acceptable response rates. Indeed, five items of Kanugo's scale had previously been used successfully by Frone et al. to measure job involvement. Items were included or excluded according to judgements of best wording and relevance for both the job and family involvement scales.

Questionnaire Development

The present questionnaire (see Appendix A) was developed after much investigation and careful thought about the important issues surrounding work-family conflict and informal support for FFIs within an organisation. Existing scales were used where acceptable measures of the constructs could be found. To simplify the layout of the questionnaire and to make it logical and easy to follow, a number of sections were developed and the appropriate questions and scales included within each section.

Following completion of the questionnaire, it was piloted on six individuals to assess aspects such as time for completion and language comprehension. The individuals involved in the piloting were given short evaluation forms (see Appendix B) in which they were asked to answer a few questions and give any comments or suggestions for improving the questionnaire. However, as it turned out, no substantial changes were suggested or made to the questionnaire.

Family Friendly Initiatives

The 'family friendly initiatives' section investigated issues such as what employees knew about the FFIs in their workplace, if they had used them, who they thought the initiatives applied to, and how effective they thought they were. All of the questions in this section were developed by the researcher in an attempt to tap into participants' knowledge and beliefs surrounding FFIs. This type of information was necessary to analyse differences between participants with regard to their perceptions of informal support and work-family conflict. The list of FFIs that was included in the questionnaire was taken from a joint publication by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, New Zealand Employers Federation, and the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust (1995) which describes New Zealand organisations involved in FFIs.

Work-family Interaction

The 'work-family interaction' section investigated the amount of work-family conflict that employees experienced, and their perceptions of supervisor, co-worker, and overall organisational support for combining work and family life.

The majority of this section comprised existing scales for work-family conflict (Netemeyer et al., 1996) and supervisor support (Caplan et al., 1975; Greenberger et al.,

1989; Warren & Johnson, 1995). As noted above, the researcher modified the co-worker support scales and developed the overall workplace support items.

Work Life

The 'work-life' section investigated issues surrounding employees' work lives, for example, the amount of time spent at work, tenure, position, job involvement, and job demands. The majority of this section was developed by the researcher with reference to Tudhope (1993). Job involvement was the only construct in this section for which an existing scale was used (Kanugo, 1982).

Family Life

The 'family life' section investigated issues surrounding employees' family lives, such as number of children (if any), the amount of time spent on household chores, family involvement, child-care, and so on. As with the 'work life' section, the 'family life' section was developed mainly by the researcher, except for the Family Involvement scale, which was modified from the Job Involvement scale (Kanugo, 1982).

Demographic Information

The 'demographic information' section included general demographic questions concerning age, gender, ethnicity, and level of education.

Scoring

All scales were constructed using a five point Likert scale (1 representing 'strongly agree' and 5 representing 'strongly disagree') except for the 'supervisor flexibility' scale where 1 represented 'always' and 5 represented 'never'. Where information was given detailing the scoring process used in earlier research, item scores were generally summed and averaged to obtain final scale scores (e.g., Greenberger et al., 1989; Warren & Johnson, 1995). Information on scoring was provided for all three supervisor scales, but was not provided for the other scales. In the present research, all item scores were summed and averaged to obtain final scale scores.

Psychometric Information

Work-family conflict

Sampling

The work-family conflict scale developed by Netemeyer et al. (1996) was tested on three samples. The first sample consisted of 182 elementary and high school teachers and administrators in a large south-eastern American city. The second sample comprised 162 small business owners, and the third sample comprised 186 real estate sales people, both in the same city.

Reliability

Stability over time

The scale was tested on three samples, however, it was not tested on the same subjects more than once. Therefore, there were no estimates of test-retest reliability. Although it is desirable to have an acceptable level of test-retest reliability, the nature of the work-family conflict variable does not easily allow for the measurement of this aspect of reliability. Work family conflict is not a stable characteristic and, therefore, the level of conflict experienced by individuals could change between tests.

Internal consistency

Evidence of internal consistency is provided by coefficient alpha (overall α = .88 for WFC and α = .86 for FWC), and average variance extracted estimates (overall α = .60 for WFC and α = .57 for FWC) (Netemeyer et al., 1996, p. 404).

Validity

Content validity

To ensure content validity, items were judged as representative of WFC or FWC by a panel of four faculty members from other universities (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

Criterion validity

For numerous on-job and off-job variables, significant correlations with the WFC and FWC scales were found and given as evidence of criterion (and thus construct) validity.

Construct validity

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess scale dimensionality, discriminant validity, and internal consistency. The statistics indicated a two-factor model, representing WFC and FWC. The scales showed adequate levels of dimensionality, and discriminant validity across three samples.

Several tests assessing differences in correlations between WFC and FWC, and several other variables, supported construct validity, as did mean level difference tests between WFC and FWC. WFC was predicted to show a higher mean score than FWC.

Due to the thorough testing of the 'work-family conflict' scale and the detailed psychometric information provided by Netemeyer et al. (1996) on this scale, a reasonable degree of confidence can be placed in the reliability and validity of this measure.

Supervisor Support

Sampling

The four items originally developed by Caplan et al. (1975) have been used in many studies since (e.g., Greenberger et al., 1989; Warren & Johnson, 1995). In the Greenberger et al. (1989) study, the sample comprised 321 men and women who were employed parents of a pre-school child/ren. Participants were recruited through pre-schools in four Southern Californian cities. The participants in Warren and Johnson's (1995) study were 116 mothers who were employed outside the home and had at least one pre-school aged child in a licensed day-care centre.

Reliability

Stability over time

An estimate of the stability of scores over time was not reported by Caplan et al. (1975), Greenberger et al. (1989), or Warren and Johnson (1995).

Internal consistency

Caplan et al. (1975) reported a reliability estimate of .83. In the study by Greenberger et al. (1989), Cronbach's α ranged from .79 to .85 for the three groups in their sample – married men, married women, and single women. For Warren and Johnson's (1995) sample Cronbach's α was .83.

<u>Validity</u>

Validity estimates were not reported by Caplan et al. (1975), Greenberger et al. (1989), or Warren and Johnson (1995).

Confidence in the 'supervisor support' scale is limited by the lack of psychometric information available. However, the scale has been used by many researchers (e.g., Caplan et al., 1975; Greenberger et al., 1989; Warren & Johnson, 1995) and has produced satisfactory estimates of internal consistency.

<u>Supervisor Sensitivity</u>

<u>Sampling</u>

The participants in Warren and Johnson's (1995) study were 116 mothers who were employed outside the home and had at least one pre-school aged child in a licensed day-care centre. Questionnaires were distributed to mothers in 45 day-care centres in Vancouver, Canada.

<u>Reliability</u>

Stability over time

An estimate of the stability of scores over time was not reported.

Internal consistency

Cronbach's α for this sample was .88 (Warren & Johnson, 1995).

<u>Validity</u>

Warren and Johnson (1995) did not provide any information on scale validity for supervisor sensitivity. However, Warren (1993) provided further details of the assessment of scale validity. Items were included in the scale based upon characteristics of sensitive supervisors that were identified in the literature. Three professors and two graduate students evaluated the validity of the scale and were asked a series of questions relating to the relevance of the items. Following this procedure, the scale was extended from four items to five. Warren and Johnson warned that the scale was developed for their study and that conclusions should not be drawn until it had been used with other samples.

The psychometric information provided for the 'supervisor sensitivity' scale is limited. The internal consistency estimate is good, however, it relates only to a single sample and, as mentioned by Warren and Johnson (1995), the scale needs to be used with other samples. Some degree of confidence is provided by the procedural information for the development of the scale. Although the scale was only tested on one sample, experts assessed the validity of scale items. Therefore, despite the lack of psychometric information, Warren and Johnson's 'supervisor sensitivity' scale was the best measure available for this construct.

Supervisor Flexibility

Sampling

The samples in the research by Greenberger et al. (1989) and Warren and Johnson (1995) are detailed above.

Reliability

Stability over time

An estimate of the stability of scores over time was not reported.

Internal Consistency

Greenberger et al. (1989) reported co-efficient α's of .88 for married women, .90 for single women, and .86 for married men. In the research by Warren and Johnson (1995), co-efficient α was .84.

Validity

No information on the validity or development of the scale could be found.

Internal consistency estimates for the 'supervisor flexibility' scale are good, both in the research by Greenberger et al. (1989) and in that by Warren and Johnson (1995). However, the lack of further psychometric information and any detail regarding the development of the scale limit confidence in this scale. However, as with the 'supervisor sensitivity' scale, Greenberger et al.'s 'supervisor flexibility' scale was the best measure available for this construct.

Co-worker Support and Sensitivity

As the researcher adjusted these scales for the present research, no previous information existed on their reliability and validity. The closest estimates would be those for the supervisor scales from which these scales were developed (Greenberger et al., 1989; Warren & Johnson, 1995).

Job Involvement

Sampling

Kanugo (1982) conducted the research with 900 full-time French and English speaking employees, enrolled in evening extension courses in three different universities in Montreal.

Reliability

Test-retest reliability

Questionnaires were administered twice, three weeks apart for a group of 63 respondents. The test-retest reliability estimate was .85 (Kanugo, 1982).

Internal consistency

Co-efficient α was found to be .87 by Kanugo (1982), .88 by Frone et al. (1992), and .68 by Adams et al. (1996).

Validity

Content validity

The job involvement scale was judged to have content validity by a panel of experts (Kanugo, 1982).

Criterion validity

Criterion-related concurrent validity was evaluated by Kanugo (1982) by testing a number of association expectations, such as the expectation that job involvement was more strongly associated with job satisfaction than was a separate measure of work involvement. All of Kanugo's expectations with regard to criterion validity were confirmed.

Construct validity

The job involvement scale was developed in conjunction with a work involvement scale. Construct validation involved illustrating dimensionality of the two scales, as well as convergent and discriminant validities of the questionnaire items with

other methods of measurement. The validity coefficients were found to be adequate (Kanugo, 1982).

The detailed psychometric information provided for the 'job involvement' scale and its use by a large number of researchers (e.g., Adams et al., 1996; Frone et al., 1992; Kanugo, 1982), ensures a reasonable degree of confidence in the reliability and validity of this measure.

Family Involvement
Sampling

Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1992) and Adams, King, and King (1996) both modified Kanugo's (1982) scale to measure family involvement. Frone et al.'s sample consisted of 631 adults who were residing in Erie County, New York. The participants had to be employed at least 20 hours a week and be in a live in relationship, and /or have children living at home. Adams et al: (1996) used a sample of 163 full-time workers enrolled in either weekend or evening courses at a medium-sized university in Michigan.

Reliability
Stability over time

An estimate of the stability of scores over time was not reported in either study.
Internal consistency

Coefficient α was found to be .88 by Frone et al. (1992), and .80 by Adams et al. (1996).

Validity

No estimates of any aspect of validity were given in either study.

Despite the lack of psychometric information provided for the 'family involvement' scale, a moderate degree of confidence is held for this measure. This is due to the reasonable degree of confidence held for the 'job involvement' scale and the successful modification of the scale, from job involvement to family involvement, by previous researchers (Adams et al., 1996; Frone et al., 1992).

Procedure

The questionnaire was piloted on six individuals and was found to be satisfactory with regard to aspects such as the time taken to complete (approximately 10 to 15 minutes) and language comprehension. No changes were made to the questionnaire as a result of the piloting procedure.

The contact person within each organisation distributed the questionnaire to employees. Employees were encouraged to take the questionnaire home to fill in and then post the completed forms back to the researcher in stamped self addressed envelopes. Anonymity was ensured, as no identifying information was required from participants. Follow up letters were distributed three weeks following the distribution of the questionnaires, requesting that outstanding questionnaires be returned within two weeks.

Information was also gathered from the contact person within each organisation concerning the nature of the organisation's FFIs. A small number of questions were compiled (see Appendix D) and given to each organisation, in order to investigate issues such as which initiatives were actually available and how they were implemented.

RESULTS

Data Entry

The data[2] were entered into Microsoft Excel by the researcher. Qualitative data were categorised under descriptions that adequately accounted for all responses and allowed for numerical entry of this information (see Appendix E).

The accuracy of data entry was checked on 11% (30) of the questionnaires, which were selected according to a list of random numbers produced for each organisational group. The quality of data entry was found to be high, with mistakes occurring on only 0.3% of all items. Because this initial check indicated a high level of accuracy, no further accuracy checks were made.

Missing Data

The amount of missing data was calculated according to a 35% drop off limit. That is, respondents were dropped from a scale if they had completed fewer than 35% of the items within that scale. Three respondents were removed from the study altogether due to being dropped from 3, 4, and 10 individual scales, respectively. Two of these respondents were from Organisation 2 and the other was from Organisation 1. Having eliminated the responses of these three participants, the number of participants in the research fell to the final total of 269. Of these, 92 participants were from Organisation 1, 86 were from Organisation 2, 50 were from Organisation 3, and 41 were from Organisation 4.

Data missing from individual scale responses resulted in 22 respondents being dropped from either one (18) or two (4) scales. These respondents were retained in the research and their scores for the scales they had missed were estimated using the relevant scale means. Missing values were replaced by scale means because this was the most neutral method of estimation available. Of course, because the estimated scores made up only 0.8% of overall scale scores, the method of estimation would not have had a

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[2] A large quantity of data were collected via the questionnaire, however, due to time and space constraints not all of this information will be presented here. The main focus will be on data that are relevant to the most crucial research questions.

significant influence on the overall results.

Question 8, where participants were asked to identify the family friendly initiatives (FFIs) they used or had used in the past incurred some additional missing values. Fourteen participants identified initiatives that they had used after previously indicating that they didn't/hadn't used any initiatives, or after leaving this yes/no question blank. The decision was made to accept the responses given in the second category of the question, that is, to accept the identified initiatives as having actually been used. Again, because this applied to such a small number of participants, it would not have had a significant influence on the overall results.

Initiatives

Organisational Information

Of the 18 initiatives outlined in the questionnaire, the Human Resources Advisors in Organisations 1 and 3 claimed that 13 were available at their workplace, whereas Organisations 2 and 4 claimed to offer 10. From the additional information provided by each organisation, it was clear that these initiatives were implemented with the intention of accounting for 'employee needs' and to be a 'good employer'. Only Organisation 4 specified their objectives as reducing turnover and increasing the number of employees returning from parental leave. Organisation 1 claimed to have consulted with employees and unions in their development of these initiatives, whereas Organisation 4 used benchmarking from other organisations. Within each organisation, the direct manager is the employee's first contact should they wish to make use of the initiatives. For some initiatives, such as the child-care subsidy, an application may need to be made to the Human Resources Manager. Organisations 2 and 4 claimed that their initiatives have been effective in terms of their initial aims and objectives, however, neither of the organisations had conducted a formal assessment of this. In terms of the use of the initiatives, Organisation 1 estimated that approximately 30 employees, in total, use four of the initiatives offered. Organisations 2, 3, and 4, did not know how many of their employees made use of their initiatives.

Employee Perceptions of Initiatives Offered and Used

As would be expected, respondents perceived the initiatives that were in fact offered by their organisation were available more often than the initiatives that were not offered (see Table 1). However, it is interesting to note that 6 of the 13 initiatives offered by Organisation 1 were perceived to be available by fewer than 50% of respondents. Also, 'work from home', an initiative that was not offered by Organisation 1, was perceived to be available by 24% of respondents. Similar results are illustrated for Organisations 2, 3, and 4.

Table 1

Proportion of Respondents who Perceive Initiatives to be Available, Presently Use and Would Use Initiatives

| | Organisation 1 | | | Organisation 2 | | |
Initiative	Offered	Perceive	Used	Would Use	Offered	Perceive	Used	Would Use
PT	Yes	.89	.03	.16	Yes	.69	.07	.26
FT	Yes	.87	.18	.22	Yes	.88	.16	.20
JS	Yes	.77	.01	.17	Yes	.43	.05	.15
WH	No	.24	.03	.30	Yes	.52	.22	.44
SPL	Yes	.33	.01	.15	Yes	.31	.07	.17
CW	Yes	.08	.00	.20	No	.10	.01	.26
MC	Yes	.62	.07	.08	Yes	.35	.07	.21
P	Yes	.88	.09	.14	Yes	.87	.15	.13
PPL	Yes	.43	.07	.21	No	.23	.02	.27
CB	Yes	.24	.02	.32	Yes	.15	.03	.34
FR	No	.01	.00	.04	No	.00	.00	.13
CC	No	.00	.00	.13	No	.00	.00	.22
SC	Yes	.57	.07	.15	No	.00	.01	.23
CP	Yes	.77	.10	.11	Yes	.63	.08	.20
S	Yes	.03	.01	.16	No	.06	.02	.26
RS	Yes	.25	.02	.11	Yes	.22	.00	.20
O	Yes	.04	.01	.01	No	.01	.01	.03

Table 1 - continued

Proportion of Respondents who Perceive Initiatives to be Available, Presently Use and Would Use
Initiatives

Initiative	Organisation 3				Organisation 4			
	Offered	Perceive	Used	Would Use	Offered	Perceive	Used	Would Use
PT	Yes	.72	.02	.20	Yes	.85	.02	.29
FT	Yes	.96	.18	.18	Yes	.85	.12	.44
JS	Yes	.68	.02	.10	Yes	.46	.00	.24
WH	Yes	.60	.08	.30	Yes	.78	.24	.32
SPL	Yes	.56	.00	.14	Yes	.71	.07	.24
CW	Yes	.10	.02	.24	No	.05	.00	.46
MC	Yes	.48	.04	.14	Yes	.32	.00	.17
P	Yes	.88	.22	.04	Yes	.93	.05	.05
PPL	No	.18	.04	.18	No	.10	.00	.44
CB	Yes	.26	.08	.16	Yes	.15	.02	.44
FR	No	.02	.00	.12	No	.10	.02	.17
CC	No	.04	.00	.14	No	.00	.00	.34
SC	Yes	.10	.02	.22	Yes	.59	.02	.27
CP	Yes	.92	.26	.18	No	.20	.02	.27
S	Yes	.42	.08	.16	No	.29	.00	.32
RS	Yes	.54	.16	.10	Yes	.20	.02	.27
O	Yes	.14	.04	.02	Yes	.02	.00	.05

Note: Initiatives are – Part-time (PT), flexitime (FT), job sharing (JS), work from home (WH),
staggered return from parental leave (SPL), compressed work week (CW), meetings in core hours (MC),
phone available for contact with family (P), payment associated with parental leave (PPL), career breaks
(CB), family room at work (FR), centre-based child-care (CC), school holiday or after school care (SC),
counselling or employee assistance programme (CP), seminars or training on work/family issues (S),
information or referral services (RS), other (O).

In Organisation 1, fewer than half the respondents perceived the organisation to
offer 'staggered return from parental leave', 'compressed work week', 'payment
associated with parental leave', 'career breaks', 'seminars or training on work and family
issues', and 'information and/or referral services'. The small percentage of respondents
who perceived the organisation to offer 'compressed work week' (8%) and 'seminars or
training on work family issues' (3%) is particularly noteworthy, as is the 24% of
respondents who perceived the organisation to offer 'work from home' when this was

not actually available. The most pronounced misperceptions for the other organisations related to payment associated with 'parental leave', 'career breaks', and 'information or referral services' in Organisation 2; 'compressed work week', 'career breaks', and 'holiday/after-school care' in Organisation 3; and 'meetings in core hours', 'career breaks', 'seminars on work-family issues', and 'information or referral services' in Organisation 4.

Fifty eight percent of respondents used at least one FFI at the time of data collection[3]. However, the use of FFIs varied significantly between organisations ($p < .01$)[4], between genders ($p < .01$), and between respondents with and without children ($p < .01$). In Organisation 3, 80% of respondents used at least one FFI, compared with only 46% and 49% of respondents from Organisations 1 and 4, respectively. Overall, 71% of female respondents, and 65% of respondents with children used at least one FFI, in comparison with 49% of both men and respondents without children.

The initiatives most frequently used were 'flexitime' (18%) and 'counselling/employee assistance programme' (10%) in Organisation 1; 'work from home' (22%), 'flexitime' (16%), and 'phone contact with family' (15%) in Organisation 2; 'counselling/employee assistance programme' (26%), 'phone contact with family' (22%), 'flexitime' (18%), and 'information and/or referral services' (16%) in Organisation 3; and 'work from home' (24%) and 'flexitime' (12%) in Organisation 4.

By contrast, many respondents thought they would use certain FFIs were they offered. In each organisation there were a number of initiatives that over 20% of respondents claimed they would use, for example, 44% of respondents in Organisation 2 would use 'work from home' and 46% of respondents in Organisation 4 would use 'compressed work week'. It is interesting that, although a number of the initiatives that respondents said they would use were not offered (particularly in Organisations 2 and 4), the majority of the initiatives that respondents would like to have used were already available but use of them was minimal. This is illustrated in Organisation 4, where 44% of respondents claimed they would use 'flexitime', which is in fact already offered, but is only used by 12% of respondents.

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[3] Excluding 'phone available for contact with family' and 'meetings in core hours'.

[4] Respondents in Organisations 1 and 4 used significantly fewer initiatives than respondents in Organisation 3 ($p < .01$ in both cases).

Employee Perceptions of the Implementation and Functioning of Family Friendly Initiatives

Table 2 summarises how employees learnt about the FFIs in their organisation. In Organisations 1, 2, and 4, the most common method for learning about the FFIs was from the employer (61%, 55%, and 67%) and secondly from co-workers (51%, 51%, and 61%). Organisation 3 differed, in that 56% of respondents claimed that co-workers were an avenue through which they learnt about FFIs, with the employer and newsletters second equal at 51%[5].

Table 2

How Respondents Learnt about the Family Friendly Initiatives in their

Organisation

Source	Percentage of respondents			
	Org. 1	Org. 2	Org. 3	Org. 4
Employer	60.8	55.4	51.2	66.7
Co-workers	50.6	51.4	56.1	60.6
Newsletter	41.8	36.5	51.2	36.4
General knowledge	11.4	10.8	12.2	6.1
Contract	2.5	2.7	4.9	6.1
Union	3.8	1.4	–	–
Other	–	1.4	–	–

The statistics on why employees think their organisation implemented FFIs, shown in Table 3, highlighted different employee perceptions in Organisation 1 than in the other organisations. Forty nine percent of respondents in Organisation 1 claimed that legal obligations were a reason why their organisation implemented FFIs. Coming a distant second was that their workplace was family friendly and/or trying to meet employee needs (28%). By contrast, the most common reason given for why FFIs were

[5] The percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

introduced in Organisations 2, 3, and 4 was that their workplace was family friendly and/or trying to meet employee needs (61%, 66%, and 54%, respectively). The second most frequently given reason in these organisations (second equal with increasing productivity in Organisation 3) was to recruit and/or retain employees (19%, 16%, and 33%, respectively).

Females and males also differed in their perceptions of why organisations implemented FFIs. Overall, 42% of male respondents thought that their organisation had implemented FFIs because it was a family friendly workplace and/or was trying to meet employee needs, compared to 60% of female respondents. Men were much more likely to attribute the initiatives to legal obligations (28%) than were their female counterparts (7%).

Table 3

Respondent Perceptions of their Organisation's Reasons for Implementing

Family Friendly Initiatives

Reason	Percentage of respondents			
	Org. 1	Org. 2	Org. 3	Org. 4
Family friendly workplace	28.2	61.4	65.8	53.8
Recruit/retain employees	12.7	18.6	15.8	33.3
Improve productivity	9.9	11.4	15.8	25.6
Legal requirements	49.3	8.6	–	–
Improve image	5.6	5.7	10.5	2.6
Managers with family/female	–	1.4	2.6	7.7
Don't have initiatives	–	8.6	2.6	7.7
Don't know	4.2	2.9	2.6	–
Other	1.4	2.9	7.9	2.6

Overall, 75% of respondents thought that all the FFIs that their workplace offered would be available to them should they wish to use them, and 88% thought that the FFIs were equally available to men and women. Table 4 summarises the reasons

given by respondents for the equality, or lack of equality, regarding the availability of initiatives. Likewise, Table 5 summarises the perceptions of respondents regarding the equality of use of FFIs. In this case, 64% of respondents thought that men and women were equally likely to make use of the initiatives. There was little variation in these results across organisations. However, only 59% of male respondents thought that men and women were equally likely to use the FFIs, compared to 70% of women.

Table 4

Employee Perceptions of the Reasons Family Friendly Initiatives are/are not
Equally Available to Male and Female Employees

Reason	Frequency	Percentage of responses	Percentage of cases
Only for females (No)	11	24.4	25.0
Bias for males (No)	8	17.8	18.2
For all employees (Yes)	25	55.6	56.8
Other	1	2.2	2.3
Total	45	100.0	102.3

Table 5

<u>Employee Perceptions of the Reasons Family Friendly</u>
<u>Initiatives are/are not Equally Likely to be Used by Male</u>
<u>and Female Employees</u>

Reason	Frequency	Percentage of respondents
Females responsible for child-care (No)	27	27.8
Females use initiatives more often (No)	41	42.3
Bias for males (No)	11	11.3
Equality of availability (Yes)	11	11.3
Males participate in family life too (Yes)	4	4.1
Other	10	10.3
Total	104	107.2

Only 27% of respondents felt that they had been given the opportunity for input into the development of the FFIs at their workplace. The findings for Organisations 1 (20%), 2 (13%), and 4 (28%) were consistent with the overall finding, however, in Organisation 3, 65% of respondents felt that they had been given the opportunity for input. Men were less likely to feel that they had been given the opportunity for input into initiative development, with 20% of men agreeing that they had this opportunity compared to 37% of women.

Of respondents who did not feel they had been given the opportunity for input into initiative development, approximately 50% in Organisations 1, 2, and 3 felt that they would have liked this opportunity, in contrast to 82% in Organisation 4. As expected, a greater number of respondents with children would have liked the opportunity for input (61%) than respondents without children (43%).

Overall, 92% of respondents thought that FFIs had helped them to function more effectively at work. This strong positive response was stable across organisations, gender, and parental status. The same pattern of results was found for the influence of initiatives on functioning at home. Here, 94% of respondents who had used FFIs said that they had helped them to function more efficiently in their family life, with little variation across organisations, gender, or parental status.

With respect to the influence that using FFIs may have on their career, 78% thought it would have a positive influence, and only 5% thought it would have a negative influence. The results across organisations were fairly consistent with the overall results.

Respondents were asked whether they thought that their decision to use/not to use FFIs was influenced by their supervisor's or their co-workers' attitudes toward work and family balance. Overall, 33% agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisor's attitude towards work and family influenced their decision to use the initiatives that were available. However, 53% disagreed/strongly disagreed that the supervisor's attitude had an influence. A similar result was found concerning co-workers. Twenty two percent agreed/strongly agreed that their co-workers' attitudes influenced their decision to use the initiatives, and 62% disagreed/strongly disagreed. The pattern of responses for the influence of supervisors' and co-workers' attitudes was stable across the four organisations.

Internal Consistency

Scoring

The 10 scales or sub-scales that were included in the research were all constructed using a five-point Likert scale (anchored by 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree'). Negatively worded items were included in three of the scales and the scores for these were reversed during data entry.

An average item response for each scale was computed for each respondent. Scale averages were used for analysis rather than scale totals for two reasons: (1) to retain respondents who had missed items within scales; (2) to simplify the comparison of scale scores. A five-point scale was used throughout the questionnaire, however, due to differences in the number of items comprising the various scales, total scores would have made direct comparison across scales difficult.

Possible scores on each of the 10 scales/sub-scales fell between 1 and 5. For the 'supervisor flexibility' scale, a score of five denoted a high level of perceived supervisor flexibility. For all other scales, a score of five denoted a low level of the construct and a score of one a high level. For example, a score of five on the 'work-family conflict' scale indicated that the individual had a low level of work-family conflict, that is, that they did not suffer from work-family conflict.

<u>Reliability Estimates</u>

The internal consistency of each scale was examined to ensure that items in each scale were reliably measuring the same construct. Due to the large number of respondents with missing values in the 'supervisor flexibility' scale, the internal consistency for this scale was not assessed. The reliability analysis for the other nine scales involved fewer than 269 respondents, due to missing item scores within the various scales. However, apart from the 'supervisor flexibility' scale, the only other scale with fewer than 260 complete responses was the 'co-worker sensitivity' scale which received 249 complete response sets. Because this number represents 93% of the total sample, the missing responses would not have had a large impact on the resulting reliability estimate.

Table 6 shows the number of respondents included in each analysis and the coefficient α value for each scale. The α values range from .79 for the 'job involvement' scale to .90 for the 'work-family conflict' scale. It should be noted that the number of items included in each reliability analysis is small for many of the scales.

Table 6

Reliability Estimates for Measurement Scales showing the Effective Sample Size

(Respondents) and Coefficient Alpha Value for Each Sub-scale

Scale	Respondents	Alpha value
Work-family conflict	266	.90
Family-work conflict	266	.80
Supervisor support	268	.84
Supervisor sensitivity	262	.84
Supervisor flexibility	–	–
Co-worker support	260	.84
Co-worker sensitivity	249	.84
Overall workplace support	266	.81
Job involvement	263	.79
Family involvement	260	.87

Descriptive Information

Demographic Information

Table 7 summarises the demographic information for the present sample. It is interesting to note that the number of male and female respondents was relatively even. Forty five percent of the sample was female and 55% was male. The majority of the sample (65%) was aged between 30 and 49 years, and 57% claimed that they had a tertiary qualification (Diploma, Degree, Postgraduate, and so on)[6].

The majority of the sample (60%) had children, with an average of 1.2 children each, and an average age of 13.9. The average number and average age of children varied between organisations, from an average number of 1.0 in Organisation 1 to 1.7 in Organisation 3, and an average age of 11.5 years in Organisation 4 to 16.6 years in Organisation 3. A frequency count shows that, of those with children, 66% had children

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[6] Five participants gave two responses for their highest educational qualification. In these cases, a judgement was made by the researcher regarding which was the highest. For example, if the response

aged up to and including 15 years, and 23% of those had pre-schoolers.

Gender and age varied by parental status. Thirty six percent of respondents with children were female, in comparison to 58% of the sample without children. Eighty one percent of respondents without children were aged under 40, more than double the percentage of respondents with children who were under 40 (40%).

given was a 'bachelors degree' and 'other', the bachelors degree was retained as the correct response.

Table 7

Demographic Information showing the Frequencies and
Percentages for the Categories of the Main
Demographic Variables

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	148	55.4
Female	119	44.6
Age		
Under 20	1	0.4
20-29	51	19.2
30-39	97	36.6
40-49	74	27.9
50 or over	42	15.8
Education		
School certificate	37	13.9
Sixth form certificate	15	5.6
Higher school cert.	13	4.9
University entrance	46	17.2
Bursary	5	1.9
Undergraduate	108	40.4
Postgraduate	43	16.1
Children		
Yes	159	59.8
No	107	40.2

Family Life

Overall sample figures indicated that the child-care methods of 'care by partner', 'care by relatives', and 'day-care' were used approximately equally (30%, 34%, 32%, respectively) with 'after-school care' and 'nanny' used at lower rates (8% and 14%, respectively). However, further analysis showed different patterns of child-care across organisations. Within Organisation 1, 'care by partner' was the most common method of care, with 45% of respondents selecting this as a method of child-care that they used. 'Care by relatives' was the second most popular (35%) followed by 'day-care' (20%). In Organisation 2, 'day-care' was the most popular method (46%), followed by 'care by partner' (35%), and 'care by relatives' (19%). Organisation 3 was different again, with 71% of respondents using relatives as a form of child-care, followed by 24% who used 'day-care' and only 12% selecting 'care by partner'. Finally, Organisation 4 had the most distinct pattern of child-care, with the 'nanny' being the most popular (38%), followed by 'day-care' (31%), and 'care by partner' (25%)[7]. As would be expected, the method of partner caring for the child was much more common for male respondents than for female respondents (42% compared to 13%). Female respondents appeared to rely much more heavily on relatives to help with their child-care needs, with 48% of females reporting relatives as a form of child-care used, compared to only 25% of male respondents.

Overall, 65% of respondents claimed their partner's employment status to be full-time and 22% to be part-time[8]. These percentages varied between organisations from 56% and 32% in Organisation 1, to 72% and 11% in Organisation 4. Eleven percent of respondents in Organisations 3 and 4, and 9% in Organisations 1 and 2, claimed that their partners were engaged in unpaid work at home. Results of this analysis between genders conformed to what might have been expected, with 87% of female respondents giving full-time work as their partner's employment status, only 6% as part-time, and 5% as unpaid work at home. These figures compare to 50% full-time, 35% part-time, and 13% unpaid work at home as reported by male respondents. Similar differences in the employment status of partners were found between respondents who had children and those who did not have children. Eighty nine percent of respondents without children

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[7] Due to the fact that respondents often used a combination of methods for child-care, these percentages add up to over 100%.

[8] Three respondents had entered both 'part-time work' and 'work at home' as their partner's

had partners who worked full-time, whereas only 55% of those who had children reported having partners who worked full-time.

Work Life

The average tenure for the overall sample was 10.3 years[9]. This mean value was inflated due to the high average tenure for Organisation 1 which, at 16.8 years, was significantly higher $(p < .01)$ than the tenure of participants from the other three organisations (7.0, 6.9, and 6.4 years respectively). The average tenure also differed significantly by gender and parental status. The average tenure for men was significantly greater (13.8 years) than the tenure for women (5.9 years; $p < .01$), as was the average tenure for respondents with children (12.6 years) compared to those without children (6.4 years; $p < .01$).

The average number of hours worked per week was 42.4 for the overall sample. A one-way analysis of variance showed that there were significant differences in the number of hours worked between genders and between employees who used and those who did not use FFIs at the time of data collection[10]. Women worked an average of 41.2 hours per week, whereas men worked an average of 43.4 hours. The difference was similar by use of initiatives, with employees who did use FFIs working an average of 41.1 hours and employees who did not use FFIs working an average of 43.9 hours per week.

One hundred and three, or 38% of, respondents indicated that they had management responsibility. Of these respondents, 39% had responsibility at the supervisor level, 42% at the middle management level, 6% at senior management level, and 14% had management responsibility of another description[11]. Forty five percent of the male respondents claimed to have some management responsibility, in comparison to 31% of the female respondents.

Ninety three percent of the overall sample was employed on a full-time basis, 5% were part-time and 2% were casual employees. The percentage of respondents who

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employment status in Question 23. Where this occurred, the response was classified as 'part-time'.
[9] The questions pertaining to tenure and the average number of hours worked per week contained two missing values each. These were estimated from the average responses to these questions.
[10] FFIs exclude 'phone available for contact with family' and 'meetings in core hours'.
[11] Two participants indicated more than one level. The lower level was deemed to be the correct response.

worked full-time did not vary considerably from the overall value in Organisations 1, 2, and 3, however, only 85% of respondents in Organisation 4 were full-time workers. Eleven percent of female respondents worked part-time compared to less than 1% of male respondents.

When asked which was the most important factor in the assessment of their contributions at work, 85% of respondents nominated the quality of their work followed by the amount of work that they completed (29%)[12]. These two factors were nominated as the most important factors in all organisations and were assigned the same relative importance.

Scales and Sub-scales

The number of participants with complete data sets, prior to the estimation of missing values, varied across the 10 scales/sub-scales from 266 to 269, with the exception of the 'supervisor flexibility' scale that had only 254 complete sets. Therefore, although the 'supervisor flexibility' scale had 15 participants dropped from the analysis, the other scales had only one (the 'work-family conflict', 'family-work conflict', 'overall workplace support', and 'job involvement' scales), two (the 'co-worker support' and 'co-worker sensitivity' scales), or three (the 'family involvement' scale) participants dropped from the analysis. The greater number of participants who were dropped from the 'supervisor flexibility' scale was largely due to three items, one of which was only applicable to respondents who had children, with the remaining two items only applicable to respondents who were able to take work home. Non-responses to other items on this scale were largely due to respondents having no experience with the situation described.

A principal components analysis was conducted to investigate the areas measured by the support scales. Scores for the three supervisor scales, the two co-worker scales, and the 'overall workplace support' scale were entered into the analysis. Following a Varimax rotation, the results highlighted two factors. Supervisor support, supervisor sensitivity, supervisor flexibility, and overall workplace support loaded highly onto the first factor (the loadings were .89, .87, .64, and .67, respectively). The co-worker scales loaded highly onto the second factor (the loadings were .91 for co-worker support and

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[12] Percentages add up to more than 100% as many respondents nominated more than one factor.

.89 for co-worker sensitivity). The three areas of supervisor support, co-worker
support, and overall workplace support were not each represented by a separate factor.

Table 8

Summary Statistics for Scales showing Sample Size (N), Minimum (Min), Maximum (Max), Mean, and

Standard Deviation (S.D.)

Statistic	Scale									
	WFC	FWC	SS	SSN	SF	CS	CSN	OWS	JI	FI
N	268	268	269	269	254	267	267	268	268	266
Min	2.4	3.1	2.0	1.8	2.4	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.8	1.6
Max	3.6	4.2	3.1	3.5	4.6	2.8	3.5	2.8	4.2	2.8
Mean	3.0	3.8	2.5	2.6	3.6	2.2	2.5	2.4	3.6	2.2
S.D.	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.6

Note: Scales are 'work-family conflict' (WFC), 'family-work conflict' (FWC), 'supervisor support'
(SS), 'supervisor sensitivity' (SSN), 'supervisor flexibility' (SF), 'co-worker support' (CS), 'co-worker
sensitivity' (CSN), 'overall workplace support' (OWS), 'job involvement' (JI), 'family involvement'
(FI).

Means, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum values (see Table 8)
showed a moderate overall response to the 'work-family conflict' scale. The mean
response for work-family conflict was 3.03. A reasonable degree of variation about the
mean is illustrated by the standard deviation of 0.97. The percentage of responses within
each category, detailed in Table 9, show that 47% of respondents had an average score
on the 'work family conflict' scale between 1 and 3 and 54% of respondents had an
average score between 3 and 5.

Table 9

Percentage of Scale Scores within each Category: Scores shown are Mid-points of the Relevant

Class Intervals

Score	Scale									
	WFC	FWC	SS	SSN	SF	CS	CSN	OWS	JI	FI
1.25	4.5	0.4	9.7	5.2	0.4	11.5	4.1	7.8	1.1	23.0
1.75	8.6	0.4	7.8	5.2	1.9	9.7	8.2	8.2	1.1	13.8
2.25	21.6	4.8	36.8	30.9	9.7	43.1	34.6	43.9	7.1	33.8
2.75	11.9	7.4	17.1	34.6	8.9	22.7	32.7	10.4	8.9	10.0
3.25	12.6	13.4	13.4	16.7	13.8	7.1	14.5	13.4	19.7	11.5
3.75	13.4	18.2	7.4	5.6	29.4	2.6	3.7	3.7	18.6	3.7
4.25	23.0	42.4	5.6	1.5	21.2	2.6	1.9	8.9	33.8	3.7
4.75	4.5	13.0	2.2	0.4	14.9	0.7	0.7	3.7	9.7	0.4

Note: Scales are 'work-family conflict' (WFC), 'family-work conflict' (FWC), 'supervisor support' (SS), 'supervisor sensitivity' (SSN), 'supervisor flexibility' (SF), 'co-worker support' (CS), 'co-worker sensitivity' (CSN), 'overall workplace support' (OWS), 'job involvement' (JI), 'family involvement' (FI).

Significant differences were found in the level of work-family conflict experienced by male and female respondents and between employees with and without children ($p < .01$ in each case). The average 'work-family conflict' score for females was 3.25, compared to 2.86 for male respondents. The higher level of work-family conflict for men is illustrated by the fact that 65% of men scored between 1 and 3 on this scale compared to the 37% of women who scored in the same range. Further investigation of this relationship revealed that these differences applied only to individuals with children ($p < .01$). For respondents without children, no gender differences were found in levels of work-family conflict.

As might have been expected, the respondents who had children were more likely to suffer from work-family conflict than those without children. The mean scores on the 'work-family conflict' scale were 2.89 for respondents with children and 3.23 for those without children ($p < .01$). Fifty five percent of those with children scored between 1 and 3 on the scale compared to 35% of those without children.

The mean for the 'family-work conflict' scale was 3.77, slightly higher than the overall work-family conflict value. The frequency count clearly showed that the results were skewed toward higher scores and, therefore, lower levels of conflict. Eighty seven percent of respondents had average scores between 3 and 5. Significant differences ($p <$ .01) were found in the mean level of family-work conflict between organisations. Specifically, Organisations 1 and 2 differed significantly ($p < .01$) from one another, their scores on the 'family-work conflict' scale were 3.94 and 3.52, respectively. As might have been expected, the level of family-work conflict was also significantly different ($p <$ .01) for employees with and without children. Respondents who had children were more likely to suffer from family-work conflict (mean = 3.67), than respondents without children (mean = 3.90).

The mean scores for the supervisor support and sensitivity scales were slightly lower than the previous two scales. The 'supervisor support' and the 'supervisor sensitivity' scales had overall means of 2.48 and 2.57, respectively, indicating that moderate to high levels of supervisor support and sensitivity were perceived in the overall sample. The lower scores on these scales were clearly illustrated by the fact that 71% of respondents scored between 1 and 3 on the 'supervisor support' scale compared to the 29% who scored between 3 and 5. Similarly, 76% of respondents scored between 1 and 3 on the 'supervisor sensitivity' scale, while 24% scored between 3 and 5. For the 'supervisor support' scale, significant differences were found for average scale scores between genders and between the employees who used and did not use FFIs ($p < .01$ in both cases). The mean scores were 2.32 for female respondents, 2.58 for males, 2.37 for respondents who used FFIs, and 2.64 for those who did not use FFIs. There were no significant differences between demographic subgroups for the 'supervisor sensitivity' scale ($p > .01$).

Scores on the 'supervisor flexibility' scale reflected the results seen for the other supervisor scales. Although scores were relatively high for supervisor flexibility, in this instance higher scores illustrated a high level of perceived supervisor flexibility. The mean score was 3.64 and 79% of respondents scored between 3 and 5. Organisation, gender, and use of initiatives all were associated with significant differences in the perception of supervisor flexibility. Organisation 1 differed significantly ($p < .01$) from the other three organisations in the level of perceived supervisor flexibility. The mean score for Organisation 1 was 3.15 compared to 3.92, 3.73, and 4.03, for Organisations 2,

3, and 4. Consistent with the findings for the 'supervisor support' scale, significant differences ($p < .01$) were found in the level of supervisor flexibility that was perceived by respondents who used FFIs and between genders. A difference of 0.32 was found between the mean for females (3.83) and the mean for males (3.51), and a similar difference was found in the level of perceived supervisor flexibility between those who used FFIs (3.78) and those who did not use FFIs (3.44).

The co-worker support scores followed much the same pattern as the scores for the supervisor scales. Mean scores were 2.22 for the 'co-worker support' scale and 2.50 for the 'co-worker sensitivity' scale. That 87% of respondents scored between 1 and 3 on the 'co-worker support' scale, illustrates the skewed nature of the scores, and this was confirmed by the relatively small standard deviation of 0.69. The 'co-worker support' scale was not associated with any significant differences between demographic subgroups. However, significant differences were found on the 'co-worker sensitivity' scale between genders ($p < .01$) and between respondents who used or did not use FFIs ($p < .01$). Means were 2.40 for females, 2.59 for males, 2.42 for respondents who used FFIs, and 2.62 for those who did not use FFIs.

Scores on the 'overall workplace support' scale were also low, with a mean of 2.4. The only significant difference found for this scale was between the respondents who used FFIs and those who did not use them ($p < .01$). The respondents who used FFIs at the time of data collection were more likely to perceive overall workplace support for balancing work and family life (mean = 2.29) than were their co-workers who did not use FFIs (mean = 2.55).

As might have been expected, the job involvement and family involvement results were the opposite of each other. Lower levels of job involvement were illustrated, with a mean of 3.61. A mean of 2.15 illustrated higher levels of family involvement. Further results that were consistent with expectations were the significant differences in job and family involvement scores between respondents with children and those without children ($p < .01$ in both cases). Respondents who had children had a mean score on the 'job involvement' scale of 3.72 and a score on the 'family involvement' scale of 1.97. Respondents without children had comparative scores of 3.47 and 2.42.

Relationships among Measures

Pearson Correlation Coefficients

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to investigate the relationships between the 10 measurement scales and the number of FFIs used. According to Cohen's (1992) effect size criteria, of the 22 statistically significant correlations[13] in Table 10 (also shown in Figure 3), 7 classify as small effects (i.e., $.1 \leq r < .3$), 12 as medium effects (i.e., $.3 \leq r < .5$), and the remaining 3 as large effects (i.e., $r \geq .5$).

Table 10

Pearson Correlation Matrix for the 10 Measurement Scales and the Number of Family Friendly Initiatives Used

Variable	WFC	FWC	SS	SSN	SF	CS	CSN	OWS	JI	FI
WFC	—									
FWC	.397**	—								
SS	-.205**	.022	—							
SSN	-.183**	-.052	.763**	—						
SF	-.032	.025	.437**	.509**	—					
CS	-.173**	-.048	.275**	.332**	.324**	—				
CSN	-.012	.070	.278**	.432**	.319**	.725**	—			
OWS	.349**	-.159**	.490**	.488**	.366**	.317**	.381**	—		
JI	.088	.040	.093	.124*	.082	.044	.134*	.119	—	
FI	.090	-.016	.006	.048	.024	.053	.137*	.018	-.159**	—
FFI	-.034	.117	.197**	.148*	.262**	.125*	.170**	.209**	.140*	.028

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level.
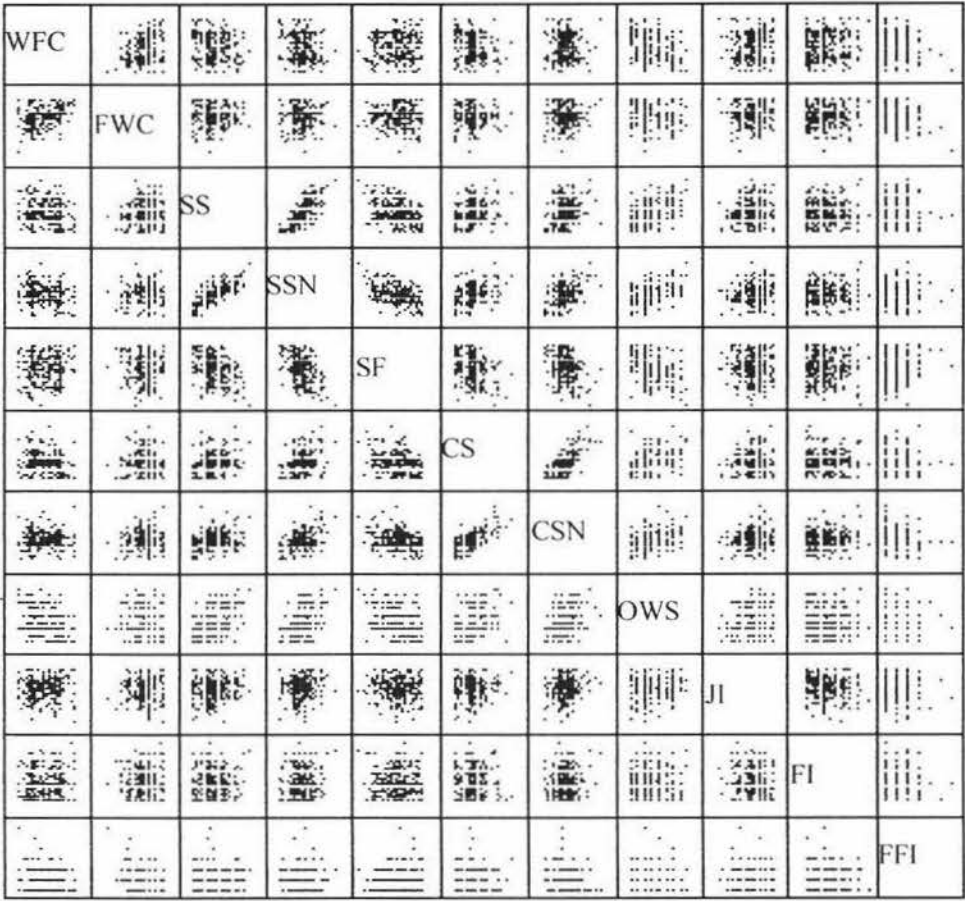** Correlation is significant at the .01 level.
Note (1): Scales are 'work-family conflict' (WFC), 'family-work conflict' (FWC), 'supervisor support' (SS), 'supervisor sensitivity' (SSN), 'supervisor flexibility' (SF), 'co-worker support' (CS), 'co-worker sensitivity' (CSN), 'overall workplace support' (OWS), 'job involvement' (JI), 'family involvement' (FI), 'number of family friendly initiatives used' (FFI).
Note (2): Degree of shading indicates small, medium, and large significant correlations, based on Cohen's (1992) criteria with light representing small, medium representing medium, and dark representing large.
Note (3): High scores on the SF scale and FFIs related to high levels of these constructs, whereas, high

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[13] Significant at the .01 level.

scores on the other scales related to low levels. The direction of the relationships for SF and FFIs were adjusted for this table.

Note (1): Scales are 'work-family conflict' (WFC), 'family-work conflict' (FWC), 'supervisor support' (SS), 'supervisor sensitivity' (SSN), 'supervisor flexibility' (SF), co-worker support' (CS), 'co-worker sensitivity' (CSN), 'overall workplace support' (OWS), 'job involvement' (JI), 'family involvement' (FI), 'number of family friendly initiatives used' (FFI).
Note (2): High scores on the SF scale and FFIs related to high levels of these constructs, whereas, high scores on the other scales related to low levels. The direction of the relationships for SF and FFIs were not adjusted for this scatterplot.

Figure 3. Scatterplot Matrix for the 10 Measurement Scales and the Number of Family Friendly Initiatives Used.

The significant correlations for the 'work-family conflict' scale include small negative correlations with both supervisor support and supervisor sensitivity (-.21 and -.18, respectively), and with the 'co-worker support' scale (-.17). A medium positive relationship was found between work-family and family-work conflict (.40), and a

medium negative relationship with overall workplace support (-.35). Although there were no strong relationships with other variables, the results showed significant relationships between work-family conflict and family-work conflict, perceived supervisor support and sensitivity, co-worker support, and overall workplace support.

The only significant correlation associated with family-work conflict, despite its relationship with work-family conflict, was a small negative correlation with overall workplace support (-.16). The lack of significant relationships with family-work conflict was to be expected due to the fact that the variables investigated in the present research were predominantly work variables and would be more likely to moderate work interfering with family life than family life interfering with work.

As would be expected, supervisor support had a strong positive relationship with the 'supervisor sensitivity' scale (.76), and a medium positive relationship with supervisor flexibility (.44). This pattern was repeated between the two co-worker scales (.73). Supervisor support had small positive relationships with both co-worker scales (both .28), whereas supervisor sensitivity (.33 and .43) and supervisor flexibility (both .32) had medium relationships with both.

Overall workplace support had significant correlations with all variables, except the job and family involvement scales. The negative relationships were, as mentioned above, a small correlation with family-work conflict and a medium correlation with work-family conflict. Overall workplace support had strong positive correlations with both supervisor support and sensitivity (both .49), but only a medium negative relationship with supervisor flexibility (- .37). Co-worker support and sensitivity both had medium positive correlations with overall workplace support (.32 and .38).

Job involvement and family involvement had a significant but small negative relationship with each other (-.16), but did not have any significant correlations with other variables.

The number of FFIs used by respondents[14] had small but significant positive relationships with supervisor support (.20), supervisor flexibility (.26), co-worker sensitivity (.17), and overall workplace support (.21). However, the pattern of correlations for the number of initiatives used differed substantially between demographic subgroups. The number of initiatives used was significantly related to

[14] Excluding 'phone available for contact with family' and 'meetings in core hours'.

supervisor flexibility (.31) and overall workplace support (.22) for respondents with children, and respondents in Organisation 1. However, the initiatives used were not significantly related to any scales for respondents without children, or for the other three organisations. For male respondents, supervisor sensitivity (.22), supervisor flexibility (.34), co-worker support (.26), co-worker sensitivity (.23), and overall workplace support (.29) all had small or medium, significant correlations with the number of FFIs used. By contrast, no significant relationships with the use of FFIs were found for female respondents.

In contrast to the correlations for FFIs, the pattern of correlations for the 10 scales was similar between demographic subgroups. However, there were a number of small differences. For example, small significant correlations ($p < .01$ in both cases) were found between work-family conflict and supervisor support and sensitivity for respondents with children (-.24 and -.22), whereas the relationships between these variables were not significant for respondents without children (-.12 and -.13). Investigation of the differences between groups showed a difference of two significant correlations between genders, five between respondents with and without children, three between those who had and had not used FFIs, and three between Organisation 2 and the other three organisations.

There were also small differences between demographic subgroups in the effect size of significant correlations as defined by Cohen's (1992) criteria. An example of this type of occurrence was the medium negative relationship in Organisation 4 between work-family conflict and co-worker support ($r = -.44$), whereas in Organisation 1 this was only a small relationship (-.28). In Organisations 2 and 3, the relationship between these variables would classify as a small effect using Cohen's criteria, however, due to the smaller sample sizes in the organisational analysis they were not statistically significant.

Multiple Linear Regression

Standard multiple linear regression analyses were performed for the two main dependent variables, work-family conflict and family-work conflict. Fifteen predictor variables were entered into each analysis, and these were largely made up of the other eight scales: Supervisor support, supervisor sensitivity, supervisor flexibility, co-worker support, co-worker sensitivity, overall workplace support, job involvement, and family

involvement. The other seven variables were sex, age, parental status, number of children, education level, how many FFIs respondents perceived their organisation to offer, and how many initiatives they presently use.

Table 11 shows that only a small but statistically significant amount of variation in work-family conflict (29%, $p < .01$) was accounted for by the regression analysis. The four variables that were significant in the prediction of work-family conflict, in order of importance, were overall workplace support, co-worker sensitivity, co-worker support, and job involvement. Note that, co-worker sensitivity was a significant predictor in the regression equation, despite a low Pearson correlation coefficient with work-family conflict. However, co-worker sensitivity did have a number of correlations of varying magnitudes with other variables. In particular, co-worker sensitivity had a large correlation with co-worker support, and a medium correlation with overall workplace support, both of which were significant predictors of work-family conflict.

Table 11

Summary of Standard Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Variables
Predicting Work-Family Conflict showing Regression Coefficient (B),
Standard Error (SE (B)), Obtained t value (t), and Corresponding p value
(p) for Each Predictor Variable. The Proportion of Variation in Work-
Family Conflict Scores Accounted for by the 15 Predictor Variables (r^2) is
also shown.

Predictors	B	Std.Error	t	p
Overall workplace support	-.38	.08	-5.10	.00
Co-worker sensitivity	.53	.14	3.73	.00
Co-worker support	-.40	.12	-3.43	.00
Job involvement	.22	.07	3.04	.00
Supervisor flexibility	-.19	.08	-2.35	.02
Education	-.06	.03	-2.22	.03
Sex	-.26	.12	-2.17	.03
Family involvement	.13	.07	1.81	.07
No. of children	-.11	.07	-1.60	.11
Supervisor sensitivity	-.21	.14	-1.49	.14
Initiatives used	.04	.04	1.01	.32
Initiatives offered	-.02	.02	-.77	.44
Supervisor support	.05	.10	.48	.63
Children yes/no	.04	.18	.24	.81
Age	-.00	.07	-.03	.97

$r^2 = .29$

Note: Shading indicates significance at the .01 level.

The regression analysis was even less successful at predicting the second
dependent variable, family-work conflict (see Table 12). Specifically, only 17% of the
variation in family-work conflict was accounted for by the set of 15 predictor variables.
Moreover, the contributions of the three significant variables, co-worker sensitivity,
overall workplace support, and supervisor support, were approximately equal. Although
co-worker sensitivity and supervisor support were both significant predictors of family-
work conflict, their Pearson correlation coefficients were not significant. However, both
of these variables had medium correlation coefficients with overall workplace support,
which was the only other significant predictor of family-work conflict.

Table 12

Summary of Standard Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Variables
Predicting Family-Work Conflict showing Regression Coefficient (B),
Standard Error (SE (B)), Obtained t value (t), and Corresponding p value
(p) for Each Predictor Variable. The Proportion of Variation in Family-
Work Conflict Scores Accounted for by the 15 Predictor Variables (r^2) is
also shown.

Predictors	B	Std.Error	t	Sig.β
Overall workplace support	-.209	.06	-3.59	.00
Co-worker sensitivity	.328	.11	3.01	.00
Supervisor Support	.209	.08	2.68	.01
Supervisor sensitivity	-.249	.11	-2.23	.03
Co-worker support	-.180	.09	-1.99	.05
Age	.09	.05	1.82	.07
Number of children	-.08	.05	-1.58	.12
Education	-.04	.02	-1.58	.12
Initiatives used	-.04	.03	-1.24	.22
Family involvement	-.06	.05	-1.21	.23
Job involvement	.06	.06	1.02	.31
Children yes/no	.125	.14	.87	.38
Sex	-.08	.09	-.82	.41
Supervisor flexibility	-.03	.06	-.51	.61
Initiatives offered	-.07	.02	-.389	.698

$r^2 = .17$

Note: Shading indicates significance at the .01 level.

Predictive ability was improved for both dependent variables by conducting the
regression analyses separately for respondents with different parental status and for
different genders. For work-family conflict, an analysis split by parental status produced
better predictive ability for both groups than had been seen for the overall sample. For
respondents with children, 33% of the variance in work-family conflict could be
accounted for by the predictor variables and for respondents without children 31% of the
variance could be accounted for. The significant variables for respondents with children
were co-worker sensitivity, overall workplace support, sex, and job involvement, but for
those without children, only overall workplace support had statistically significant
predictive ability.

In terms of gender, a split analysis also produced higher r^2 values for both groups. The best predictive ability of all groups was found for female respondents for the work-family conflict variable. For this group, 36% of the variance in work-family conflict was accounted for by the predictor variables. Note that the importance of the predictor variables differed considerably between genders. For females, overall workplace support, co-worker support, and supervisor flexibility were the significant predictors, but for male respondents, job involvement, co-worker sensitivity, and family involvement were the most important, with overall workplace support the fourth significant predictor. A positive regression coefficient for co-worker sensitivity despite a low, negative correlation with work-family conflict was displayed for the split analyses, as was found for the overall sample.

The second dependent variable, family-work conflict, received lower r^2 values than the work-family conflict variable irrespective of how the analysis was conducted. However, separate regression analyses by parental status and gender did produce better results than for the overall sample. In comparison to the r^2 value of .17 for the overall sample, split analyses showed that for respondents with children almost 25% of the variance in family-work conflict could be accounted for by the predictor variables, and for females this value was 28%. Significant predictor variables were supervisor support and overall workplace support for respondents with children, and co-worker sensitivity, overall workplace support, and age for women. For male respondents and those without children, the predictive ability of the variables in this analysis was not statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

Findings of the Present Research

Initiatives

Organisational Information

The information provided by the organisations in the present research indicated that a substantial number of family friendly initiatives (FFIs) were offered. The smallest number of initiatives provided by an organisation was 10. This finding appears to be in line with previous research. For example, the Australian organisations participating in Moore's (1996) research offered an average of nine initiatives.

The reasons given by the participating organisations for introducing FFIs were broadly defined as being a 'good employer' or fulfilling 'employee needs'. However, despite the expressed interest in fulfilling these needs, only Organisations 1 and 3 claimed that they had actually assessed the needs of employees in the process of implementing FFIs.

The fact that direct managers or supervisors were the first point of contact for employees wishing to use FFIs may have limited their use. The undesirable influence of supervisor discretion on the use of FFIs has been documented by a number of researchers (e.g., Galinsky, 1988; Perlow, 1995; Raabe & Gessner, 1988; Tudhope, 1994). Unsupportive supervisors can act as barriers to the use of FFIs and, therefore, inhibit the reduction of work-family conflict. Due to the accumulating evidence on this point, the influence of supervisor discretion in the use of FFIs should not continue unchecked.

Because the initial aims and objectives for the implementation of FFIs were, in most cases, broadly defined, it is inevitable that difficulties would be encountered in the assessment of their effectiveness. Although two organisations claimed that the initiatives had been effective in terms of their initial aims or objectives, none of the organisations had conducted a formal assessment. Indeed, in three of the four participating organisations, the number of employees using the initiatives was unknown.

Employee Perceptions of the Family Friendly Initiatives Offered and Used

By comparing the initiatives actually offered by the organisations with those perceived by employees to be offered, it is apparent that there was a significant lack of employee awareness concerning FFIs. A similar lack of awareness has been highlighted in previous research (Tudhope, 1994). In the present research, misperceptions of FFIs existed despite the claims made by approximately 60% of respondents, from three organisations, that they learnt of the initiatives from their employer. However, the quality of the information disseminated to employees was not assessed and it is possible that a factor such as this may have contributed to employees' inadequate knowledge of FFIs. Indeed, Tudhope questioned employers' knowledge and the amount of detail given to employees regarding FFIs in her investigation of three large Auckland based organisations.

Differences in the use of FFIs between genders, and respondents with and without children, occurred in the expected directions, with female respondents and those with children being more likely to use FFIs. Differences between organisations in the use of initiatives may reflect organisational characteristics such as awareness of initiatives or support for their use.

Large contrasts were found in the percentage of respondents who claimed they presently use certain FFIs, and the percentage of respondents who claimed they would make use of FFIs were they offered by their organisation. The initial temptation is to attribute these differences to the organisations providing FFIs that were not consistent with the needs of many of their employees. However, on closer inspection, it can be seen that, in a number of cases, the initiatives that employees claimed they would use were in fact already offered by their organisation. The failure to use apparently 'in demand' initiatives may be accounted for by misperceptions regarding the FFIs that were offered, as discussed above, or may be attributable to the influence of supervisor discretion in the use of FFIs.

Employee Perceptions of the Implementation and Functioning of Family Friendly Initiatives

Employers, followed by co-workers, were the most common sources of information concerning FFIs for the majority of respondents. Newsletters were also common in Organisation 3. However, the general dominance of employers and co-

workers in the supply of family friendly information is consistent with previous New Zealand research (Tudhope, 1994).

Employee perceptions of their organisation's reasons for implementing FFIs were, in the main, consistent with the reasons supplied by the organisations themselves - to be a good employer or to fulfil employee needs. However, employees in Organisation 1 were more likely to hold the view that the implementation of FFIs was due to the legal obligations of their employer. Men were also more likely to hold this view, whereas the majority of female participants believed that their employers were responding to the needs of employees. Increasing productivity and recruiting and retaining employees were also seen to be reasons for the introduction of FFIs.

Most respondents (75%) perceived that the FFIs that were offered by their organisation were available to them. However, a quarter of respondents did not believe they had access to all the initiatives that were available. Reasons offered by employees for this unavailability included: Practical constraints of the job that prohibited changing the hours and the site where work was performed; that initiatives were not available to part-time workers or to managers; and that initiatives were only available to women and employees with children. These restrictions to the use of FFIs may reflect real impediments in the workplace or misperceptions on the part of employees. However, because the present research recorded employee perceptions the existence of real effects cannot be confirmed. In either case, it is argued that the organisation is responsible for reducing impediments to the use of initiatives and eliminating misperceptions regarding their availability.

The majority of respondents (88%) thought FFIs were equally available to men and women, and 64% thought they would be equally likely to use them. However, female respondents were more likely than male respondents to perceive this equality.

As noted above, the organisations in the present research expressed their interest in fulfilling employee needs, and many respondents perceived that the implementation of FFIs on the part of the organisation was an attempt to meet their needs. However, despite these findings, less than one third of respondents felt that they had been given the opportunity for input into the development of the initiatives. Schmidt and Scott (1987) conducted an assessment of the FFIs that employees perceived as the most useful for balancing work and home responsibilities. They concluded that the assessment of employee needs was crucial for the effective implementation of these policies, because they found a need for multiple approaches to suit different employees. The work-family

difficulties that predominate in one organisation may differ substantially from the problems that are dominant in another organisation. As a result, family friendly programmes need to be developed specifically for the organisation they are to be used in.

Self-reports of respondents who had used FFIs were overwhelmingly positive. Ninety two percent of respondents who had used FFIs felt that they had helped them to function more effectively in their work lives, and 94% of respondents agreed they had done the same for their family lives. Although such self-reports may not be as conclusive in assessing the effectiveness of FFI as more objective data, it could be argued that the perception of greater functioning in work and family lives is an important consideration in itself.

Despite much recent discussion concerning the negative influence of FFIs on the career advancement of employees (e.g., Perlow, 1995; Schwartz, 1994), the present findings show that the majority of respondents perceived the use of FFIs to have had a positive influence on their career. However, because the questionnaire did not specifically mention career advancement, it is possible that the perception of any negative influence in this regard may not have been realised in the present research.

A minority of employees agreed that supervisors' and co-workers' attitudes influenced their decisions to use or not use FFIs. Self-reports showed that one third of respondents agreed with the influence of supervisor attitudes, and 22% with co-worker influence. Schwartz (1994) claimed that supervisor attitudes could influence the use of FFIs.

Descriptive Information

Demographic Information

The present sample differed from that of much research in the area of work-family conflict (e.g., Warren & Johnson, 1995), in that it included both male and female respondents as well as respondents with and without children. Due to perceptions that women with children experience the greatest degree of work-family conflict, they have traditionally been the focus of research in this area. However, Warren and Johnson concluded that future research should investigate workplace support within a sample that includes "both mothers and fathers...in a variety of occupational positions with children in a range of child care options, as well as employed parents who are also

providing care to ageing relatives" (*p.* 169). The demographic data and information collected concerning the family lives and work lives of the present respondents showed that they included and expanded upon these characteristics.

The number of children that respondents had, and their average age, are also important considerations when comparing the present findings with previous research. In the present research, 60% of respondents had children, with an average of 1.2 children each and an average age of approximately 14 years. Parental demands are well documented as stressors which lead to work-family conflict (e.g., Frone, Yardely, & Markel, 1997; Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granose, 1992; Parasuraman, Purohit, Godshalk, & Beutall, 1996), and these demands change considerably with the number and age of the children. Therefore, because Warren and Johnson's (1995) research was conducted with a sample of employed mothers with pre-school children, their findings could be expected to differ from the present research.

The gender and age of respondents varied by parental status. Respondents with children were more likely to be male and were, on average, older than respondents without children. This is to be expected, as men with children are more likely to remain in the workforce than women with children, and the likelihood of having children increases with age.

Family Life

Respondents in the present research used a wide range of child-care options, including care by partner or relatives, day-care, nanny, and after-school care. The participating organisations differed as to which method was predominant, suggesting that organisational characteristics or factors associated with work may influence the method of child-care used. These factors could include the average salary received by employees, the degree of flexibility employees are given to combine work and child-care, or the gender makeup of the workforce.

The percentage of respondents, who had to provide special care to someone on the basis of illness, handicap, or old age, was low. This suggests that the provision of care to elderly parents was not a major issue for the majority of the present sample. However, the difference in the level of special care between organisations indicates that this was a more pertinent issue within Organisation 4, and emphasises the need for organisations to conduct a detailed needs assessment prior to introducing a family friendly programme.

A large proportion of the sample were members of dual-earner or dual-career couples. Sixty five percent of all respondents had partners who were employed full-time, and 55% of those with children had the combined pressures of both parenthood and a partner who was in full-time employment. The increasing body of literature on dual-earner and dual career couples (e.g., Gilbert, 1985; Higgins & Duxbury, 1992; Karambayya & Reilly, 1992; Wiersma & Van Den Berg, 1991) emphasises the significance of the employment status of partners for the work-family conflict experienced by employees. Higgins and Duxbury, in their comparison of dual-career and traditional-career men, found that wives' employment had a significant effect on the antecedents of work-family conflict and that men in dual-career couples experienced significant negative spillover from work to home.

Work Life

The average tenure was large due to the exceedingly high tenure for Organisation 1 (a mean of 16.8 years). The differences in tenure seen between genders and respondents with and without children may be attributable simply to the age differences between these groups.

The differences in the number of hours worked between genders, and between respondents who used and did not use FFIs, can be accounted for by the participation of these groups in part-time work. Eleven percent of female respondents worked part-time compared to less than one percent of men.

A significant proportion of the sample claimed to have some degree of management responsibility, ranging from supervisor to senior management. This finding could have significant implications for work-family conflict and the use of FFIs. Management responsibility is associated with greater work demands that could lead to increases in work-family conflict. Also, some respondents claimed that FFIs were not available to managers.

The majority of respondents nominated the quality of their work as the most important factor in the assessment of their contributions at work rather than the amount of time spent at the workplace, or the amount of work produced. This is certainly a positive outcome, as Perlow (1995) has identified the cultural assumption that "presence at work is directly related to one's contribution to the work" (p. 234) as an underlying barrier to the success of FFIs in the workplace.

<u>Scales and Sub-scales</u>

The internal consistency of the scales used in the present research was assessed and, with the exception of the 'supervisor flexibility' scale, the results were positive. Therefore, we may have confidence that the items within each of these scales consistently measured the relevant constructs. The extent of missing data associated with the 'supervisor flexibility' scale precluded an assessment of its internal consistency and suggests caution must be taken in interpreting the results associated with this measure. The inapplicability of one item to individuals without children, and two items to individuals unable to take work home, limits the use of this scale (in its original form) within such a diverse sample. For subsequent use of this scale, adjustments should be made to items that exclude certain groups of respondents.

As Schwartz's (1994) definition of corporate culture suggests[15], the overall workplace support that exists for work-family balance will incorporate aspects of supervisor support, and possibly even co-worker support. Warren and Johnson (1995) alluded to this possibility in their evaluation of supervisor flexibility and work environment support in the work-family context. Thus, measures of workplace support were examined to further investigate the constructs measured by each scale. The principal components analysis of the 'supervisor support', 'co-worker support', and 'overall workplace support' scales, suggested that the 'supervisor' and 'overall workplace support' scales were measuring components of the same construct. The 'co-worker support' scales loaded onto a factor of their own and therefore appear to measure a construct that is independent of supervisor and overall workplace support. The mutual factor associated with supervisor and overall workplace support suggests the perception of overall workplace support is largely dependent upon the perception of support from supervisors.

The level of work-family conflict was moderate for the overall sample. However, an analysis of the differences between groups highlighted some interesting, and unexpected, results. The existence of a significant difference in levels of work-family conflict between genders was not, in itself, surprising. What was unexpected, was that the level of work-family conflict was found to be significantly higher for male respondents. Further investigation revealed that this difference applied only to men and

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[15] "The norms and values that are communicated through supervisor's attitudes, career paths, and organisational practices for assessing and developing the potential of employees" (Schwartz, 1994, *p.* 29).

women with children. For respondents without children, the levels of work-family conflict were largely independent of gender. This finding is consistent with the segmentation and synergy models discussed by Andrews and Bailyn (1993), and highlights the importance and relevance of the body of literature that has been developing in the area of men's experiences of the work-family interface (Bowen & Orthner, 1991; Haas & Hwang, 1995; Pleck, 1993). The finding also confirms that claims such as "no one seriously thinks these issues impact on fathers the way they do mothers" (Pleck, *p.* 218), which are often documented in work-family conflict literature, are inaccurate in today's environment.

The greater level of work-family conflict reported by respondents with children is certainly consistent with expectations. However, of the respondents without children, one third were found to suffer from moderate to high levels of work-family conflict. Such a high level of conflict cannot be viewed as acceptable. The incidence of work-family conflict among half of the respondents with children and one third of respondents without children suggests the likelihood of profound negative influences on the organisations and the individuals involved (Galinsky & Stein, 1990; Schmidt & Scott, 1987; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

On the other hand, the level of family-work conflict reported by the present sample was low relative to the reported level of work-family conflict – a finding that is consistent with Gutek, Searle, and Klepa's (1991) findings. The difference in the levels of these two types of conflict may be explained in part by a flexibility in the family domain that seems so allusive in the work domain. As Gutek et al. noted, "family work is more elastic than paid work" (*p.* 567).

Levels of supervisor support were found to be high for all supervisor scales. It was encouraging to see that the majority of respondents perceived their supervisors to provide the instrumental and emotional support they needed to effectively combine their work and family lives. This is consistent with the findings of Galinsky, Hughes, and Shinn (1986, cited in Galinsky, 1988) who found that 94% of respondents agreed that their supervisor was flexible in respect to everyday work/family issues. Although Warren and Johnson (1995) also measured the same facets of supervisor support, the levels of support that were experienced by respondents were not reported.

Although overall levels of perceived supervisor support were high, the results showed that some groups were more likely to perceive this support than others. The perception of support from supervisors differed between genders, organisations, and

between respondents who did and did not use FFIs. Contrary to the findings of Greenberger, Goldberg, Hamill, O'Neill, and Payne (1989), the present research found significant differences between male and female respondents in their perceived levels of supervisor support and supervisor flexibility. Specifically, women were more likely to perceive supervisor support and flexibility than were their male counterparts.

Findings that have not been reported in previous research were the significant differences in levels of supervisor support and supervisor flexibility that were perceived by respondents who did and did not use FFIs. Respondents who used FFIs were significantly more likely to perceive support than those who did not use FFIs. Consistent with these findings were the perceptions of one third of respondents who agreed with the influence of supervisor attitudes on their decisions to use or not use FFIs. Therefore, the present research is supportive of claims, such as that made by Schwartz (1994), that supervisors influence the use and, therefore, the impact and effectiveness of FFIs.

The significant differences found between organisations in the levels of perceived supervisor sensitivity and supervisor flexibility suggest that factors within the organisation may influence the degree to which supervisors display these characteristics. However, as there were no significant differences found between organisations in levels of perceived overall workplace support, the identification of these factors requires further attention.

As with supervisor support, the perceptions of co-worker support and sensitivity were high. This is consistent with the findings of Greenberger et al. (1989), as was the finding of no significant differences between demographic sub-groups on the 'co-worker support' scale. Perceptions of overall workplace support were also high. The significant differences found on this scale, and on the 'co-worker sensitivity' scale, between respondents who used and did not use FFIs, suggest that the perception of co-worker sensitivity and overall workplace support also influence the use of FFIs. However, as questionnaires provide only correlational data, firm conclusions cannot be made regarding the nature of these relationships.

The results of job and family involvement meet with expectations. The majority of respondents reported higher levels of family involvement and lower levels of job involvement, with this pattern exacerbated for respondents who had children.

The results illustrated that perceived workplace support was related to the use of FFIs. The initial analysis that contained all FFIs that were in the questionnaire did not

show any differences in scale scores between respondents who used and did not use FFIs. However, a decision was made to remove two initiatives, 'phone available for contact with family' and 'meetings in core hours' due to their lack of specific family focus. Because having a phone available for contact with family and conducting meetings in core working hours are common workplace practices, their relationships with other workplace variables, such as support, differs from initiatives with a more specific family focus. Repetition of the analysis without these two initiatives revealed a significant relationship between the use of the remaining FFIs and supervisor support, supervisor flexibility, co-worker sensitivity, and overall workplace support. An explanation consistent with these findings is that employees feel the presence of these aspects of workplace support are necessary for them to make use of the FFIs that are offered in the workplace.

Comparisons with Previous Research

A number of differences were found between the scale results in the present research and the findings of previous research. There are many possible explanations for these differences, including differences in the scales used to measure common constructs; cultural differences (the majority of previous research was conducted overseas); sample size; and source of the sample, for example, a child care centre versus a business organisation. It is also possible that the differences in findings may reflect real differences in the levels of work-family conflict experienced, and levels of support perceived, by respondents. In all likelihood, the differences are the result of a combination of factors such as those mentioned above.

Relationships among Measures

As respondents' perceptions of supervisor support, supervisor sensitivity, co-worker support, and overall workplace support increased, the lower their levels of work-family conflict were found to be. The negative relationship between work-family conflict and overall workplace support substantiates the findings of Warren and Johnson (1995), that the more supportive the organisational culture was perceived to be, the lower the levels of strain respondents experienced between work and family roles.

Warren and Johnson (1995) found that supervisor flexibility, not supervisor sensitivity, was negatively related to concerns surrounding the fulfilment of work and

family roles. Greenberger et al. (1989) also found support for the influence of supervisor flexibility on levels of work-family conflict. However, further findings of Greenberger et al. were consistent with the present findings regarding the influence of supervisor and co-worker support on work-family conflict. The non-significant result for the 'supervisor flexibility' scale may be related to the amount of missing data associated with this measure in the present research. However, it should be noted that the measures of work-family conflict or 'role strain' used by Greenberger et al. and Warren and Johnson differed from the one used in the present study, and did not acknowledge the bi-directional nature of this construct.

The relationship between work-family conflict and supervisor support and sensitivity was found to be significant only for respondents with children and respondents who used FFIs at the time of data collection. Therefore, for respondents without children, or for those who did not use FFIs, the perception of supervisor support had no bearing on the level of work-family conflict they experienced. This suggests that the respondents for whom work and family issues are most pertinent find that the perception of support and sensitivity from their supervisors helps to alleviate some of the stress associated with balancing work and family lives.

A significant positive relationship was found between family-work and work-family conflict. As family-work conflict increased, so too did work-family conflict. This finding has a certain intuitive appeal and is supportive of other research conducted with a bi-directional measure of work-family conflict, such as that reported by Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1992) and by Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997).

There were very few significant relationships between family-work conflict and other variables. The only significant relationships were with work-family conflict and overall workplace support. The absence of significant relationships between the variables measured in the present research and family-work conflict can be accounted for by examining the model of work-family conflict proposed by Frone et al. (1997). This model, for which Frone et al. provided empirical support, shows family-work conflict to be related primarily to family-domain variables, such as family distress, parental overload, and family support, and work-family conflict to be related primarily to work-domain variables, such as work overload, work distress, and supervisor or co-worker support. Thus, considering the focus of the present research was work-domain variables the lack of significant relationships between family-work conflict and the other variables measured in the present research was not unexpected.

Scores on the supervisor support and the co-worker support scales were all interrelated. In general, the more supportive a supervisor was perceived to be the more sensitive and flexible they were perceived to be in relation to work and family balance. The same was observed of co-workers - the more supportive they were perceived to be in general, the more sensitive they were perceived to be for family issues. In addition to this, the greater a respondent's perception of supervisor support, the greater their perception of co-worker support. This finding could be due to the presence of an organisational culture that supports work and family balance and as such influences the reactions of supervisors and co-workers toward the family responsibilities of other employees. This would obviously be a reciprocal relationship, because the presence of supportive supervisors and co-workers would, in turn, influence the organisational culture (or, in fact, comprise a considerable portion of it).

Overall workplace support for work and family balance was a key variable within the present research, as it was significantly related to all variables, with the exception of job and family involvement. As the perception of overall workplace support increased, levels of work-family conflict and, to some degree, family-work conflict decreased. All aspects of supervisor support and co-worker support were related to higher levels of perceived overall workplace support. When these findings are considered along with the results of the principal components analysis[16], it can be seen that, although the perception of supervisor support is crucial to the perception of overall workplace support, the perception of co-worker support also contributes to higher levels of this construct. It is likely that other variables also influence the perception of overall workplace support. Schwartz's (1994) definition of corporate culture describes this construct as "the norms and values that are communicated through supervisors' attitudes, career paths, and organisational practices for assessing and developing the potential of employees" (p. 29).

A number of researchers have provided empirical evidence for a significant positive relationship between job involvement and work-family conflict (e.g., Adams, King, & King, 1996; Frone, Russel, & Cooper, 1992; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, Granrose, Rabinowitz, & Beutell, 1989; Higgins, Duxbury, & Irving, 1992; Parasuraman, Purohit, Godshalk, & Beutell, 1996). However, evidence for a positive relationship between family involvement and work-family/family-work conflict is less

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[16] Two factors were found. All aspects of supervisor support and overall workplace support loaded on to the first factor, and co-worker support was represented by the second factor.

common (Frone et al., 1992). Therefore, although the finding of a non-significant relationship between job involvement and work-family conflict is contrary to the majority of research in the area, the non-significant relationship between family involvement and work-family conflict is not as unexpected.

Contrary to the overall findings, the separate correlation analyses by gender showed that there was a small, but statistically significant relationship between family involvement and work-family conflict for men. This finding contradicts the assertion by Frone et al. (1992) that family involvement is related to family-work conflict and job involvement is related to work-family conflict. However, the finding provides some support for Duxbury and Higgins' (1991) conclusion that high involvement in non-traditional roles is problematic for employees. Applying this conclusion to the present findings would suggest that a high level of involvement in the family domain could increase men's perception of work interference with family.

The number of initiatives used by respondents increased as their perceptions of supervisor support, supervisor flexibility, co-worker sensitivity, and overall workplace support increased. This lends strong support, albeit of an indirect nature, to the hypothesis that supervisor and co-worker attitudes toward work and family issues, and the level of support that is perceived from the organisation as a whole, influence the use of FFIs. This is also consistent with the significantly higher level of perceived support reported by respondents who used FFIs relative to those who did not use them.

The separate correlation analyses between demographic sub-groups illustrated that the significant relationships between the use of initiatives and perceptions of workplace support were only applicable to respondents with children, respondents in Organisation 1, and men. The significance of this relationship for respondents with children may suggest sensitivity on the part of these respondents to the views of supervisors and co-workers. If supervisors or co-workers hold attitudes that working parents are not as committed to their work, and that they cannot perform as well in the workplace as other employees, then employees with children may be reluctant to appear to be fulfilling these expectations. The literature that describes the experiences of employees who use FFIs supports this assertion (Perlow, 1995; Swiss & Walker, 1993). The significance of this relationship in Organisation 1, in contrast to the results for the other three organisations, may relate to that organisation's significantly lower level of perceived supervisor flexibility. The existence of this relationship may be an indication that supervisor attitudes are acting as a barrier to the use of initiatives in Organisation 1.

That the use of FFIs was related to the perception of supervisor sensitivity, supervisor flexibility, general co-worker support, co-worker sensitivity, and overall workplace support for men only is a highly significant result. This suggests that, whereas women may use FFIs irrespective of their perceptions of workplace support, the use of these initiatives by men is governed by the support present or perceived in the work environment. The finding that men perceive a significantly lower amount of support in the work environment, and that they are significantly less likely to use FFIs makes the above finding particularly pertinent. Even if the perception of support does not accurately reflect the support that actually exists in the work environment, it appears that the use of initiatives by men could be substantially limited by the existence of such a perception.

Although the perception of workplace support is identified as a mediator for the use of FFIs by men, the findings suggest that women's greater use of FFIs cannot be explained simply by their elevated perceptions of workplace support. It is possible that factors such as the greater parental and family demands placed upon them by the 'second shift' (Burke & McKeen, 1992) and by stereotypical gender role expectations (Amatea, Cross, Clark, & Bobby, 1986; Gutek et al., 1991) override the influence of workplace supportive variables in women's decisions to use FFIs. The greater social acceptance for women to interrupt or slow their careers in order to care for children may contribute to women being less focused on the potentially negative career repercussions that may result from their use of FFIs. Due to gender role expectations that place men in the domain of work (Amatea, Cross, Clark, & Bobby, 1986), the choices made by men in relation to FFIs may be controlled more by the potential impact on their careers than they would be for women.

Predicting Work-family and Family-work Conflict

One of the main objectives of the present research was to investigate the relationships between the use of FFIs, the perception of supervisor, co-worker, and overall workplace support, and the levels of work-family and family-work conflict experienced by employees. These relationships were expected to be stronger for work-family conflict than for family-work conflict. This was due to the fact that the perception of support from supervisors, co-workers, and the organisation constitute

work variables that would be more likely to mediate the perception of work interference with family life than family interference with work life.

Because the 15 predictor variables combined to predict only 29% of the variance in work-family conflict, and 17% of the variance in family-work conflict, it is apparent that there are other unmeasured variables that contribute to the experience of work-family and family-work conflict. However, when male and female respondents, and individuals with and without children, were investigated separately, the predictive ability of the measured variables increased.

Support was found for two relationships between workplace support variables and work-family conflict. Overall workplace support and co-worker support and sensitivity were all significant predictors of work-family conflict. This conclusion was supported by the fact that overall workplace support, co-worker support, and co-worker sensitivity had significant coefficients in the regression equation. However, it appears that co-worker sensitivity may have acted as a suppressor variable[17]. As with the combined regression analysis performed by Warren and Johnson (1995), supervisor support and the use of FFIs were not found to be significant predictors of work-family conflict. Job-involvement was also a significant predictor of work-family conflict and suggests that the more psychological and/or emotional involvement an individual has in their work, the more their work tends to interfere with their family life. The influence of job and family involvement on work-family conflict has been the subject of much discussion in this area. Frone et al. (1992) found support for job involvement being a direct predictor of work-family conflict in their model of the work-family interface. They hypothesised that increased psychological involvement in work can lead to work-family conflict in two ways; firstly, as a result of the increased time and effort invested in the work role and, secondly, by the mental preoccupation with the work role. Both aspects of work involvement make it difficult to fulfil the demands of the family role.

For family-work conflict, support was found for relationships with all three areas of perceived support. Specifically, supervisor support, co-worker sensitivity, and overall workplace support were all significant predictors of family-work conflict. However, as with co-worker sensitivity in the work-family conflict regression, supervisor support and co-worker sensitivity appear to be influential in the regression equation through their correlations with overall workplace support.

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[17] "An independent variable that is useful in predicting the dependent variable and in increasing the multiple r^2 by virtue of its correlations with other independent variables" (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 1989).

Overall workplace support was a significant predictor in both regression equations. However, the results of the principal components analysis suggested that employee perceptions of overall workplace support might be largely determined by their perceptions of supervisor support. An awareness of this finding is important when considering the regression analysis.

The separate regression analyses for employees with and without children illustrated that the variables influencing work-family conflict do differ between groups. As might have been expected, the variables examined in the present research were more applicable to the work-family conflict experienced by employees with children than those without children. Only overall workplace support was significant in the prediction of work-family conflict for employees without children, whereas co-worker sensitivity, overall workplace support, sex, and job involvement were all significant in the prediction of work-family conflict for employees with children. The lack of relevance of the variables measured in the present research to the work-family conflict experienced by employees without children could be attributed to the lack of existing knowledge concerning work-family conflict for this group. Because employees with children generally experience more work-family conflict, they have been the primary focus of research in this area.

As noted earlier, the levels of work-family conflict experienced by male and female respondents differed significantly. However, contrary to popular belief and the findings and premise behind most research in the area (e.g., Greenberger et al., 1989; Warren & Johnson, 1995), men in the present research experienced significantly more work-family conflict than their female counterparts. The significant predictors of this conflict also differed for men and women. The variables that were significant in the regression equation for women were overall workplace support, co-worker support, and supervisor flexibility. However, for men, the most important predictor was job involvement, followed by co-worker sensitivity, family involvement, and finally overall workplace support. It is possible that the greater conflict reported by men could be explained, in part, by the existence of the high overall level of workplace support found in this research, which appears to be more important in the prediction of work-family conflict for women than for men. Because a high level of perceived support was related to a lower level of work-family conflict for most support scales, the greater relevance of these variables to women could contribute to their lower levels of work-family conflict.

Interestingly, the number of FFIs used was unrelated to the level of work-family conflict experienced. The number of FFIs that were offered, and the number that were used, were not significant predictors of work-family conflict. Thus, the perception of support from supervisors and co-workers was much more influential in the prediction of work-family conflict than was the availability of, and even the use of, FFIs.

Warren and Johnson (1995) claimed that the use of FFIs by respondents was a significant predictor of work-family role strain. However, when they included work environment support, supervisor flexibility, and use of initiatives in the same regression analysis, only work environment support was found to be a significant predictor of work-family role strain. The present findings, and the findings of Warren and Johnson, seem to suggest that when workplace support is present, FFIs do not contribute anything unique to the reduction of work-family conflict. However, Greenberger et al. (1989) found that "both types of support are important to working parents, and their contributions to wellbeing...are additive, not redundant" (*p*. 780).

The findings of Tudhope (1994) may also be useful in understanding the lack of influence exerted by FFIs on work-family conflict. Tudhope questioned the quality of the FFIs that were implemented in organisations in her research, and argued that "some organisations feel that by applying new labels to already existent policy, they can make them 'family friendly'" (Tudhope, *p*. 133). As the quality of the FFIs in the present research was not examined, conclusions cannot be made as to the influence of FFIs on work-family conflict in other organisations.

Contributions of the Present Research

The present research contributes both to the literature on work-family conflict and FFIs, and to the information available to organisations that are interested in FFIs. It highlights supervisor, co-worker, and overall workplace support as areas that appear to surpass FFIs when it comes to reducing work-family and family-work conflict. It also highlights the relevance of this area of research to men, and the relevance of perceived workplace support to men's use of FFIs.

Contributions to the Literature

The findings that supervisor, co-worker, and overall workplace support influence both levels of work-family conflict and the use of FFIs contributes to the literature in this area (Galinsky, 1988; Greenberger et al., 1989; Perlow, 1995; Raabe & Gessner, 1988; Schwartz, 1994; Warren & Johnson, 1995). The findings regarding the interaction of perceived workplace support, use of FFIs, and gender also extend the existing research. The inclusion of both men and women in the present research enabled a gender comparison of the influences of workplace support on levels of work-family conflict and the use of FFIs. Significant differences were found through these comparisons, however, not always in the expected direction. For example, it was found that men suffered from work-family conflict to a greater degree than women did, and women perceived a greater degree of workplace support for work-family balance. However, the perception of workplace support had a significant influence on the use of FFIs for men only.

The predictors of work-family conflict were also found to vary between men and women. Overall workplace support was an important predictor for both men and women. In addition, job and family involvement, and the sensitivity of co-workers to family needs, were important predictors of work-family conflict for men. However, for women, the support of co-workers in general and the flexibility of supervisors were of greatest importance. These findings extend those of Greenberger et al. (1989) who also found support for differences between men and women in the variables that were associated with role strain.

The present research contributes conflicting evidence to the literature on the effectiveness of FFIs. Over 90% of respondents who had used FFIs claimed that they helped them to function more effectively in their work and in their family lives, however, the objective measures of work-family conflict were not significantly related to the use of FFIs. These findings are in line with the controversy that exists in the literature regarding the effectiveness of FFIs. However, the non-significant relationship between the objective measure of work-family conflict and the use of FFIs does not provide evidence for the ineffectiveness of FFIs, because the present research was not designed as a comprehensive evaluation of this effectiveness. Such research would ideally be longitudinal, to allow for the recording of pre-initiative and post-initiative measures of work-family conflict.

Although the present research does not help to clarify the controversy surrounding the effectiveness of FFIs, it extends the extant research by suggesting that informal workplace support for family issues is more important to the reduction of work-family conflict than the initiatives themselves. This suggests that the effectiveness of FFIs should not be studied in isolation, and that the influence of workplace support must be considered as an important variable to be included in these assessments. The present research, therefore, illustrates that implementing FFIs is not enough to make an organisation family friendly. The initiatives must be accompanied by training to encourage supervisors and co-workers to be more sensitive and flexible toward work and family issues experienced by both female and male employees.

The present research also contributed to the literature by addressing claims by Warren and Johnson (1995) that future research needed to "investigate the perceptions of managers and other individuals in the organisation about the family-related culture of their workplace" (*p.* 169). They also argued that future research should investigate the impact of workplace support on diverse samples, including parents in a range of occupations, and children in a variety of child-care options.

Warren and Johnson (1995) concluded that the more supportive the supervisors and organisational culture were perceived to be, the less strain that existed between work and family roles. They also found that the number of policies offered was not significantly related to work-family role strain. The present research extended these findings by illustrating that supervisor, co-worker, and overall workplace support were related to lower levels of work-family conflict, but not to lower levels of family-work conflict. For family-work conflict, only overall workplace support was significant.

The number of FFIs used by men was found to increase with perceptions of supervisor support, co-worker support, and overall workplace support. Significant predictors of work-family conflict were overall workplace support, co-worker support, and job involvement. As with the overall regression analysis performed by Warren and Johnson (1995), supervisor support and the use of FFIs were not found to be significant predictors of work-family conflict. However, over 90% of the respondents who used FFIs claimed they had helped them to function more effectively in their work and family lives.

Perlow (1995) asserted that barriers to the use of FFIs do exist within the culture of an organisation. A number of findings of the present research provide anecdotal evidence for this assertion. The FFIs that respondents claimed they would use, if only

they were available, included FFIs that were already offered by the organisation. The presence of organisational barriers to the use of these initiatives is a possible explanation for this discrepancy. Also, the significant relationship between the use of FFIs and perceptions of workplace support for men should be considered in relation to men's lower levels of initiative use. This suggests that the lower levels of support perceived by men for work and family issues acts as a barrier to their use of FFIs. Although the present research involves only correlational data, these relationships suggest areas for further investigating the presence of workplace barriers to the use of FFIs.

As well as extending the findings of overseas research, the present findings constitute a significant contribution to the New Zealand literature on work-family conflict and FFIs. Tudhope (1994) investigated the use and implementation of FFIs, whether they eased the conflict between work and family lives, and whether position and influence affected access to and knowledge of FFIs. Areas that were touched on by Tudhope, such as the existence of 'general encouragement' within the organisation toward FFIs and the contribution of FFIs to a decrease in work and family conflict, were extended in the present research.

The present findings have important implications for future research and highlight the importance of including both men and women in work-family conflict research. The relevance of this area to men was clearly illustrated in the present research, and ignoring this relevance will perpetuate the myth that FFIs are only for working mothers. As a result, men may not feel able to make use of the initiatives, and both genders will continue to be disadvantaged for using them.

Overall organisational support was the most significant variable in the prediction of work-family conflict and family-work conflict. It was significantly related to supervisor and co-worker support, and the principal components analysis showed a strong association with supervisor support. These findings give some insight into the makeup of this variable, however, future research must further investigate what constitutes a family supportive organisational culture, and use this information to develop a valid measure of this construct. The definition given by Schwartz (1994) could be a useful starting point for identifying variables that contribute to the family supportive aspects of an organisation's culture.

The perceptions of employees are important factors in an investigation of work-family conflict and FFIs. However, future research should also measure the attitudes of

supervisors and co-workers directly. The direct measurement of these attitudes will enable closer examination of potential barriers to the effectiveness of FFIs, and will also identify the characteristics of attitudes that lend support to their use.

Future research should also investigate the quality of FFIs in New Zealand organisations, because the present findings of a non-significant relationship between the use of initiatives and work-family conflict supports Tudhope's (1994) assertion that their quality is questionable at best.

Contributions to Organisations

For organisations interested in FFIs, the present findings may be used to increase the likelihood that the programme implemented will help to reduce the work-family conflict experienced by employees.

The most significant contribution of the present research in this regard, was the finding that supervisor flexibility, co-worker support, and overall workplace support were superior to the number of FFIs that were used by an employee in predicting levels of work-family conflict. This finding has a number of implications for organisations. The first is that the implementation of FFIs must be accompanied by the provision of training and information for supervisors and co-workers. The second is that attempts should be made to encourage the evolution of an organisational culture that supports employees in their combination of work and family lives. As the definition of corporate culture given by Schwartz (1994) and the conclusions of Perlow (1995) suggest, providing training to supervisors and co-workers will contribute to an improved family supportive organisational culture. Moreover, such attempts should also include changes to the structure and assessment of work. Employees should be rewarded for their productivity and efficiency, as well as the quality of their work, and not the amount of time that they spend at the workplace. This will enable employees with family responsibilities to spend the necessary time attending to these tasks, without suffering the consequences of negative performance reviews based solely on time commitments.

Another significant contribution of the present research was the finding of higher rates of work-family conflict in men, and the relationship between the use of FFIs and perceived supervisor, co-worker, and overall organisational support for men. Organisations need to be aware that work-family conflict is relevant to men and that the support available to men for work and family issues needs to be addressed. Education in

this area should be provided during the training of supervisors and co-workers accompanying the introduction of the family friendly programme.

Limitations of the Present Research

When considering the present findings, the associated limitations must also be considered. Firstly, of the four organisations involved in the research, three were government organisations. As a result of the small number of organisations involved in the research and their membership to a distinct sector of the business community, caution must be taken when generalising the results to organisations outside the immediate sample. Another restriction in terms of applying the findings of the present research across organisations, is the membership of all participating organisations to the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, Work and Family Network. The Work and Family Network encourages members to initiate work and family policies in their workplaces within the context of providing equal employment opportunities. However, because the provision of FFIs was a prerequisite for participation in the present research, access to organisations through this network was a necessary component of the sampling procedure.

The overall response rate to the questionnaire was an acceptable 37% and is not considered to be a major limitation of the present research. Indeed, the response rates for Organisations 1, 3, and 4 were excellent, with 47%, 50%, and 59% of respondents, respectively, returning useable questionnaires (de Vaus, 1995). Unfortunately, the response rate for Organisation 2 was much lower at 25%. Because Organisation 2 was the largest organisation involved in the research, its response had a large impact on the overall rate. The poor response rate for Organisation 2 may limit the relevance of the findings to other employees within this organisation. It is possible that organisational factors, such as the size of the organisation and a change of contact person during the research, may have influenced the rate of return.

The present research should be seen as a starting point in evaluating the influence of perceptions of workplace support on the use of FFIs and levels of work-family conflict in New Zealand organisations. Due to the practical limitations of the present research, such as severe time and resource constraints, a questionnaire was the only method of data collection used. A more in depth investigation, better addressing the complexity of work-family conflict and FFIs, might have included a series of focus

groups prior to developing the questionnaire. The use of focus groups, involving perhaps 8 to 10 individuals from each organisation, would have highlighted the issues most pertinent to these groups and allowed for greater accuracy and relevance in the development of questionnaire items, as well as providing much rich qualitative detail. The generalisability of the information provided by the focus groups to other individuals within the organisations could then have been tested using the questionnaire methodology. The use of focus groups may also have contributed to a greater understanding of the differences between the present and previous findings. It is suggested that future research incorporates a method such as this to gain greater depth of understanding in this area.

The scales used in the present research were developed overseas and had not been tested on New Zealand samples. The implications of this can be seen in the 'supervisor flexibility' scale, which was developed by Greenberger et al. (1989) and initially used on a sample of employed parents with pre-school children. In the present research, the 'supervisor flexibility' scale incurred a substantial amount of missing data. As a result, 15 respondents were dropped from the analysis for this scale, and the assessment of the scale's internal consistency was impeded. Although the number of respondents dropped from the 'supervisor flexibility' scale represented only 6% of the entire sample, some caution must be taken when interpreting the results based on this scale, as a number of items were not applicable to some respondents (specifically those who did not have children and those who could not take work home). The items on this scale need to be revised to ensure that they are applicable to a wide range of respondents. Despite the missing data associated with the 'supervisor flexibility' scale, the remaining scales appear to have been successfully applied to the current sample. The results of the reliability analysis demonstrated that all the other scales had a high degree of internally consistency.

The results of the principal components analysis indicated that the 'overall workplace support' scale and the supervisor support scales all measured components of a common factor. The medium positive correlations found between these scales also support this assertion. The finding that these scales measure similar aspects of perceived support indicates that employees may not differentiate the support they receive for work and family issues from their supervisor from the support provided by the organisation as a whole. More attention needs to be given to the identification and measurement of the

support that may exist in the culture of the organisation, and that is distinct from the support provided by supervisors and co-workers.

Conclusions

The present research makes a number of valuable contributions to the literature on work-family conflict, FFIs, and the interaction of informal workplace support with these two constructs. The present findings provide support for a positive relationship between perceived supervisor support, co-worker support, overall workplace support, and levels of work-family conflict. The greater the perceptions of family oriented workplace support, the lower the levels of work-family conflict reported.

Informal workplace support was more important for the prediction of work-family conflict than FFIs. Although FFIs were not related to lower levels of work-family conflict, self-reports showed that over 90% of respondents believed FFIs had helped them to function more effectively in their work and family lives. Thus, the effectiveness of FFIs was neither completely supported, nor discredited by the present findings.

Work-family conflict was found to be higher in men than in women and the use of FFIs by men was significantly related to their perceptions of family oriented workplace support. Therefore, the fact that the use of FFIs was lower in men may be attributed to their lower perceptions of support, suggesting the presence of barriers to the use of FFIs.

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

Employee Perceptions of Support for Family Friendly Initiatives in the Workplace

Relationship Between Scales and Sections of the Questionnaire

Scale	Section of Questionnaire
WFC	Work-family Interaction, Question 13, a – e.
FWC	Work-family Interaction, Question 13, f – j.
SS	Work-family Interaction, Question 14, a – d.
SSN	Work-family Interaction, Question 14, e –l.
SF	Work-family Interaction, Question 15, a – i.
CS	Work-family Interaction, Question 16, a – d.
CSN	Work-family Interaction, Question 16, e – l.
OWS	Work-family Interaction, Question 17, a – b.
JI	Work Life, Question 24, a – e.
FI	Family Life, Question 32, a – e.

Section One: Family Friendly Initiatives

In this section we would like some information about the family friendly initiatives in your workplace.

1. As far as you are aware, which of the following family friendly initiatives does your workplace offer? Please tick as many spaces as are appropriate.

Part-time work	
Flexible hours	
Job-sharing	
Work from home	
Staggered return from parental leave	
Compressed work week	
Meetings in core hours	
Phone available for contact with family	
Payment associated with parental leave	
Career breaks	
Family room at work, e.g. for breast-feeding	
Centre-based child care	
School holiday care/After school care	
Counselling or employee assistance programme	
Seminars/training on work family issues	
Information and /or referral services	
Others (please specify)	

2. How did you learn about the above family friendly initiatives? (e.g., from employer, co-workers, workplace newsletter/brochure, etc.)

3. Should you wish to use them, would all the family friendly initiatives that your workplace offers be available to you?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Which initiatives would not be available and why?

4. Are the family friendly initiatives at your workplace equally available to male and female employees?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Why/Why not?

5. Are male and female employees equally likely to make use of the family friendly initiatives in your workplace?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Why/Why not?

6. What do you think are the reasons that your workplace implemented family friendly initiatives?

7. Were you, as an employee, given the opportunity to have input into family friendly initiative development?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Would you like to have had this opportunity?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐

8. Do you, or have you in the past, made use of any of the family friendly initiatives that your workplace offers?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Please indicate with a tick those initiatives (if any) which you **would use** if they were offered at your workplace.

Please indicate with a tick those initiatives which you **presently use**, those which you have **previously used**, and those you **would use** if they were offered at your workplace.

	Presently Use	Previously Used	Would Use
Part-time work			
Flexible hours			
Job-sharing			
Work from home			
Staggered return from parental leave			
Compressed work week			
Meetings in core hours			
Phone available for contact with family			
Payment associated with parental leave			
Career breaks			
Family room at work, e.g. for breast-feeding			
Centre-based child care			
School holiday care/After school care			
Counselling or employee assistance programme			
Seminars/training on work family issues			
Information and /or referral services			
Other (please specify)			

If you answered "yes" to question 8, please complete the following questions. If you answered "no" to question 8, please go to question 12.

9. Do you feel that these initiatives help you function more effectively at work?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   ⬇

In what way do these initiatives help you function more effectively in your work life?

10. Do you feel that these initiatives help you function more effectively in your family life?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    ⬇

In what way do these initiatives help you function more effectively in your family life?

11. If you no longer use family friendly initiatives, what was your reason for not continuing with them?

12. Please indicate on the scale below what sort of influence using family friendly initiatives would have on your career.

Strong Positive Influence	Positive Influence	No Influence	Negative Influence	Strong Negative Influence
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section Two: Work-Family Interaction

In this section of the questionnaire we would like to find out how you feel about the combination of your work and family lives.

13. **Please tick the box that most accurately describes the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfil my family responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands of the job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfil my family duties.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for family activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
f. The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. I have to put off doing things at work because of demands on my time at home.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. Things I want to do at work don't get done because of the demands of my spouse/partner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. My home life interferes with my responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks, and working overtime.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. Family related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. **Please tick the box that most accurately describes the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. My supervisor/manager goes out of his/her way to do things to make my work life easier for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. It is very easy for me to talk to my supervisor/manager.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. My supervisor/manager can be relied on when things get rough at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
d. My supervisor/manager is willing to listen to my personal problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. My supervisor/manager understands that I have to meet family responsibilities as well as those related to my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. My supervisor/manager is aware of the family demands being placed on me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. My supervisor/manager tries to find ways of helping me meet my family responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. My supervisor/manager does not understand that it may be difficult for me to co-ordinate work and family responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. I can talk to my supervisor/ manager about family-related problems that are making it difficult for me to combine work and family roles.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. My supervisor/manager expects me to keep my work and home life separate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. My supervisor/manager is knowledgeable about company policies that apply to family issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l. I can talk to my supervisor/ manager about work-related problems that are making it difficult for me to combine work and family roles.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. **If the following situations were to occur, how do you think your supervisor/manager would behave? Please tick the box that best describes how she/he might behave.**

		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
a.	If I ask for extra holiday time (unpaid) so I can spend more time with my family, my supervisor/ manager gives it to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	My supervisor/manager is flexible in scheduling so as to accommodate my family needs (e.g., take a child to the doctor).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	If I receive phone calls (at work) from family members, my supervisor/manager is understanding.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	My supervisor/manager lets me take work home if I need to, instead of asking me to work late at the office.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	My supervisor/manager lets me bring my child to work in an emergency.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	My supervisor/manager lets me come in late or leave early to accommodate my family needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g.	My supervisor/manager will let me take an occasional day off without pay.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h.	My supervisor/manager lets me come in at a non-scheduled time (e.g., on the weekend) to make up work I missed because of family commitments.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
i. My supervisor/manager lets me work from home if I can't come to work on a given day because of family matters.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. **Please tick the box that most accurately describes the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. My co-workers go out of their way to do things to make my work life easier for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. It is very easy for me to talk to my co-workers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. My co-workers can be relied on when things get rough at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. My co-workers are willing to listen to my personal problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. My co-workers understand that I have to meet family responsibilities as well as those related to my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. My co-workers are aware of the family demands being placed on me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. My co-workers try to find ways of helping me meet my family responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
h. My co-workers do not understand that it may be difficult for me to co-ordinate work and family responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. I can talk to my co-workers about <u>family-related</u> problems that are making it difficult for me to combine my work and family roles.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. My co-workers expect me to keep my work and home life separate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. My co-workers are knowledgeable about company policies that apply to family issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l. I can talk to my co-workers about <u>work-related</u> problems that are making it difficult for me to combine work and family roles.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. **Please tick the box that most accurately describes the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Overall, my workplace is committed to achieving work and family balance for their employees.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. I do not consider my workplace to be 'family friendly'.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
c. My supervisor's attitude toward balancing work and family life is consistent with that of the organisation as a whole.	□	☐	□	□	☐
d. My decision to use/not use family friendly initiatives is influenced by my supervisor's/manager's attitude toward work and family balance.	□	☐	□	□	☐
e. My decision to use/not use family friendly initiatives is influenced by my co-worker's attitudes toward work and family balance.	□	☐	□	□	☐

Section Three: Work Life

In this section we would like some information about your employment situation.

18.   How long have you been employed with this organisation?

19.   What is your current position within the organisation?

20.   What is your employment status?
    ☐ Full time
    ☐ Part time (30 hours per week or less)
    ☐ Contract/Casual

21.   On average, how many hours do you work per week?

22.   In your current position, do you have any management responsibility?

Yes ☐   No ☐
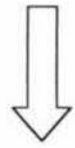
☐ Supervisor	☐ Other: please specify
☐ Middle management	_____
☐ Senior management	_____

23.   What do you think is the most important factor in the assessment of your contributions at work?

☐   The amount of time I spend at the workplace

☐   The amount of work I produce

☐   The quality of the work I produce

☐   I do not know how my contributions are assessed

☐   Other: please specify _____

24.   **Please tick the box that most accurately describes the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. The most important things that happen to me involve my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. To me, my job is only a small part of who I am.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I consider my job to be very central to my existence.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Most of my interests are centred around my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Most of my personal life goals are job-oriented.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section Four: Family Life

In this section we would like some information on your family situation.

25.   Do you have any children ?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

Please list their ages	
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

26. Who lives with you? Please list by relationship and age.

    Example

Relationship	Age
- Son	- 5
- Partner	- 34
- Mother in law	- 65
-	-
-	-
-	-

Relationship	Age
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

27.   If you have children, please list the individuals in your household in descending
    order, according to the amount of time they spend on child-care tasks. The list
    should start with the individual who spends the most time on child-care and you may
    indicate if individuals spend approximately equal amounts of time on these tasks.

    1.   4.

    2.   5.

    3.   6.

28.   Please list the individuals in your household in descending order, according to the
    amount of time they spend on household chores. The list should start with the
    individual who spends the most time on chores and you may indicate if individuals
    spend approximately equal amounts of time on these chores.

    1.   4.

    2.   5.

    3.   6.

29. If you have children at home, what are your current child-care arrangements? (e.g., full-time day-care, nanny, care by relatives, etc.).

30. If you have a spouse/partner, what is their employment status?
   ☐ Full-time paid employment
   ☐ Part-time paid employment
   Unpaid work:　☐ At home
   　　　　　　　☐ Outside the home
   　　　　　　　☐ Both

31. Is there anyone for whom you provide special care, e.g., because of illness, handicap. or old age?
   Yes ☐　　　No ☐

32. **Please tick the box that most accurately describes the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. The most important things that happen to me involve my family.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. To me, my family is only a small part of who I am.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I consider my family to be very central to my existence.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Most of my interests are centred around my family.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Most of my personal life goals are family-oriented.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section Five: Demographic Information

Finally, we would like some general information about your background. Please tick the box next to the most appropriate answer.

33. Age

   ☐ Under 20

   ☐ 20-29

   ☐ 30-39

   ☐ 40-49

   ☐ 50 or over

34. Sex

   ☐ Female

   ☐ Male

35. Which ethnic group do you identify with?

   ☐ Maori

   ☐ European/Pakeha

   ☐ Pacific Island

   ☐ Chinese

   ☐ Other - Please specify _____

36. What is your highest educational qualification?

   ☐ School Certificate

   ☐ Sixth Form Certificate

   ☐ Higher School Certificate

   ☐ University Entrance

   ☐ Bursary

   ☐ Tertiary: ☐ Bachelors

                   ☐ Diploma

                   ☐ Post Graduate

   ☐ Other - Please specify _____

APPENDIX B

Pilot Evaluation Forms

Questionnaire Evaluation

1. Was the information sheet easy to understand?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If no, why not?

2. Was the language used in the questionnaire easy to understand?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If no, what did you find difficult to understand and why?

3. Did you have difficulty answering any questions for other reasons (unrelated to how questions were worded)?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If yes, what was the difficulty and why?

4. Did you object to answering any of the questions?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If yes, which questions and why did you object to it/them?

5. Approximately how long did it take you to complete the questionnaire?

6. Did you find the time it took to complete the questionnaire acceptable?

    Acceptable ☐   Too short ☐   Too long ☐

    If it was not acceptable, what do you consider to be an acceptable length of time to complete a questionnaire?

7. Are there any issues surrounding family friendly initiatives which are not in the questionnaire, but which you think should be included?

8. Were there enough options provided to answer the questions adequately?

9. Can you think of any other changes that would improve the questionnaire?

Thank you very much for your help!

APPENDIX C

Information Sheet

My name is Fiona McAulay and I am studying for a Masters degree in organisational psychology with Massey University at Albany, under the supervision of Dr Philip Voss.

Many families today experience some conflict between their work and family lives, and in recent years a number of workplaces have realised that they can be of assistance to employees in maintaining a balance between these two spheres. The present research investigates employee perceptions of family friendly initiatives in the workplace, to see if assistance is helping employees to achieve a balance.

I invite you to participate in this research by taking 15-20 minutes to complete the attached questionnaire. Your anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed as no identifying information is required and the completed questionnaire may be posted back to the researcher in the prepaid, self-addressed envelope. Participation in this research will have no influence on your employment, however, it will enable you to make your views and ideas about family friendly initiatives known without personal identification.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary and you may decline to answer any particular questions in the questionnaire. You have the right to withdraw from the study and you may ask questions at any time during the research. Please feel free to contact either myself or my supervisor at the numbers listed below. It is assumed that filling in the questionnaire implies consent.

A summary sheet of the research findings will be available following completion of the research for those who are interested.

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APPENDIX D

Questions for Organisation Contact Person

<u>Family Friendly Initiatives in your Workplace</u>

1. How many employees does your organisation currently have?

2. What proportion of your workforce is female?

3. What is the ethnic composition of your workforce?

4. What proportion of management in your workplace is female?

5. What is the ethnic composition of management in your workplace?

6. Which Family Friendly Initiatives are covered by formal policy at your workplace?
   -   -
   -   -
   -   -
   -
   -
   -
   -
   -

7. Are there any family friendly initiatives in your workplace that are frequently used on an informal basis, i.e., initiatives that are not covered by policy? If yes, what are these initiatives?

8. How many employees make use of family friendly initiatives in your workplace?

   Most recent estimate: _____

   Unknown ☐

9. Why were family friendly policies developed for your workplace?

10. Who initiated the introduction of family friendly policies in your workplace? e.g., HR staff, employees.

11. How were family friendly policies developed for your workplace?

12. What is the procedure when an employee decides to make use of your family friendly policies?

13. Have family friendly policies been effective in terms of the initial aims or objectives?

14. Has there been a formal assessment of the effectiveness of these policies?

APPENDIX E
Categories for Qualitative Data[18]

Question Two

How did you learn about the above family friendly initiatives? (e.g., from employer, co-workers, workplace newsletters, etc.).

1 – Employer

2 – Co-workers

3 – Newsletter/brochure

4 – General knowledge

5 – Contract

6 – Union

7 – Other

8 – No response

Question Four

Are the family friendly initiatives at your workplace equally available to male and female employees? Why/why not?

1 – Only for Females (No)

2 – Bias for Males (No)

3 – For all Employees (Yes)

4 – Other

5 – No response

Question Five

Are male and female employees equally likely to make use of the family friendly initiatives in your workplace? Why/why not?

1 – Females are responsible for child-care (No)

2 – Females use initiatives more often (No)

3 – Bias for males (No)

4 – Equality of availability (Yes)

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[18] This appendix only includes categories for qualitative questions that were included in the results.

5 – Males participate in family life too (Yes)

6 – Other

7 – No response

Question Six

What do you think are the reasons that your workplace implemented family friendly initiatives?

1 – Employees needs/family friendly workplace

2 – Recruit/retain employees

3 – Improve productivity

4 – Legal requirements

5 – Improve their image

6 – Senior staff females and/or have families

7 – Organisation does not have family friendly initiatives

8 – Dòn't know

9 – Other

0 – No Response

Question Twenty Nine

If you have children at home, what are your current child-care arrangements? (e.g., full-time day-care, nanny, care by relatives, etc.).

1 – Care by partner

2 – Care by relatives

3 – Day-care

4 – After-school care

5 – Nanny

8 – Not applicable

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