

2015

The Quest for Work and Family Balance Using Flexible Work Arrangements

Sandra Ellen Forris
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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Sandra Forris

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Walden University
2015

Abstract

The Quest for Work and Family Balance Using Flexible Work Arrangements

by

Sandra E. Forris

MA, Baker College, 2004

BS, Wayne State University, 1994

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Applied Management and Decision Sciences

Walden University

August 2015

Abstract

Employees experience challenges managing home and work. The increase of women in the workforce, single-parents, childcare, elder care responsibilities, and men in nontraditional roles warrant changes in traditional working hours and flexibility in work schedules. Through the theoretical frameworks of work-family conflict, spillover, border, and boundary theories, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore how flexible work arrangements (FWAs) assisted employees in meeting work and family obligations. Minimal research is available in the defense industry and the use of FWAs. A nonprobability, convenience sample was used to explore how management and nonmanagement participants from a Midwest defense contractor used FWAs. An online questionnaire consisting of 59 questions and 14 face-to-face (FTF) interviews were used to collect data. There were 27 participants that responded to all online questions. FTF interviews were audio recorded and member-checked. The research questions were focused on how employees used FWAs and whether work-family balance (WFB) was achieved. Both data collection media were transcribed and inductively coded tracking emerging themes and patterns. Dominant themes showed that FWA increased WFB, employees worked longer hours, employees were loyal to the organization, and telecommuting was the ideal FWA. The implications for social change are providing a realistic view to employers on the importance of balancing work and family. FWAs are also shown to contribute to employee satisfaction and attract and retain highly-skilled workers.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to all the families that struggle with the challenges of meeting family and work obligations. In today's society, we can become overwhelmed with so many daily responsibilities. It is my hope that the information contained in this dissertation will assist families and employers with making life's daily challenges more manageable.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction to the Study

The need for balancing work and family transcends nations, occupations, disciplines, cultures, mental and physical health, age, and gender. Work-family balance (WFB) or work-life balance (WLB) refers to how individuals manage and negotiate the domains between work and personal life, including issues of holding multiple roles and other work-life matters (Bulger, Matthews, & Hoffman, 2007). Workers may have to choose between attending to a critical work commitment, spouse, or child who requires attention. There is a need for further research and academic understanding of WFB and its role in work culture (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007).

In this dissertation, I sought to understand how flexible work arrangements (FWAs) contributed to WFB for employees of a Midwest defense contractor. Major sections of Chapter 1 include a preview WFB and FWAs backgrounds as well as a discussion of the problem statement. In these sections, I reiterate the purpose of the study and provide research questions. In addition, the conceptual framework, nature of the study, definitions of terminology used for this project, and the assumptions are explained. Limitations, significance, and the chapter summary are also included in the chapter.

Researchers have examined the effects of WFB, FWAs, and work-family policies on organizations and have shown positive, negative, and inconclusive results. Scholars of WFB issues lament the way research findings tend to remain caged in the *ivory tower* of academia and suggest those who implement WFB and FWAs policies rarely read academic journals. Work-family researchers have not made a significant impact in

improving the lives of employees relative to the amount of research conducted. Although work-family research has increased over the past several decades, an implementation gap persists in putting work-family research into practice (Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011).

Previous and current WFB theories suggest FWAs contribute to balancing work and family. WFB and WFC theories and studies conclude that FWAs increase organizational profits, reduce familial conflict, allow more time to spend with family, are instrumental in choosing places to work, and increase organizational loyalty (Khan & Agha, 2013). The findings in this dissertation may help to further establish a link with balancing work and family with career choices, diversity in the workplace, multiple responsibilities, organizational policies and practices, and social support as argued by Valk and Srinivasan (2011) and Quesenberry, Trauth, and Morgan (2006).

Flextime, compressed work schedules, telecommuting, job sharing, and working reduced or part-time are types of FWAs, with flextime as the most requested, easiest to manage, and most affordable (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2009; Shockley & Allen, 2012; University of Minnesota, 2010). This study's focus was on the use of flextime in combination with a compressed work schedule. Both terms are defined as the ability to start and finish work at a range of times and the ability to compress their workweek into fewer days at work (Yuile, Chang, Gudmundsson, & Sawang, 2012).

The National Study of Changing Workforce (NSCW) 2008 survey reported that only 20% of U.S. employees have the necessary workplace flexibility to manage their work and family roles (Tang & Wadsworth, 2008). A principal means of balancing work and personal commitments and becoming increasingly common in modern economies is

the use of FWAs (Russell, O'Connell & McGinnity, 2009). Research suggests alternate work arrangements are one avenue in achieving work and family balance.

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Workplace Flexibility Survey (2014) found that, among the responding organizations offering each type of FWAs, at least 80%-92% indicated that the arrangements were *somewhat* or *very successful*. Thirty-nine percent of responding organizations indicated that their organization offered employees the option to telecommute. Of these organizations, 26% reported that the productivity of employees who previously worked 100% onsite had increased and 32% reported absenteeism rates had decreased. When asked about changes over the next 5 years, 89% - 83%, of responding organizations indicated it was *somewhat* or *very likely* that FWAs and telecommuting would be more commonplace in 5 years.

Early, but still current research in the division of labor and sharing of family responsibilities create imbalances and conflict in families and work settings both domestically and internationally. Conflict and imbalances between work and family roles exists when (a) time devoted to the requirements of one role to fulfill requirements of another, (b) strain from participation in one role makes it difficult to fulfill the role of another, and (c) specific behavior of one role makes it difficult to fulfill the role of another (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Family Interference with Work (FIW) and Work Interference with Family (WIF)

There is a fundamental flaw in the argument that businesses should help workers balance their work and family lives. Specifically, there is a little empirical research to support the claim that workers or organizations benefit from a balanced professional and

family life (Demerouti, Derks, Brummelhuis, & Bakker, 2014). Nohe, Meier, Sonntag, and Michel (2015) argued the direction of effect between WFC and home and is still unclear. Additionally, their study discussed relative merits of the cross-domain versus the matching perspective for the relationship of WFC and work-related strain. Nohe et al. (2015) concluded empirical evidence consistently supports positive correlations between both forms of WFC and strain.

Researchers have generally used single item measures of WFB (Keene & Quadagno, 2004), measures of satisfaction with WFB (Valcour, 2007), or constructed measures that over-emphasize equality in the work and family domains (Greenhaus et al. 2003). Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, and Semmer (2011) found work interference with family (WIF) to be a significant factor in balancing both domains. However, research proposing and testing reverse and reciprocal relationships has only begun to accumulate (e.g., Demerouti, Bakker, & Bulters, 2004). Thus, the debate about the direction of the relationship between WFC and strain has not been settled.

Nohe et al. (2015) further suggested there is an ongoing debate about the pattern of relationships of WFC with domain-specific consequences. The notion that conflict originating in one domain (e.g., WIF) is mainly causing problems in the other domain (e.g., family) has dominated the field (cross-domain perspective; Bellavia & Frone, 2005). More recently, scholars have proposed an alternative perspective, assuming that WFC mainly has an impact on the domain where the conflict originates (Amstad et al. 2011; Shockley & Singla, 2011). As a result, an enriching controversy has emerged about the primary effect of WIF and FIW on domain-specific consequences.

Researchers have assumed that the absence of WFC or the presence of work-family enrichment (WFE) is equivalent to WFB (Frone, 2003) and tend to use these concepts interchangeably (Greenhaus & Allen, in press; Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). In doing so, an additional concept is not needed to characterize and understand the work-family interface. The conceptual distinction among WFB, WFC, and WFE, and the potential necessity of a concept like WFB remains underdeveloped and empirically unsubstantiated (Carlson & Zivnuska, 2009).

The literature on WFB indicates that there is a dynamic between balancing work and family. Employees are realizing how important it is for their personal well-being and family functioning to be in control and to have the ability to juggle between family and work roles (Pedersen, Minnotte, Kiger & Mannon, 2008). Kofodimos (1993) suggested that an imbalance, specifically, work imbalance, arouses high levels of stress, detracts from a quality of life, and ultimately reduces individuals' effectiveness at work.

In a similar study, Valcour (2007) revealed that work hours negatively relate to satisfaction with WFB while job complexity and control over work time positively associate with satisfaction with WFB. Control over work time moderated the relationship such that as work hours rose, workers with low control experienced a decline in WFB satisfaction; workers with little control did not. Valcour's results encourage greater research attention to work characteristics, such as job complexity and control over work time, and skills that represent resources useful to the successful integration of work and family demands.

Khan and Agha (2013), Arbon, Facer, and Wadsworth (2009), Valcour et al. (2007), and Greenhaus et al. (1985) all found that FWAs or an alternative work schedule improves productivity. Kahn et al. (2013) also found the FWAs/WFB dynamic is a critical business issue for organizations and results in improved recruitment and retention of employees, higher level of customer service, increased job satisfaction, and reduced employee absenteeism. Employees working a flexible workweek reported lower levels of WFC than their counterparts working a traditional schedule.

Employees have also reported that the alternative schedule increased their productivity and their ability to serve the citizens (Arbon et al., 2009). Shockley and Allen (2009) reported inconsistent results in their studies and argue there is not a clear link between the use of FWAs and better life management. They suggested that individuals are more likely to use flexibility as a means to help them achieve greater work-related outcomes than as a way to manage work and nonwork (p. 486).

Background

Single parent households, women returning to the workforce, men assuming more roles with caring for children and household duties, people working longer hours, and the increasing need to care for children and the elderly suggest a need to create policies and procedures and alternate work arrangements to achieve WFB. When women enter the workforce, their ability to focus on the family and home life is compromised (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). Work, then, represents a conflict and a major contributor to less balance in home and work domains (McElwain, Korabik, & Rosin, 2005; Rothbard, 2001).

Banerjee (2012) found flexible work provisions reduce WFC, especially the option to work part-time and the lack of sanctions for using flextime options.

Several theorists have described a need for balancing home and work domains. Some have argued that flexibility in the workplace can offer an effective beginning to address the issue. Implementation of FWAs intends to enhance employee satisfaction, which in turn may translate into gains in productivity and organizational loyalty, an assumption that has found some level of empirical support (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Ollier-Malaterre, 2010). In concert, some politicians have enacted WFB legislation and introduced bills that would provide employees with a statutory right to request flexible work terms and conditions to assist in balancing work and family (Schuman, 2013).

The Working Families Flexibility Act (2013) was introduced and signed into law to help workers handle the constant challenge of work-life balance by allowing private-sector employers to offer all individuals who work overtime to choose between monetary compensation or comp-time. Particularly for families, the law helps alleviate the difficulties of juggling work, home, young children, and community (Jamieson, 2013). The consensus of the two groups--theorists and politicians--is that there is a need for some form of alternate work arrangement to address non-traditional households.

Scholars, theorists, researchers, and academia are searching for answers, solutions, and phenomena to assist society in balancing work and home domains. Carlson, Zivnuska, and Whitten (2007) found social support to be a contributing factor. Ferguson (2007) argued WFB is a negotiated experience between spouses and committed

partners. Some employers suggest providing FWAs will enhance familial bliss and increase employee organizational loyalty.

In contrast, Shockley and Allen (2009) suggested that there is no clear link or identifying measure that links FWAs and better life management. Valk and Srinivasan (2011) suggested WFB derives from a combination of work, home, and employer organizational policies. Aumann, et al. (2011), Halrynjo (2009) and Higgins et al. (2010) both argued that researchers should focus on men and their WFB issues.

The majority of researchers have historically focused on women; however, there are clear indications that balancing work and family is a significant and critical issue for men. A study commissioned by the Families and Work Institute revealed that men may now experience more WFC than women (Aumann et al., 2011). Results in this dissertation identify how family and spousal support, women and men in the workforce, FWAs, and circumstances when work and family had little or minimal impact on balancing work and family.

Sustainable development is a key challenge facing organizations (Blake-Beard, O'Neill, Ingois, & Shapiro, 2010). Further research is needed to learn how FWAs affects men and women across ethnic groups and at lower levels in organizations (Blake-Beard et al., 2010). Sampling choice in previous literature is somewhat constrained but could be enhanced by the targeting of single and same-sex parent families, manual and lower-skilled service workers, and employees providing eldercare (Chang, McDonald, & Burton, 2010). Company-wide flexibility is needed relative to metrics on sustainability (retention, productivity, health care costs) across gender, race, and level of employee will

also contribute to the current body of FWAs and WFB literature (Blake-Beard et al., 2010).

Evidence suggests that organizations benefit from employees who achieve WFB, but achieving this balance remains an elusive goal for many employees (Halpern, 2005). Kelliher and Anderson (2010) have shown that flexible workers might be linked to work intensification. Employees benefiting from flexible work practices may put in extra effort as an additional form of loyalty, also known as the social exchange theory, which posits that obligations generate through a series of transactions between parties. The reciprocal exchange occurs when parties provide benefits for one another and, although no agreements are made, there are expectations for future benefits. Identifying commonalities and shared or unique experiences address employee loyalty and retention, productivity, elder/childcare issues, and health-related issues. Findings also assess if flexibility in the workplace assists with such situations. Various gaps in the literature are discussed. However, the focus is if FWAs serves as an intervention medium in balancing work and family domains.

Problem Statement

The problem is that some families encounter challenges balancing work and home domains. Households in the 21st century are composed of single parents, dual-working couples, same-sex parents, and parents with elder care and childcare situations than families of the mid-century. Traditional households consisted of male breadwinners and women remaining home to care for the children. Research further reiterates how competing demands of work and family can take its toll on families. Many workers

report substantial levels of WFC (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2011) as a result of trends in the workplace and home. Changes in government policies and implementation of FWAs may contribute to achieving WFB.

Unlike other nations with advanced economies, the United States has very modest government policies requiring employers to give their workers benefits such as paid family leave for illnesses or childbirth (Brookings Institute, 2011). The United States has only one major piece of federal legislation designed to assist Americans in achieving WFB (Boushey & Williams, 2010). The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) became law in 1993. This legislation makes available, to eligible employees, up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave each year to balance needs of employers and employees in circumstances when employees must take extended medical leaves for serious medical conditions, including pregnancy, or to care for family members. The Public Policy Platform on FWAs (2010) suggests workplace flexibility is a win-win situation for both employees and employers. The research further reported that a significant number of workers do not have the flexibility they need to balance work and family domains.

Policies and assistance have not kept pace with the new dynamic of non-traditional households. Policy reforms outside the United States aimed at reducing work time appear to have had an effect. Average work hours in almost every European nation have fallen dramatically since 1979 (Gornick, Heron, & Eisenbrey, 2007; Mishel et al., 2006).

In Japan, known throughout the world for its long work hours, saw a decline by over 300 hours a year. By contrast, the United States has not implemented or seriously

debated policies designed to reduce work time. The OECD data series for Japan shows that, for 2006, annual average hours actually worked were 1,784, a figure that is 35 hours less than the U.S. estimate of 1,804. Over a quarter century, Japan's annual average hours actually worked declined by 42 8-hour workdays and the U.S. average fell by less than two eight-hour workdays (Fleck, 2009). Instead, most work-family advocates have focused on the need for childcare, paid family leave, and programs that permit flexibility in determining which, rather than how many hours workers will spend on the job.

Research suggests that employees often experience WFC when the demands of work-life spill over into their family life, or when family life requires spill over into work-life. Increased levels of WFC can decrease productivity, absenteeism, and turnover, in addition to increasing stress. These outcomes are detrimental to individuals and to the organizations in which they work (Arbon et al. 2009). Several theorists suggest FWAs may assist with creating a balance between home and work domains.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore how FWAs assisted employees in meeting work and family obligations. Are there typical situations within households that create conflict as it relates to time spent between home and work domains? What is the ingredient that allows families to enjoy both work and home domains equally? Are FWAs an intervention tool utilized in conjunction with other media to assist in attaining WFB? Evaluating what is required to achieve balance in both home and work domains remains an open-ended discussion among WFB theorists. My general assumption was that employers and employees would both benefit from implementing FWAs. The

intended outcome was to determine if employee retention, attracting the best available new talent, job satisfaction, less stressful environments, increased profits, and overall satisfied employees is achievable by solely implementing FWAs.

Identifying commonalities and shared or unique experiences extends knowledge in the areas of WFB and FWAs so that, policies, guidelines, and/or legislation are written to include current, previous, and recent information. The results of this dissertation might benefit employees and employers alike. Based on results of data gathered, I proposed to interpret, evaluate, and analyze findings as it relates to employee retention and turnover, employee loyalty, stress, health issues, FWAs, and WFB.

My premise is that research findings have social change implications that cross nations, genders, occupations, workers, traditional, and nontraditional households—negatively or positively. The goal was to disseminate information to those communities and organizations where flexibility and balancing work and home domains will serve best. Further, I planned to discover factors that contribute to effectively balancing work and family.

Research Questions

To gain better insight into balancing work and family, I conducted a qualitative study. In the first step, I identified the target to explore and consisted of shared experiences of individuals with balancing work and family. The next step was to develop the questions (Simon & Francis, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Research questions were as follows:

1. How do FWAs affect your home and work domains?

2. What area is harder to balance? Why?
3. How do FWAs decrease or increase WFB?
4. What is the central cause of imbalance or balance in your home or work environment?

I questions presented interview questions during face-to-face (FTF) interviews in order to gather information. The goal of these questions was to have the participant elaborate, in as much detail as deemed appropriate, for data collection needs. Questions are as follows:

1. Can you recall a moment in time when you chose work responsibilities over home responsibilities? What was that like?
2. What is the ideal alternative work arrangement?
3. Tell me an experience when a choice was made that you can say affected your spouse, children, or other family members.
4. How often are you able to participate in social events, church activities, sports activities, parties, during a month?
5. If you could create the perfect scenario for balancing work and family, what would it encompass?
6. If you could set a flexible work/home schedule, what would it entail?

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework links concepts, theories, and literature matrixes into an area of examination. Theories identified are WFC, WFB, boundary theory, border theory, and spillover theory. These are key theories that have developed concepts and

models to address balancing work and family domains. Spillover theory (Chen, 2009) suggests work-life and family-life significantly influence one another negatively and positively. Workers struggle with separating work-life from home life resulting in a spillover effect. Ashforth, Kreiner, and Fugate, 2000; Kreiner, 2006; and Nippert-Eng (1996) proposed boundary theory may address the negative or positive divide encountered from spillover. Clark (2000) proposed a theory of the borders between life domains, discussing the transitions that are required to navigate the two.

The basic approach addresses home life as one entity and work-life as another. Border theory proposed that a person who identifies strongly with both the family and work domains will have greater control over those areas and is more likely to achieve WFB (Donald & Linington, 2005). WFC theory is as a form of inter-role conflict in which role pressures from work and family domain are mutually incompatible in some respect (as cited in Frone, 2002). Past and current research documents that conflict occurs when there is an imbalance between work and home.

The most commonly cited family-friendly policy is workplace flexibility (Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2013; Berg, Kossek, Misra, & Belman, 2014; Galinski, Bond, & Aumann, 2011). Previous and current research suggests flexibility in the workplace increases employee satisfaction, retains workers, and contributes to organizational profits (assuming workers take advantage of FWAs and that their home lives are in disarray). The concept and belief that creating bliss in both domains comprises a win-win situation for all derives from recent and previous research.

Employees and employers alike will achieve satisfaction, organizations will be profitable as a result, and employee retention will be a matter of choice and preference.

Nature of the Study

I chose to conduct a qualitative, phenomenological methodology for this study. The goal of phenomenology is to understand human interaction with a phenomenon. For this reason, the best research topics involve questions that consider how and why people do what they do or how they feel or interact with a phenomenon. Phenomenological research aligns with qualitative research because is based on the idea that individual perceptions guide actions and responses (Walden University, n.d.). I intended to collect data from participants' conscious experience from the subjective or first person point of view (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2013). A phenomenological design is best suited for this type of study since I am interested in participants' experiences as they pertain to their daily lives.

A quantitative design was not be appropriate as it is controlled in the fact that the data are defined, gathered and evaluated according to prescribed rules that can be reviewed for error and measured by validity and reliability, and numerical data are used to obtain information (Burns, 2005; Smith, 2008). Due to time restraints, the participant base, and choice of organization, a case study would not suffice. The choice of a qualitative design is best suited for this dissertation.

Qualitative data enabled me to learn and discuss, with selected participants, what is experienced with balancing work and family obligations through interviews and an online questionnaire. Statistics or numbers would not provide the breadth of knowledge

sought for this research study. The research that I conducted entailed identifying how FWAs, social support, job satisfaction, and other related experiences support the research questions. An essential aspect to keep in mind is that WFB incorporates a subjective element as not everyone wants to give similar weights to work and personal life. Thus, it is imperative to place a heavy emphasis on understanding the human experience as it is lived (Polit & Beck 2004).

Data will be collected based on experiences of individuals with balancing work and family. Previous and current WFB theorists suggested FWAs contributed to balancing work and family. WFB and WFC theories and studies further conclude that FWAs increase organizational profits, reduces familial conflict, allow more time to spend with family, instrumental in choosing places to work, and shown to increase organizational loyalty and profits. Khan and Agha, (2013), Uliss and Schillaci, (2007) and Bell et al. (2007) suggest implementing programs that address the WFB/FWAs dynamic will also attract younger workers and entice older workers to delay retirement.

Definition of Terms

Work-family balance (WFB) / Work-life balance (WLB) / Role balance: Balancing work and family is based on having satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum role conflict (Clark, 2000) for achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains (Kirchmeyer, 2000). The operational definition used for this research will be the ability to perform and meet family and work responsibilities successfully or with minimal role conflict (Clark, 2000; Kirchmeyer, C., 2000).

Balance: The extent to which individuals are equally involved in and equally satisfied with their work role and their family role. (Greenhaus & Singh,).

Work-family conflict (WFC)/ Work-to-family conflict / Family-to-work conflict: WFC is defined as a type of inter-role conflict in which participation in one role (e. g., work) makes it difficult to participate in another role (e.g., family; Collins & Shaw, 2003; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Boundary blurring: The degree to which policies separate work and family life versus overlap them (Hayman & Rasmussen, 2011).

Cultural integration: The extent to which policies are reflected in the company's core values and employees are supported in their use of work-life policies (Kossek & Lambert, 2006).

Generation X, Y, and Z: Generation X is referred to as people born during the 1960s and 1970s; Generation Y is referred to as the generation of people born during the 1980s and early 1990s (Business Dictionary, 2012). Researchers and others who have written about Generation Z have found it difficult to classify the generation precisely. Some generational experts say they were born as early as 1991; others argue the new generation began as late as 2001 (Lowe, Levitt, & Wilson, 2008).

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) / Flextime / Compressed work schedules: Employer-provided benefits that permit employees some level of control over when and where they work outside the standard workday (Lambert, Marler, & Gueutal, 2008).

Imbalance: The term imbalance is used in the context of giving substantially more precedence to one role than the other even if the distribution of commitment to family

and work is consistent with what the family wants or values (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2002) as it relates to family and work.

Member checking / Member validation: Member checking is an opportunity for members (participants) to check (approve) particular aspects of the interpretation of the data they provided (Doyle, 2007; Merriam, 1998).

Negotiability: The extent to which policies are simply available versus available only after negotiation (Kossek, 2005).

Phenomenology: A philosophical movement founded by Edward Husserl based on the relationship between a subject and the objects of his/her world (Willis, 2007). The phenomenological psychological method is one of the qualitative research strategies that have been emerging over the last 20 years or so. It is research based upon descriptions of experiences as they occur in everyday life by persons from all walks of life (Giorgi, 1995).

Assumptions

My basic assumption was that participants have experiences with balancing work and home domains. I further assumed that the employee had a flexible or alternative work schedule that permitted a variation from the employee's core hours in starting and departure times, but did not alter the total number of hours worked in a week. Roles, with balancing work and family in both domains, may vary and relate to elder care or childcare issues or working late hours and unable to meet family and/or social obligations, and so on. In general, balancing work and home domains is successful or problematic. It was also assumed that participants were honest in their responses to lend

credibility, validity, and provide additional information to the WFB, WFC, and FWAs breadth of knowledge. Further, I assumed participants demonstrate the transcendental process by truly documenting their understanding and experiences of how WFB, WFC, and FWAs are applicable to their individual situations.

Limitations of the Study

Procedures, as identified by Moustakas (1994), include bracketing out a researcher's experiences, as well as collecting data from persons who have experienced difficulty balancing work and home domains (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013). As an employed, single parent, and college student, I was a model for the 21st century nontraditional household. My current employer offered FWAs, and it was advantageous to me in the earlier years of my career. Being afforded this opportunity provided better perception and insight from one perspective. However, over the last 10 years, FWAs did not increase or hinder my work or personal life. To ensure unbiased research, my experience with FWAs will not be a part of the interview/questionnaire process so as not to influence participant responses.

A limitation is the choice of organization (Midwest defense contractor) and the omission of executive level staff (e.g., vice presidents, COO, CEO). In addition, the majority of participants were white-collar, have clear job expectations, and college-educated. Although a specific audience was targeted, the knowledge gained may be applicable to many levels of management, organizations, cultures, gender, and age. A recent article entitled "Executives See Worsening Work-Life Imbalance" (Reuters, 2012) stated the following:

In recent years, many companies on Wall Street and beyond have embraced the mantra of flexible hours and WLB. Read any image-building column written by a top executive, and he or she is likely to stress the importance of getting to a child's soccer game or concert (p. 1).

The article further stated:

One top international airline executive said a tragedy -- the loss of a child in the fifth month of his wife's pregnancy -- reinforced the need to balance work and home.

Although the cited source (Reuters) is not peer-reviewed, the article provides an example of how balancing family and work extend to executive levels of management.

Sample size may also be a limitation as a small sample may not totally have encapsulated many issues that contribute to achieving balance in work and home domains. Within qualitative methodological discussions, the literature is littered with debates about whether there should be generic quality criteria for all qualitative research (Caelli, Ray, & Mill, 2003; Mays & Pope, 2000; Tracy, 2010). The corpus needs to be large enough to capture a range of experiences but not so large as to be repetitious, and the common guiding principle is saturation.

Doctoral studies using qualitative approaches and qualitative interviews as the method of data collection were analyzed for sample sizes. Five hundred and sixty studies fit the inclusion criteria. Results showed that the mean sample size was 31 (Mason, 2010). Sample size for this study is more than adequate to provide valid, reliability, and credible results. Factors that result in balancing work and family domains may be as

simple as reverting to traditional households, or as complex as seeking new career choices. Chapter 5 includes additional limitations, if required, after analyzing of data.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was how FWAs could prove beneficial to employees and employers in retaining and attracting a talented workforce. Benefits include better office coverage, extended service hours, enhancement of staff morale, reduced tardiness and absenteeism, increased employee ability to manage personal life, and increased productivity.

Alternate work schedules and balancing home and work domains are required to meet current and the workforce of the future (Benko & Weisberg, 2007; Pocock, 2003). Beauregard and Henry (2009) found organizational commitment, reduced turnover intentions, and increased job satisfaction apply only if the employees perceive that the usability of flexibility is to increase their control over time. Other researchers who reviewed flextime literature determined that there was no clear relationship with organizational commitment (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007).

In 2012, 57.7% of women were in the labor force, down 0.4% from 2011. Men's labor force participation, which always has been much higher than that for women, also edged down in 2012, from 70.5% to 70.2% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). The U.S. workforce is expected to become more diverse by 2018. Among racial groups, Whites are expected to make up a decreasing share of the labor force while Blacks, Asians, and all other groups will increase their share. Among ethnic groups, persons of Hispanic origin are projected to increase their share of the labor force from 14.3% to 17.6%,

reflecting 33.1% growth. The number of women in the labor force will grow at a slightly faster rate than the number of men. The male labor force is projected to increase by 7.5% from 2008 to 2018, compared with 9.0% of the female labor force (BLS, Occupational Outlook Handbook). These statistics support a rationale and argument for employers and legislators to allow flexibility in work and home domains for current and future workers. Employers recognize the importance of workplace flexibility to retain and attract the best employees (Gonzales & Morrow-Howell, 2009).

WFB and flexibility in the workplace can affect social change in cultures, ethnicities, and non-traditional households by identifying what is required to assist in maintaining balance at work and home. Individuals who spend more time with family experience a higher quality of life than balanced individuals who, in turn, experienced a higher quality of life than those who spend more time on work (Greenhaus et al. 2006). WFB and flexibility might well affect communities and organizations where balancing work and family is elusive, and challenging to achieve.

Summary

Sociologist Elisabeth Moss Kanter (1977) was one of the first scholars to detail the prevailing assumption that work and the home must be treated as separate domains. She challenged this approach as being socially necessary for employee effectiveness in carrying out the dual demands of being a worker and being a family member years ago. In Chapter 1, I discussed the issues that are affecting families as they face balancing work and home domains. Researchers found that seeking methods to manage households and the workplace simultaneously are problematic in many families. It has also been found

that few existing legislative policies are in effect to assist families in achieving WFB and organizations are slow to implement alternate work arrangements that are reflective of the need to support non-traditional households.

In Chapter 1, I have also shown that balancing work and family and workplace flexibility increases organizational profits, retains a seasoned workforce, and attracts the most talented workers, and that balancing work and family is not limited to one occupation, a particular gender, ethnicity, culture, a specific industry, or age. However, several theorists (Galinski & Bond, 2011; Halrynjo, 2009; Khan, & Agha, 2013) noted a gap in the literature as to how FWAs affects men and women across ethnic groups, in lower-skilled service workers, and employees providing eldercare.

This research contributes to the body of WFB and FWAs knowledge by addressing the concerns expressed by research participants. In Chapter 2, I explore relevant research findings on work and family balance, to include how FWAs and domain balancing affect gender, culture, policies, GenX/Y, and organizations. Chapter 3 includes the design of this research against the stated problem, purpose, and research questions. In Chapter 4, I analyze and summarize the results of the research. Chapter 5 includes conclusions and recommendations that relate to the dissertations' problem, purpose, and research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Chapter 1 included the details of the scope of balancing work and family. The scope also included the *if* and *why* there is a need to implement FWAs to attain balance in home and work domains. As indicated previously, the purpose of the study was to explore how FWAs assisted employees in meeting work and family obligations.

Researchers who specialize in WFB have primarily used WFC, WFE, or a combination of these two factors as a proxy for WFB. In a recent study (e.g., Carlson et al. 2009), however, researchers indicated that these three concepts are theoretically and empirically distinct. Both WFC and WFE are concerned with how participation in one domain impacts one's performance in the other domain, either in a negative or positive way. In contrast with these areas of study, WFB offers an entirely different way of thinking about the intersection between work and family; instead of being concerned with how work and family impact each other, WFB is more process-oriented, focusing on how individuals manage multiple roles (Ferguson, Carlson, Zivnuska, & Whitten, 2012).

This literature review includes sections that demonstrate how WFB affects each area and examines the depth of balancing both domains and highlights theories, suggestions, and probable solutions to address this issue. Topical sections include recent research, low-wage workers, WFB theories, men, women, and WFB, generations X and Y, and adverse effects of FWAs. WFB, or more aptly difficulty achieving balance, is highlighted in popular periodicals such as *Harvard Business Review*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Businessweek* (Deal, 2014; Grosse, 2014; & Kolhatkar, 2013).

In response to workers' increasing work and family demands, many organizations now offer FWAs or policies that intended to increase flexibility in the work domain (Shockley & Allen, 2010). Nienhueser (2005) suggested that FWAs, however, might not be the solution to balancing work and family. He argued FWAs is discussed as a means of enhancing the capability of firms to adapt to changing market conditions, to satisfy the preferences of the workers and to decrease unemployment. Nienhueser further suggested that FWAs are seen as precarious, leading to unstable employment, low wages, bad working conditions, and to the erosion of the welfare state. Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) found little evidence in the literature suggesting that people seek equality or even near equality in their work and family lives, as had been proposed by Greenhaus et al. (2003).

In contrast, Khan and Agha, (2013), Kumar and Chakraborty, (2013), and Aumann et al. (2011) found FWAs to be a win-win situation, beneficial to both employees and organizations. The availability of FWAs has been touted as a simple and effective way that organizations can help prevent or buffer their employees' WFC. However, closer empirical scrutiny reveals that FWAs may not merit such an efficacious reputation. Research investigating FWAs and WFC has produced mixed results, with inconsistencies present not only across individual studies but even across meta-analyses (e.g., Shockley & Allen, 2007).

In this literature review, I examined relevant theories on WFB, WFC, and FWAs. I wanted to understand what research had been conducted on the positive or negative effects on dual-earner couples, single-parent families, and generations X and Y as they

apply to families, work, social events, economics, and health. In addition, I wanted to learn about how families with childcare or eldercare responsibilities handle the challenge or struggle with or without alternative work arrangements. Finally, I focused this literature review on what WFB or FWAs theories are refuted or can be challenged based on 21st century households. Information to address the above likes of inquiry were retrieved from peer-reviewed sources, including the appropriate data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the United States Census Bureau (USCB).

WFB Defined

Ten days after taking office, President Obama established a White House Task Force on middle class working families, led by Vice President Biden (The White House, 2008). One of the actions of the task force was to address improvements in WFB. Historically, and most frequently, researchers view WFB as an individual's balance between personal lives and their professional life (Berg et al. 2014; Sundaresan, 2014) and the ability to manage both domains equally.

Duncan and Pettigrew (2012) used a nationally representative sample of women and men in dual-earner families (with children) from Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (1998, 2005). I used time-use cycles to explore how flexible schedules, shift work and self-employment, on respondents' reported satisfaction with their WFB. Results of regression analysis indicated that work arrangements strongly affected WFB and did so differently for women and men. For women, some control over the work schedule significantly improved the perception of balance. For men, both self-employment and shift work were negatively related to reported WFB. The results

support a flexible approach by policy-makers and employers in formulating workplace policies that assist employees in achieving satisfaction with the balance between their family and work responsibilities.

Although Canada is often closely associated with the United States in cross-national comparisons, these countries are not identical in their outlooks or their policy approaches. For example, policies that support working parents, such as parental leave and wage protection, are more generous in the Nordic countries than Canada, but more generous in Canada than the USA (Baker, 2006). Duncan et al.'s (2012) conceptual framework was based on ecology theory, a systems approach to the study of families. In this theory, family systems interact with, and are mutually dependent on, the systems in their environment (Berry, 1993; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). Of particular interest are the relationships between families and the economic environment.

Duncan et al. (2012) suggested that schedule flexibility increased the odds of being satisfied with WFB by 75% for these women in 2005. Although women may not have access to flextime as frequently as men, it appears that for those women who are able to control the start and end of their day, this control has a sizable positive impact on how they perceive the balance between their work and family life. This result may indicate that employers who offer flexible scheduling, when appropriate and possible, may make life a little easier for the mothers in their workforce. However, in order for men or women to use such policies, managers must be well-informed about, explicit in their support for, and facilitate on behalf of, their employees' usage of the policies available (Kelly et al. 2008).

The literature shows that managerial support benefits the organization.

Employees who feel satisfied with their work and family balance because of a benefit offered by their employers, such as flextime, will be less likely to leave and perhaps be willing to put in extra effort (Kelly et al. 2011; Richman et al. 2008; Scandura & Lankau, 1997) while at the same time producing cost savings at the organizational level by minimizing the costs associated with turnover (Golden, 2009).

Interestingly, Duncan et al. (2012) found having a flexible schedule was not significantly associated with satisfaction with the balance between work and family life for men in dual-earner families with children. This result is particularly interesting because men used flextime at higher rates than women. Perhaps flextime is a more meaningful work arrangement for those who hold the position of primary caregiver. The results of their study have implications both for families seeking to improve their WFB and for employers and policy-makers who are interested in creating effective initiatives that foster WFB and help minimize the conflict experienced by their employees.

WFB literature suggests alternative work arrangements or FWAs contribute to balance in work and home domains. However, researchers suggest employers and legislators are not keeping pace with the increasing demand to accommodate households (Hartmann, Hegewisch, & Lovell, 2007). Key theories and strategies are discussed as they relate to WFB, WFC, and FWAs in the following sections.

Flexible Work Arrangements

Among various organizational practices, FWAs in particular have been touted as key to helping employees manage work and nonwork responsibilities (Allen et al., 2013;

Hill et al., 2008; Voydanoff, 2004). For example, in March of 2010, a White House forum was held on increasing workplace flexibility (Jarrett, 2010). The White House report noted that flexibility in the workplace helps workers balance work and family responsibilities (Executive Office of the President Council of Economic Advisors, 2010). On February 1, 2011, the Society for Human Resource Management and the Families and Work Institute announced a partnership intended to change the outlook of how organizations adopt workplace flexibility (Miller, 2011). Further, suggesting that flexible workplace policies are a way to promote work–life balance, the Women’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor is currently engaged in a National Dialogue on Workplace Flexibility (United States Department of Labor, n.d.).

The transition to flexible working hours has been proclaimed as an appropriate means to satisfy individual needs and the compatibility of work and family life. However, more recent research on flexible scheduling emphasizes the double-edged relationship of work-life-balance issues (Grawitch, & Barber, 2010; Pedersen & Lewis, 2012). Some studies report negative relations of flexible scheduling with work-family conflict and positive with health-related outcomes or job satisfaction (e.g., Halpern, 2005; Hayman, 2009). The results of other studies support the opposite relationship (e.g., Bamberg, Dettmers, Funck, Krähe, & Vahle-Hinz, 2012). Still, other studies find no clear differences (e.g., Sverke, Gallagher, & Hellgren, 2000).

Flexible work is, therefore, an ambiguous concept: on the one hand, it is a prerequisite for short term, economic success and competitive advantages, while at the same time, flexible work might be criticized for its negative effects on workers and

society (Dettmer et al., 2013). Despite the recent attention and emphasis given to FWAs, empirical studies examining their relationship with WFC have produced inconsistent results (Allen et al., 2013). However, the majority of WFB research indicates FWAs are paramount in addressing WFB and conflict issues.

Adverse Effects of FWAs

The availability of FWAs may signal that the organization cares about the well-being of its employees (Aumann, et al., 2011; Budig et al., 2012; Callier et al., 2012). While recent research suggests FWAs are one solution to reducing WFC and WFB, there is also evidence of negative or adverse effects. Given that some employers are adapting FWAs policies and procedures, Nienhuser (2005) suggested that FWAs could be precarious, leading to unstable employment, low wages, bad working conditions, and the erosion of the welfare state. He argued that more information is needed to determine the possible conditions under which atypical employment serves employers, employees and society equally. Is it possible to have the advantages of flexibility (for the firms) and, at the same time, avoid possible adverse effects (for the workers). Research by Nienhueser is insufficient, and I find his argument inconclusive as it relates to adverse effects of implementing FWAs.

Allen et al. (2013) argued that flexibility increases the number of choices and decisions made by employees (recognizing the degree of choice varies). Other streams of research have discussed the peril associated with too much choice such as increased uncertainty and cognitive overload (Chua & Iyengar, 2006; Iyengar & Lepper, 2000). Flexibility may create additional resource allocation choices that can be difficult to

manage. Individuals may not possess the skills needed to allocate resources in a way that best helps avert WFC (Lapierre & Allen, 2012).

LaPierre et al. (2012) concluded that individuals who reported greater control at home also reported less FIW. Moreover, more control at home was associated with less WIF and suggested having more control at home enables people to adjust their home activities around their work obligations. This would enable them to fulfill their work demands without sacrificing their home responsibilities as much. Greater control over family decision-making and responsibilities may be a way that individuals are able to manage both directions of the WFC (LaPierre, et al., (2012), p. 1511).

Brookins (2010) also argued that FWAs could create adverse conditions. One might experience burnout that may cause a decrease in productivity in the workplace, leave employees susceptible to errors, and moody behavior towards coworkers, and interfere with their ability to concentrate on tasks. Brookins (2010) further suggested employees with nontraditional schedules may face problems securing adequate child care to cover their flexible work schedules. Further, they might face conflict and jealousy from peers who are not or do not take advantage of flexible work schedules. Working evening or night shifts may be a risk factor for depressive symptoms and relationship conflicts for new parents and is related to worse family functioning and less effective parenting (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2007; Strazdins et al., 2006).

Recent Research

Wattis, Standing, and Yerkes (2011) argued that research on women and WFB is measured objectively, which implies a static and fixed state fulfilled by particular criteria

and quantitatively. Wattis et al. (2011) further suggested qualitative research on women's WFB experiences reveal a fluctuating and intangible process. During their analysis, it became evident that data supported findings from previous studies which highlight the weak nature of family policies at both government and organizational levels (Hogarth, Hasluck, Winterbotham, & Vivian, 2000; McKie et al., 2001, 2002); the efficacy of employer initiatives in female-dominated occupations (Dex & Scheibl, 2002); the pervasiveness of care ideologies for working mothers (Ball, 2004; Duncan, 2002; Duncan et al. 2003); unequal division of domestic labor and organization of care in dual-earner households (Gatrell, 2004; Hochschild, 1989; Lewis, 2001); and the presence of the *mommy-track* in many women's employment/career profiles (Lewis & Lewis, 1996).

Wattis et al. (2011) highlighted the subjective nature of WFB and the way in which experiences of conflict and balance are not fixed, but fluctuate as a result of changing circumstances and coping strategies. The need for flexibility in work schedules is found to be paramount to assist women with balancing home and work life. Wattis et al found that men experience similar problematic issues with balancing work and home and often emanated into WFC.

Variable schedules that are set by employers, not workers, generate daunting problems for those who need to coordinate their schedules with others – most prominently, for workers with families (McCrate, 2012). According to the 2008 National Study of Employers, FWAs are commonplace, as 79% of organizations surveyed offered some degree of time flexibility (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, Kim, & Giuntoli, 2008). A recent report from the Families and Work Institute focused on employers and the

recession found that 81% of companies have maintained FWAs during the recession while another 13% have increased flexibility programs and 6% have eliminated them (Galinsky & Bond, 2009).

To extend the current state of FWAs knowledge beyond organizational and job-related drivers, Shockley and Allen (2012) examined employee's personal motivation for FWAs use; specifically, flextime and flexplace. They hypothesized that individuals with greater family responsibilities would be more driven to use FWAs by life management motives based on their greater potential for work-nonwork conflict. Research participants were faculty members from a large research university. Fifteen percent response rate was received from 238 invited participants. Using life management and work-related motives as constructs, Shockley et al. found employees were motivated by work-related reasons significantly more than by life management incentives. In other words, individuals are more likely to use flexibility as a means to help them achieve greater work-related outcomes than as a way to manage work and nonwork.

Work and family researchers have established the presence of robust relationships among variables across work and family domains, embodying the strong influence the two domains have on each another (Ode-Dusseau, Britt, & Bobko, 2012). One finding is that WFB has generated substantial interest in the academic, applied, and popular press. In nearly two-thirds of couples with children younger than 18, both partners are employed (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008), 35% of workers currently provide care for an aging parent or family member, and the proportion of workers providing eldercare will likely increase (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002). Working adults report

difficulty balancing work and family (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004; Clark, 2000, 2001; Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001; Keene & Quadagno, 2004; Wattis, Standing, & Yerkes, 2013).

Researchers have also suggested that the absence of WFB, typically defined in term of elevated WFC, may undermine individual health and well-being (Devi & Nagini, 2013; Grzywacz & Bass, 2003; Hughes & Boziones, 2007; Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002). Jyothi and Jyothi (2012) highlighted that human resources policies intended to help employees balance their work and family lives can positively affect performance, organizational commitment and employee willingness to go the extra mile on behalf of their employers. A healthy balance between family and job leads to higher job satisfaction and contribute to enhancing employee performance (Kanwar, Singh, & Kodwani, 2009).

While some studies indicate improved well-being and job satisfaction, Kumar & Chakraborty (2012) found the consequences of poor WFB might be low morale and motivation, increased number of grievances, WFC, poor well-being, low employee retention, low performance and productivity level, poor organizational image, poor quality of work-life, and reduced quality of life. Sverke, Gallager, and Hellgren (2000) studies found no differential effects for life satisfaction and self-rated performance.

WFB literature findings have shown a dynamic between balancing work and family and FWAs. Analysis and research of various WFB/FWAs surveys indicate that there is a definite need for FWAs. In the current economic environment, WFB is regarded as one of the most important workplace qualities, second only to paid work

(Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013). FWAs has been identified as one important means of balancing work and personal commitments (Russell, O'Connell & McGinnity 2009) and are becoming increasingly common in modern economies. Numerous studies show that FWAs availability and use varies on the basis of individual characteristics of workers, employers, and national contexts (Golden, 2008; Kassinis & Stavrou, 2013; Swanberg, James, Werner, & McKechnie, 2008).

In the last decade, a level of awareness has been rising on the need for one's recovery from work demands during the off-job time in order for the person to maintain a healthy balance between work and family life. Employees are realizing how important it is for their personal well-being and family functioning to be in control and to have the ability to juggle between family and work roles (Eby et al. 2005; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Pedersen, Minnotte, Kiger & Mannon, 2008). WFB research suggests employers that do not offer flexibility or alternative work schedule run the risk of losing valuable employees who seek employment at companies that provide FWAs.

In contrast, employees who use FWAs are perceived to lack commitment (Tajlil, 2014; Grouse, 2012). The original concept of WLB proposed at the beginning of the 21st century (O'Neil, Hopkins, & Bilimoria, 2008) has been eschewed in favor of the term work–life integration (Slaughter, 2012) because professional working mothers find that balance is an unachievable ideal in today's fast-paced world. Thus, evidence paints a contradictory picture regarding the effect on career success and provides limited understanding regarding when FWAs are a source of career premiums versus penalties (Leslie, Park, & Mehng, 2012).

Low-Wage Workers

Low-wage workers suffer from a dramatic flexibility stigma that is very different from that experienced by professionals and blue-color workers (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Williams, Blair-Loy, & Berdahl, 2013). Current labor projections suggest low-wage workers will only increase over the next decade. This labor force includes personal care services, hospitality, retail work, food services, cleaning, home health care, and telemarketing work (Dodson, 2013). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) suggests four of the five fastest growing occupations in the United States are lower wage jobs, and of the million new jobs needed by the year 2018, 75% will be low wage (Lacey & Wright, 2009).

Lower-paid service workers face an additional challenge. Mothers, in particular, face untenable choices trying to respond to children and elder care needs. If they put children foremost and behave as though they should have some choice or flexibility, they may face sanctions at work that include warnings, suspended pay, and even termination (Crate, 2012; Dodson & Luttrell, 2011). What is viewed as a lack of “work-devotion” among higher income mothers—who use flextime—becomes a lack of “personal responsibility” when it comes to low-wage mothers who seek flexibility at work. Low-wage mothers who experience WFC are often judged as not only irresponsible workers, but also as irresponsible reproducers who have “had children they cannot take care of” (Dodson, 2013).

Dodson (2013) suggested that individuals with low-income jobs rarely have job flexibility and do not have the resources to mitigate WFC (e.g., money, time, or an in-

home partner). Galinsky et al. (2004) and Williams et al. (2011) argue that low-income workers are more likely to have work schedules that disrupt ordinary family routines; have few or no benefits that could be used for family leave time and, in agreement with Dodson (2013), have minimal or no job flexibility.

Work-Family Balance Theories

To minimize the negative influence and maximize the positive aspect to achieve WFB, one researcher suggested measurement of appropriate constructs (Masuda, McNall, Allen, & Nicklin, 2012). Another researcher suggested separation of the home and work domain was the key proponent (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). Other theorists conclude FWAs and autonomy are the formulae (Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2012). The following theories incorporate various methods to achieve WFB. Based on theoretical conclusions, these methods contribute to achieving the WFB that is paramount to maintaining a strong workforce and positively influential in the maintenance of balance in nonwork environments.

Spillover Theory

Chen, Powell, and Greenhaus' (2009) suggested spillover theory significantly influence one another negatively and positively with meeting work and family obligations. Workers struggle with separating work-life from home life resulting in this spillover effect. Existing researchers acknowledge positive (i.e., experiences from one domain facilitate performance in another domain) as well as negative (i.e., experiences from one domain inhibit the fulfillment of demands in another domain) spillover (Allen, 2012).

Work-to-family positive spillover occurs when a positive effect transfers from the work domain to the family domain in a way that benefits the family domain. Work-to-family instrumental positive spillover occurs when positive behaviors, skills, and values transfer from the work area in a way that benefits the family domain (Hanson, Hammer, & Colton, 2006). Negative spillover is just the opposite. When adverse effects are experienced, they translate to conflict, and non-beneficial support to the family structure.

Boundary Theory

Researchers have shown that individuals have a preference, or a need, for a particular level of segmentation or integration of the boundaries between work and family (Bulger, Matthews, & Hoffman, 2007; Cho, Tay, Allen, & Stark, 2013). Recent empirical work suggests that this definition should be expanded (Matthews & Barnes-Farrell, 2010). Matthews et al (2010) proposed that boundary flexibility should be conceptualized in terms of two components: (a) flexibility-ability, the perceived *ability* to contract or expand domain boundaries, and (b) flexibility-willingness, the *willingness* to contract or expand domain boundaries. Essentially, the flexibility-ability component reflects perceived constraints on the ability to move from one domain to another. For example, an individual recognize that his or her manager is unwilling to allow for flexibility in his or her work schedule to meet family demands (Lautsch et al., 2009; Rothbard et al., 2005). Alternatively, flexibility-willingness reflects an individual's motivation to engage in movement between domains.

Building on the tenets of boundary theory, Cho et al. (2013) proposed that disposition to spillover is a stable individual difference, which arises from the propensity

to blur boundaries between life domains. More recently, the concept of role blurring has been applied to explain a more complex overlapping of contemporary work and family demands, including ways that electronic technologies may confound how work tasks interfere with home life (Glavin, Schieman, & Reid, 2011; Voydanoff, 2002, 2005).

On one hand, those who prefer more flexible and permeable boundaries are likely to experience all types of spillover because these limitations allow both positive and negative experiences to transfer in any direction. On the other hand, those who prefer more inflexible and impermeable boundaries are likely to experience less spillover regardless of its valence and guidance given that the boundaries block the flow of experiences between the domains.

Galinski et al. (2013), Aumann et al. (2011), and the Department of Labor, (n.d.) suggest a flexible or alternative work arrangement will minimize the negative influence and maximize the positive aspect to achieve WFB.

Border Theory

Border theory (Glavin & Schieman, 2012) suggests that a border will be stronger in the direction of the domain that one views as the more powerful domain and that individuals (*border-crossers*) will invest more effort to shape those areas they identify with most (Clark, 2000; Lobel et al. 1992). Donald and Linington (2005) proposed that a person who identifies strongly with both the family and work domains will have greater control over those domains and is more likely to achieve WFB. Border theory differs from boundary theory in that its definition of borders encompasses not only those psychological categories but also tangible boundaries that divide the times, place and

people associated with work versus family (Desrochers & Sargent, 2003). Work-family border theory is devoted to work and family domains. As suggested by boundary theory, how one strives to maintain satisfaction in both home and work areas lessens the probability of WFC. FWAs may be a construct required to assist in WFB.

Similarly, individuals in jobs with more autonomous work often feel more time pressure (Mennino, Rubin, & Brayfield, 2005; Voydanoff, 2007) or emotional demands (Bakker & Geurts, 2004). Clark (2000) found that autonomy on the job is a major influence on managing borders between work and family. Others found that although higher earnings are linked with greater autonomy, the well-paid often have more job pressures and longer hours (Mennino, Rubin, & Brayfield, 2005). The contrast is a lone parent juggling a low-paid job and looking after her children. While the two individuals (high income and low income) may have equally little free time, the single professional has considerably greater discretionary time, while the lone parent may face a trade-off between time poverty and income poverty (Burchardt, 2010). More flexibility in the work environment may be the solution for both income levels.

Prior and current researchers agree that work flexibility is a major proponent in achieving WFB. Granting autonomy to those who find separation from work more desirable is a viable argument for organizations when debating WFB policies and strategies. In addition, variables such as family and marital strength, coping strategies, and overall family satisfaction, are worth exploring as separate constructs on managing borders between work and family. Unlike spillover theory, which suggests home and work lives contribute to WFB, border theory suggests creating a balance between work

and family domain. Although many adults have multiple role identities, the salience of the identities is not the same for each role (Bagger, Li, & Gutek, 2008), and, typically, work and family roles are the most salient and significant identities for working adults (Werbel & Walter, 2002).

Work-Family Conflict Theory

Many workers report substantial levels of WFC (Galinsky et al. 2011) as a result of trends in the workplace and at home. Global competition and the adoption of technologies that allow workers to be accessible around the clock have increased demands on workers' time and attention (Valcour, 2007). At home, cultural expectations of family responsibilities, particularly parenting, involve tremendous time investment that working parents may not be able to manage successfully (Milkie et al. 2010). These trends, combined with other factors (i.e. higher female labor force participation) have led to increased perceptions of WFC in recent years (Nomaguchi, 2009).

Americans work longer hours than workers in most other developed countries. In Japan, there is a word, *karoshi*, which means death by overwork (Williams & Boushey, 2010). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have the most recognized and accepted definition of WFC. They define WFC not only affects the individual, it also subjects organizations to negative outcomes such as lower instances of organizational performance, lower morale, and higher turnover rates (Fu & Shaffer, 2001; Gordon, Whelan-Berry, & Hamilton, 2007; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Findings also suggest WFC relates negatively with job satisfaction and instrumental in employee turnover.

A Family and Work Institute study, entitled *The New Male Mystique* (2008), showed that men experience significantly higher levels of WFC today than they did three decades ago. The pressure to *do it all in order to have it all* has been termed as new male mystique (Aumann, Galinsky, & Matos, 2008). Additionally, men, more than women, believe that long working hours are detrimental to their personal time, are too time consuming; and a greater number of men would consider leaving their jobs in comparison to the number of women.

Male and female employees are confronted with conflicts between work and family, but men who believe they have a heavy workload are more likely to leave their jobs than their female counterparts (Huffman, Payne, & Castro, 2003). However, it could be misleading to view sex differences simply in terms of men's and women's personal choices based on their motivations, natures, and needs (Crosby, Williams, & Biernat, 2004). No matter where Americans stand on the income spectrum, they need short-term and extended paid leave and new workplace flexibility rules, as well as high-quality, affordable childcare and freedom from discrimination based on family responsibilities (Williams & Boushey, 2010).

WFB researchers have used various constructs to determine how to address potential problems with balancing work and family. McNamara, Pitt-Catsouphes, Matz-Costa, Brown, & Valcour (2012) examined the relationship between work hours and satisfaction with WFB, with particular attention to two potential moderators (i.e., the fit between flexible work options and worker needs, and the supportiveness of work–family organizational culture). Greenhaus et al. (2011) examined whether the relationship

between family-supportive supervision and WFB is moderated by the family supportiveness of the work environment and by the amount of support received from a spouse. Haddock et al. (2006) conducted a qualitative study on WFB/WFC on dual-earning couples who have attained success in balancing work and family. The intent of this qualitative study is to assess if organizations should employ certain strategies to attain WFB.

McNamara et al. (2012), Greenhaus et al. (2011), and Haddock et al. (2006) are in agreement with the importance of strategies as the consensus of their studies found key strategic components in achieving WFB. Variables included FWAs, non-traditional work hours, family/spouse support, professional/job autonomy, working from home, and supportive management.

A Tremblay (2004) WFB study focused on understanding situations experienced by men and women in the workplace and elements that may facilitate or militate against the work-family connection. Tremblay (2004) used similar variables as Haddock et al. (2006), i.e., FWAs, work schedules, work time, support of co-workers and management. Tremblay (2004) used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in her analysis. The qualitative analysis consisted of semi-structured interviews representative of a dozen case studies. The findings of this research study are synonymous with those of Haddock et al. (2006); that flexible work schedules, management support, and reduced work length time are measures that are conducive to attaining WFB.

Sladek and Hollander's (2009) research addressed the rise of workplace flexibility. Sladek et al. indicate while most employers are offering flexibility, most

arrangements are ad hoc and not widespread nor consistently practiced throughout the organization.

McNall, Masuda, and Nicklin (2010) agree that FWAs help employees experience greater enrichment from work to home, which, in turn, is associated with higher job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions. Their study expands the conceptual understanding of work-to-family enrichment and offers practical implications for organizations seeking to help employees with WFB issues. Further, the study focused on two types of FWAs: flextime schedules (i.e., employees can select work hours given certain restrictions by the organization) and compressed workweek schedules (i.e., employees often work more hours per day, but fewer days per week (Also see Lambert et al. 2008). According to the 2008 Employee Benefits Survey by the Society for Human Resource Management (2008), 59% of human resources professionals report that their organizations offer employees flextime, and 37% report that their organizations offer a compressed workweek. The rationale for focusing on these two types of FWAs stems from research in the WFC literature that suggests flextime may be more effective than flexplace (i.e., flexibility in the location where work is completed) in preventing both work interfering with family and family interfering with work (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2006; Shockley & Allen, 2007).

Women and WFB

For American women, and for women in many industrialized nations, the once dominant role of full-time mother/homemaker has given way to a range of choices about whether, when, and how to engage in paid work, marriage, and parenthood (Worts,

Sacker, McMunn, & McDonough, 2013). As the proportion of women in the workforce has increased over the past three decades, the traditional family structure of a male breadwinner and female homemaker has given way to dual-career partnerships, single parenthood, and other alternative family structures (Marks, 2006). The workforce of the 21st century has a new face. Research has clearly illustrated, for many women, that balancing home and work domains can be physically, psychologically, and personally challenging (Aumann et al., 2011). Figure 1 presents women's representation in the labor force from 1970 until 2012, by age.

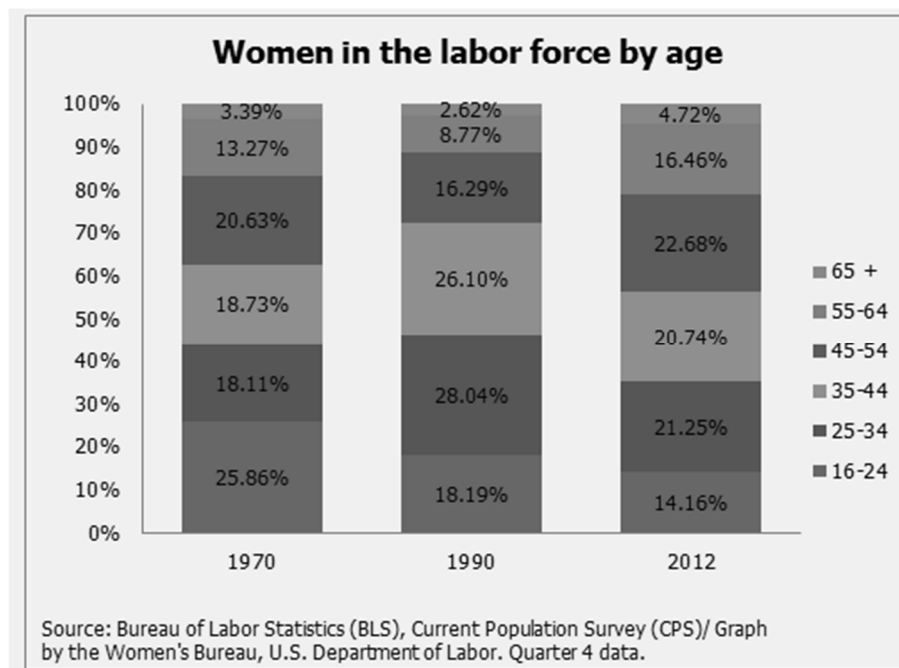


Figure 1. Women in the labor force by age.

There were 127.1 million working-age women (16 years of age and older, civilian non-institutional population) in the United States, in 2013, 72.7 million were in the labor force. Of the 127 million women of working age, 99.5 million were White, 16.6 million

were Black or African American, 7.1 million were Asian, and 18.7 million were of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Between 2012 and 2022, the number of women in the civilian labor force is expected to increase by 5.4%, compared to a 5.6% increase in the number of men. Although the number of women and men are expected to rise, overall the labor force participation rates are expected to decline.

Women are projected to represent 46.8% of the labor force in 2022 (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, n.d.). As the number of female workers at midlife who value both work and home domains continue to grow, research suggests there is an increasing urgency for managers and organizations to understand and retain this population because of their accumulated knowledge, performance, and contribution to employees. Competing demands of work and family responsibilities are increasing due to demographics, workplace changes, increased number of women in the labor force, and in the aging population (Abendroth & Dulk, 2011; Beauregard & Henry, 2009).

Losing these women from the workforce because balancing work and family have become too difficult has significant consequences for the availability of sufficient and productive human capital in organizations. Cook et al. (2009) asserted that more focus should be placed on balancing work and family commitments. Protecting labor laws for women and mothers could allow them to continue to stay active at work and combine their professional and home responsibilities (Budig, Misra, & Boeckmann, 2012).

Traditional vs. Nontraditional Roles

In today's competitive business life, balancing work and family life is a challenge faced by many individuals (Rupert, Stevanovic, Hartman, Bryant, & Miller, 2012). As women increasingly redistribute their allegiance between home and work, men have become integral in home affairs. Although women continue to be responsible for a larger percentage of household duties, men's family responsibilities have increased in recent years (Pleck, 2010). The literature on the sharing of domestic labor, including housework and childcare, is virtually unanimous in the view that women, despite the level of paid work undertaken outside the home, carry a disproportionate load of unpaid work at home compared with their male partners (e.g., Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006; Wright, 2007).

Powell & Greenhaus (2009) argued that (a) men will regard their work role as more important and their family role as less important than women do, and that (b) both men and women will make decisions about how to allocate their time and energy between work and family roles accordingly. There are often no clear guidelines for what is an equitable division of duties (Himsel & Goldberg, 2003). Although women may not have access to flextime as frequently as men, it appears that for those women who are able to control the start and end of their day, this control has a sizable positive impact on how they perceive the balance between their work and family life. This result may indicate that employers who offer flexible scheduling, when appropriate and possible, may make life a little easier for the mothers in their workforce. However, in order for men or women to use such policies, managers must be well-informed about, explicit in their

support for, and facilitate on behalf of, their employees' usage of the policies available (Kelly et al., 2008).

Although the workforce is composed almost equally of men and women, parents in the workplace are more likely to be men than women. Specifically, 29.8% of employed men are parents, and 18.3% of employed women are parents (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). Despite these demographics, work-family research has generally focused on women with an absence of the examination and understanding of men's work-family experiences (Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2007). Because the growing body of research on men and fathers suggests that their gender roles are expanding to include responsibilities beyond the workplace to the family domain, it is critical to understand how fathers manage the work-family interface (Huffman, Olson, O'Gara, & King, 2014).

Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson, and Siddiqi, (2013) explored the extent to which men and women value and prioritize work flexibility and WFB, as well as their intentions to seek out work flexibility in their own careers. When asked if they intended to seek FWAs in their own careers, men expressed less interest than women did. This reluctance is mirrored in data from organizations showing that men are less likely than women to take advantage of work flexibility policies.

The findings suggested that men's reluctance to seek work flexibility may be driven in part by fears of gender-related stigmatization. Those men who believed that seeking work flexibility would lead to the most derogation on masculine prescriptive traits were the least likely to report intentions to seek work flexibility in their own future

careers. Conversely, women who believed that seeking work flexibility would increase attributions of feminine prescriptive traits were the most likely to report intentions to seek flexibility in their careers (Wattis et al., 2013).

Results also provided evidence that men's fears of gender-related stigmatization may be grounded in reality. Hypothetical targets who sought reduced work hours after the birth of a child received worse job evaluations and lower hourly raises, by both men and women, than identical targets who worked traditional hours. Both male and female flexibility-seeking targets received lower job evaluations, suggesting that people did not distinguish between men and women in their performance evaluations. However, an examination of the trait evaluations suggests that men may be penalized more than women. On the one hand, targets who sought FWAs were rated as warmer and more moral than targets who worked traditional hours (and no less competent). On the other hand, flexibility-seekers (men and women) were seen as less masculine and were rated lower on precisely those traits (Rudman et al., 2011).

Vandello et al. (2013) suggested the importance of understanding how pressures on employees to conform to gender roles may hinder organizations from effectively implementing family-supportive policies that can benefit men, partly by discouraging men from taking advantage of flexible work policies even when available. To analyze and discern WFB/WFC/FWAs issues, an array of variables--economic status, occupation, environment, relationships, alternative or FWAs, irrespective of gender--should be taken into account in order to address FWAs, WFB and WFC in the 21st century.

Generations X & Y

According to the Pew Research Center (PRC), millennials (Generation Y) will be roughly 50% of the U.S. workforce by 2020 and 75% of the global workforce by 2030 (Kuhl, 2013). Generation Y (post-1980) demands the most from their work environment, and more inclined to leave an organization if dissatisfied with the working conditions (Lowe, Levitt, & Wilson, 2008). Millennial professionals tend to be the first employees to request to work from home or to call in remotely for meetings. In the PRC study, 41% stated they prefer to communicate electronically at work than face-to-face or by telephone.

The Y generation demands freedom and flexibility (Martin, 2005). Generation Xers (born roughly between 1963 and 1983) strive for balance in their lives, particularly between work and family, since they would be consumed by work given the technology to work anytime from anywhere (Glass, 2007). Xers appear to value WFB, growth opportunities, and positive work relationships more highly than previous generations (Chao, 2005). Generation Y tends to have a strong sense of morality, to be patriotic, willing to fight for freedom, are sociable, and value home and family. Generation Y is the most technically literate, educated and ethnically diverse generation in U.S. history (Kuhl, 2013; Lowe, Levitt, & Wilson, 2008).

Hershatter and Epstein (2010) identified two compelling factors of Generation Y workers. The factors consist of incorporation of technology and organizational accommodation. In other words, this generation expects the technology to be within their easy reach as well as workplace flexibility. Pratt (2010) surmised that Generation Y

workers equate flexible work ubiquitous with this wave of workers. Her studies found that managers would support employee efforts to balance work with other interests in order to attract and retain this generation of workers.

Related Research and Literature

The task of managing work and family is common to all walks of society. Caring for a child, spouse, parent, or workers absent of family responsibilities experience some sort of life imbalance. Previous and recent WFB researchers identified variables, strategies, and contribute factors necessary to bring balance between work and family domains. Elaboration on the positive side of balancing work and family (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002) is the focus in recent literature. On the basis of Greenhaus and Powell's (2006) model of work-family enrichment, McNall, Masuda and Nicklin, (2010) proposed that flexibility is one major driver of the enrichment process. The purpose of their research was to extend the knowledge of work-family enrichment by examining the availability of FWAs as a possible antecedent variable. Enrichment in this context is the ability to balance work and family domains

Gaps in the Literature

WFB, WFC, and FWAs researchers have identified several gaps in the literature. LaPierre et al. (2012) indicated more investigation into whether planning behavior moderates the relationship between FWAs and WFC. Employees may require training to prepare for additional responsibilities, both at home and work, to adjust to flexible schedules. LaPierre et al. (2012) further suggested managers look for employee planning behavior as a cue to help determine which employees would benefit from greater control

at work. As an individual difference variable, planning behavior is amenable to change and is a trainable skill (p. 1512).

McNall et al. (2010) suggested further examination on how often FWAs policies are used because previous research has shown that the intensity of certain FWAs moderates the relation between use and work outcomes (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Participants were a diverse sample of adults, employed at different jobs and industries, and comprised individuals who signed up to participate in Internet-based research. Studies are needed to test these hypotheses in different samples (McNall et al. 2010).

Rau and Hyland (2002) found in their studies potential job seekers generally attempt to ease role transitions and minimize undesired role interruptions. For both flextime and telecommuting, job seekers expressed predictable preferences for the work arrangement that seemed best suited to accomplish these goals. Their results indicate that role conflict does influence applicant attraction to organizations. Thus the study reinforces work by Honeycutt and Rosen (1997) and Judge and Bretz (1992) that suggested that models of the job choice process need to include variables that tap individual factors related to work and family. To the extent that attraction translates into behaviors, one would expect that role conflict would also have an impact on actual job choice decisions (Rau et al. 2002). Millennials view on role conflict, role salience, work values, and its association with job choice is an identified gap in the literature

To gain a complete understanding of the consequences of balance, it is also important to include measures of outcomes in the work domain (Greenhaus et al., 2003). Organizations may suspect that employees who seek balance in their lives are less

committed to the organization and are less productive in their jobs than other employees. However, Moore (2007) explains that defining the "balance" in work/life is as unique to each individual as individuals are themselves. As concern for balancing work and non-work roles grows, work schedule flexibility, or the ease with which employees can change their work hours, may be a work characteristic that is increasingly favored by employees (Hyland, Rowsome, & Rowsome, 2005; Jang, Park, & Zippay, 2011). King, Botsford, and Huffman (2009) advised that future research should continue in identifying elements of work and home that can help optimize positive spillover and help minimize negative spillover.

Summary

Various researchers have proposed theories on how to attain balancing work and home domains. In Chapter 2, I have (a) discussed theoretical approaches to achieve WFB, (b) proposed theories on how to address WFB, (c) reviewed the importance of flexibility in the workplace when attracting and retaining seasoned and new employees, and (d) discussed policies in place that address WFB issues. Many organizations have begun to offer FWAs to help employees balance work and family demands. The changing dynamic of the workforce is indicative of the need to continue developing theories and concepts to address WFB and FWAs issues.

Berg et al. (2014), Allen et al. (2013) and Galinski et al. (2011) found FWAs beneficial to both employer and employee. Data analyzed by researchers also found FWAs as a win-win situation as argued by Khan et al. (2013), Allen et al. (2013), Shockley et al. (2012), and Galinsky et al. (2010). Chapter 3 includes a discussion of

constructs, data-gathering instruments, participants, recruitment procedures, and research design addressing FWAs and its impact on diverse cultures, organizations, and nontraditional households.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore how FWAs assisted employees in meeting work and family obligations. Exploration how data were gathered and analyzed are discussed in this chapter. Employee responses to the following research questions determined common and unique situations as it relates to time spent between home and work:

1. How do FWAs increase or decrease the balance between home and work domains?
2. What is the ideal alternative work arrangement that will assist in balancing both domains?
3. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of FWAs.

I draw upon recent research on WFB, FWAs, and WFC from peer-reviewed journals. Research that occurred during the 1990s/early 2000s is also used, because this era is when FWAs and WFB became more prevalent and instrumental in suggesting organizational policies address the changing dynamic of households and organizations. Summarizations by experts in the field of WFB, FWAs, and WFC are included. Minimal, but key references from non-peer reviewed articles are also included. Such work is relevant to the extent it contains information referenced in peer reviewed and scholarly journals. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) provides statistical information on pertinent demographics that contribute to acquiring needed data. The Sloan Work and Family Research Network (Boston College), the Family Work

Institute (FWI), University of Michigan Work-Life Program, *American Management Association*, *Journal of Psychology*, *Community of Work*, *Gender in Management*, *Human Resources Management*, *Journal of Human Resources*, *Journal of Management*, *Personnel Management*, *British Journal of Industrial Relations* (from an international or global perspective), and Australian Medical Association are sources that have published peer-reviewed findings in the field of WFB and FWAs.

The research design was a qualitative, phenomenological approach that I found best suited to examine the work and family experiences of participants. Hermeneutic phenomenology sets out to describe human beings as they show up in “average everydayness,” prior to high-level theorizing and reflection (Guignon, 2012, p. 96; Reeves et al., 2008), and aims to describe people’s experiences and the meaning they make of them, not to explain the experience. As identified in Chapter 1 and 2, spillover theory, boundary theory, border theory, and work family balance theory suggest balancing work and family might be achievable with the use of FWAs.

Qualitative Method: Phenomenology

School of phenomenology founder Husserl (1938) affirmed that experience is the source of all knowledge. Phenomenology adopts a viewpoint of the present. Pure phenomenological research seeks essentially to describe rather than explain, and to start from a perspective free from hypotheses or preconceptions (Husserl, 1970).

Phenomenological methods are particularly effective with discussions, experiences, and perceptions of individuals from their perspectives challenging structural or normative

assumptions (Lester, 1999). For this application, I sought suggestions on how to achieve WFB, reduce WFC, and how FWAs may contribute to both.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) presented a full complement of paradigms, methods and strategies to employ in qualitative research. In this research exercise, employees discussed WFB, FWAs, and how it impacts their home and work situations. Although data collected has minimal measurements of statistics, the purpose of this study was to define FWAs assists in balancing both domains. In this chapter, research steps are discussed under their respective header (participant recruitment, data collection instruments, data collection, and analysis).

The Researcher's Role

The qualitative researcher should be personally involved with participants if the researcher is to obtain needed insights on the topic being studied (Fink, 2008). Research participants should not see this project as only personal growth for the researcher. It is important to the researcher that participants understand the social impact, research contribution, and the personal gain to each participant. Therefore, the comfort level and established relationship between participant and researcher would prove advantageous to all involved. In addition, three prerequisites are also undertaken by the researcher: (a) adopt the stance suggested by the characteristics of the naturalist paradigm, (b) develop the level of skill appropriate for a human instrument—and other—instruments (e.g. face-to-face interviewing, appropriate research questions, online research) to be used in collecting and interpreting data, and (c) prepare a research design where the researcher uses accepted strategies for naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data collected

will encompass methods suggested by Fink (2008) and Lincoln et al. (1985). Using the proposed constructs ensures that data will provide meaningful information resulting in a scholarly, valid, and a reliable breadth of knowledge.

Constructs suggested by Meara and Schmidt (1991) were integrated with the FTF and the online questionnaire. The Meara's principles—autonomy, non-maleficence (do no harm), beneficence, and justice—assisted with participant interviewing techniques. Although Meara et al. (1991) applied their principles to therapy and counseling, the principles also served well in the WFB/WFC context. The principles involve respect for autonomy in allowing the participant to rest assured that no pressure to participate is required. Participants had free will to take part in the work. Any questions that the participant considered invasive were answered at the discretion of the participant.

I respected privacy concerns. All study subjects were informed that the exercise will not benefit the researcher, but will be used as a means to disseminate information that will contribute to improvement in the area of study. Participants were further assured that questionnaire results will not cause detriment of others resulting in an imbalance of responsibility for the participant and reward for the researcher.

Methodology

A review of WFB and FWAs literature has shown that compressed work schedules can (a) contribute to less WFC in households, (b) increase employee loyalty and work satisfaction, (c) enhance to corporate profits, and (d) facilitate a harmonious work and domain scenario. Travis (2010), however, found that workers with the most acute WFC are least likely to benefit from FWAs. WFB is thus seen as all-inclusive, as

decisions that affect work and domain encompass variables—ranging from age, race, gender, culture, and demographic—to the more specific industry-related. Researchers further suggested the type of occupation, white-collar vs. blue-collar, service industry vs. corporate America, single parent vs. dual-parent households play a prominent role in how WFB and FWAs will affect an individual. Research questions are posed to address these constructs.

Correlational and descriptive research methods (e.g., Tremblay, 2004; Haddock, 2006) exercise variables that include demographics, dual-earner vs. single-earner couples, and traditional vs. non-traditional work hours. Other variables used (which are generally constant) in reaching their conclusions indicated that FWAs creates WFB, and reduces WFC in both work and household domains. Mesmer-Magnus et al. (2006); Shockley et al. (2007), and McNall et al. (2010) compared the advantages and disadvantages of flexibility in the workplace. The researchers theorized that workplace flexibility contributes to lower WFC and increased WFB and concluded that more organizations should adopt such policies. However, findings show that there is minimal impact on households with minimal WFC. Travis (2010) found “the simpler the family circumstance, the more relative impact a little schedule flexibility seems to have (p. 1234).”

Participant Recruitment

Company X was a Midwest, defense company that offers FWAs. Participants were recruited from this corporation because of the variety of occupations (i.e., engineers, buyers, financial analysts, procurement, janitors, and mechanics). Employees represent

union and nonunion employees, a wide range of ages, diverse cultures, racial, marital, age, economic, and religious backgrounds. Demographic questions were included in the questionnaire to gather and confirm these data.

A nonprobability, convenience sample was the method of choice. The use of convenience sampling and snowballing was chosen as data collection tools because of the accessibility and proximity of the population to the researcher. Due to the cost, time, and probability of lack of responses, random selection was not an option. *Snowballing* or *gatekeeping* was an additional method used to attract other participants (Field & Morgan-Klein 2012; Grieg & Taylor, 1999). This process is when study participants ask others to partake in the study.

Company X represented an employee population of approximately 200 employees at one its subsidiary facilities. My goal was to recruit no fewer than 45 online questionnaire participants and 12-15 subjects willing to be interviewed face-to-face. The research was conducted within one corporation and omits executive level (vice presidents, CEO, COO) employees. Data analysis and findings would be beneficial to individual corporations where it was known that FWAs are offered to employees, including Company X.

I instructed respondents to provide responses during nonworking hours (i.e., lunch, before/after work, and weekends to assure no mischarging of labor or use of company assets can be associated with responses/respondents). Participants were required to sign a consent form prior to accessing questionnaire and prior to interviews. I established a separate, personal email account and a link was provided to participants by

email, text messages, and social media. It has been found in previous research that respondents do not sometimes answer honestly or return the questionnaire if they sense the possibility the information can be traced electronically in their work environment (Roberts, Konczak, & Hoff-Macan, 2004).

Population Sample and Sample Size

A common misconception about sampling in qualitative research is that numbers are unimportant for ensuring the adequacy of a sampling strategy (Sandelowski, 1995). The objective or purpose of a qualitative questionnaire is to gain understanding, underlying reasons and motivations to uncover prevalent trends in thought and opinion. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting to explore a social or human problem.

A small sample size is permitted since the emphasis is on gaining detailed accounts of individual experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of judgment and experience in evaluating the quality of the information collected for the uses to which it will be put, the particular research method, purposeful sampling strategy employed, and the research product intended (Mason, 2010; Sandelowski, 2007). Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam (2003) suggested that there is a point of diminishing return to a qualitative sample—as the study goes on, more data do not necessarily lead to more information (saturation). This is because one occurrence of a piece of data, or a code, is all that is necessary to ensure that

it becomes part of the analysis framework. The number of participants and the collection of data were sufficient to justify concrete findings and analysis.

Researchers have suggested guidelines for sample sizes. Charmaz (2006), for example, found that 25 participants is adequate for small projects. Ritchie et al. (2003) suggested qualitative samples often lie under 50, while Green and Thorogood (2009, 2004) found the experience of most qualitative researchers is that in interview studies little that is new comes out of transcripts after having interviewed 20 or so people.

In general, sample sizes should not be so large as to present obstacles for extracting rich, thick data (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). In contrast, the sample should not be so small as to compromise data saturation (Flick, 1998; Morse, 1995), theoretical saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) or informational redundancy (Lincoln & Guba, 1995). Fifty-nine responses to the on-line questionnaire were received and 14 FTF interviews were conducted. Mason (2010) suggested a mean sample size of 31 in his studies on qualitative research sample size.

Criteria for selecting participants encompassed those most likely to have WFB concerns. Based on WFB/WFC literature, WFB/WFC crosses all cultures, gender, age, and occupations. As a result, criteria for selecting participants were populations with elder care/childcare issues, single parents, dual-income workers, ages ranging from 22 through 70, union and nonunion workers, maintenance workers, management employees (which will encompass various occupations (i.e., engineers, purchasing agents, finance genres).

Data Collection Instruments

Maxwell (2005) suggested there is a clear distinction between research questions and interview questions. Research questions identify the things needing to be understood; interview questions generate the data that is needed to understand these things (p. 230). This dissertation included both an online questionnaire and FTF interviews instruments.

Survey Monkey offers a data collection link that tracks questionnaire participants. The data collection and analysis software offers benefits such as tracking who responded, managing the opt outs, and sending out reminder messages to those who have yet to respond. I used this tool to send out online questionnaires and periodically communicate with participants to assure no problems with on-line accessibility or questionnaire.

The questions that I used to collect online data were extracted from The Better Work-Life Balance Manual (2005). FTF questions were identified earlier in this dissertation.

I selected this peer-reviewed instrument because it encourages research students to utilize its contents when researching WFB/WFC issues, and states the following:

The Better Work-Life Balance (2005) questionnaire can help organization improve and promote work-life balance in the workplace by:

- identifying areas of policy development and implementation where change may be required (e.g. improve awareness; change workplace culture);
- monitoring the effectiveness of organizational changes by re-administering the survey after changes have been made;

- responding to the changing needs of your employees and ensuring employees are aware of existing and changed policies by readministering the survey periodically.

The questionnaire was initially administered in 10 Queensland, Australia organizations across a variety of industries, geographical areas and sizes. These organizations included a community health organization, two law firms, a bank, two hospitals, an indigenous community organization, a research institute, a tertiary institute, and a manufacturing company. Two of these organizations were located in regional areas and one organization had some offices in regional areas. Organizations ranged in size from 10 employees to 5100 employees. The initial testing indicated that it can be used in a wide variety of organizations.

I uploaded 59 questions via Survey Monkey and sent a link to participants. The link contained instructions and a brief background of what the questionnaire entailed. I invited approximately 60 participants to participate. This instrument format was used to conduct previous WFB qualitative research (Lambert, Marler, & Gueutal, 2008). Online participants were also invited to participate in FTF interviews for further data collection. Data collection from both sources provided a means for bracketing. A diverse range of individuals and settings was part of the data collection strategy. Further corroboration of the validity of this instrument and research approach is from previous research that examined WLB. Vasquez (2014), Christian (2014), Catchings (2013), and Damiano-Teixeira, (2006) studies were successful with the use of qualitative phenomenology.

Data Collection and Verification

An online electronic survey instrument was introduced in 1999 as a way for individuals to collect survey and questionnaire information via the web quickly and easily (Survey Monkey, 2012). This instrument was used by Lambert, Marler, and Gueutal (2008) and found to be reliable. Survey Monkey is capable of filtering and cross-tabulating only responses of interest, of downloading a summary of results in multiple formats, and of performing other functions required to complete a valid and verifiable survey or questionnaire. As a supplement to Survey Monkey, NVIVO software was used to assist with data analysis.

Data that I collected focused on experiences employees had in balancing work and family domains. In addition, the data included demographics and open-ended questions associated with nontraditional households. The primary data were signals that indicated achieving balance in home and work domains have become challenging.

Data analysis, via a server and paper records, is kept in a secure location within my home office. Previous work-family researchers have recommended the use of a time-based stem so that all respondents have the same timeframe of reference for responding to the items. The questionnaire (link provided) was sent out 2 days after IRB approval, requesting a response within 15 days. A follow-up, electronic email was posted to the link 10 days after initial questionnaire administration to participants as a reminder.

Data analysis of the online questionnaire results began within 1 week after all information was received and reviewed. I conducted FTF interviews commensurate with the time line of questionnaire. Analysis commenced in alignment with the online questionnaire. Interview participants were asked in the online questionnaire if they were

willing to meet in person to conduct further research. Because participants were anonymous, I relied on them to contact me via the link provided. This was successful because 19 people agreed to interviews, of whom 14 responded to semi-structured questions. The questions had been approved by my dissertation chairperson and by the Walden University Internal Review Board.

Each participant was asked the same questions and were aware that interviews were being recorded. I further informed them that audio data would be stored and locked in file containers. After 5 years, data would be destroyed. I further informed participants that recordings are confidential and shared with only dissertation chairperson or Walden University, if required.

Data Analysis

The data collected illustrated the current reality of balancing work and family in the 21st century from questionnaire participants. Only data pertinent to the research questions was collected; for example, gender, demographics, education level, job satisfaction. This information was included in the questionnaire.

Allen et al. (2013), Aumann et al. (2011), and Haddock et al. (2006) suggested that the influx of women entering the workforce want both families and professional careers. For economic reasons, dual-earner incomes are also required in most households. The increase of single-parent families, and more men as single-parent breadwinners, was an important part of the data collected to see how they handle balancing work and family and if FWAs was conducive to achieving balance. Higgins, Duxbury, and Johnson (2000) also examined the effects of WLB for part-time working

mothers. Overall, Higgins et al. (2000) found that part-time working mothers had higher levels of WFB than full-time mothers. Data collected considered this theory to confirm, reaffirm, with not just part-time working mothers, but all questionnaire participants.

The key question I introduced in the data collection was if FWAs influenced or affected the work and home domains. Data were extrapolated from the questionnaire results, open-ended questions, and FTF interviews. The aim is to assess how FWAs and to what extent contribute to balancing work and family domains, and relatedly, how and to what extent FWAs conflict in work and family domains; -- or if FWAs do not affect either domain. Based on the responses of the interview, some questions were amended to engage the participant if conversation was leading towards relevant data that was not originally part of the questionnaire or FTF scope.

Data Storage

The electronic data from this study will be retained in encrypted form for five years on a password protected computer and then destroyed. Data collected in paper form and audio will be stored in locked file containers. After five years, electronic data will be deleted, and data in paper and audio form will be shredded.

Validity and Reliability

The internet provides an attractive environment for the convenient large-scale collection of data (Couper, 2000; Fricker & Schonlau, 2002; Reips, 2000, 2011). Additionally, collecting data online provided an opportunity to conduct questionnaires targeting otherwise difficult-to-reach populations (Mangan & Reips, 2007; Reips & Buffardi, 2012).

Two concerns with the use of on-line surveys and questionnaires are validity and reliability. Bryman (2001) suggested that when one is collecting self-report data, validity and reliability might play a role. Several techniques were used to assure reliability and validity of this dissertation. The first technique was the use of Guba and Lincoln (1985) criteria: credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability. The credibility measure involved certifying that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the study. The transferability criterion refers to the degree to which the results were generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. Confirmability as a criterion refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others and for which a number of strategies might apply. The criterion of dependability, on the other hand, emphasized the need to account for the ever-changing context within which research occurs. As the researcher, I was responsible for describing the changes that occurred in the setting and how these changes affected the study. Procedures for checking and rechecking the data throughout the study were documented.

Credibility

Credibility of participants to describe experiences in balancing work and family provided validity to this research. The credibility criterion involves-establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research. From this perspective, the purpose of research is to describe or understand the phenomena of interest from the participants' view. A second technique used to confirm validity and reliability was member-checking or member-validation.

Member-checking is what the term implies – an opportunity for members (participants) to check (approve) particular aspects of the interpretation of the data they provided (Doyle, 2007; Merriam, 1998). It is a “way of finding out whether the data analysis is congruent with the participants’ experiences” (Curtin & Fossey, 2007, p. 87). Audio was replayed to participants to confirm what was said and to avoid incorrect interpretations.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) regard member checks as “the single most critical technique for establishing credibility” (p. 239). In contrast, Sandelowski (1993) perceived reliability/dependability as a threat to validity/credibility, and questioned many of the usual qualitative reliability tests such as member checking. Sandelowski (1993) argued that if reality is assumed to be “multiple and constructed,” then “repeatability is not an essential (or necessary or sufficient) property of the things themselves” (p. 3), and we should not expect either expert researchers or respondents to arrive at the same themes and categories as the researcher.

Miscommunication between researcher/participant relationships of the study can be jeopardized unknowingly by using member checking due to the nature of human dynamics (Carlson, 2010). Several suggestions to avoid traps while using member checking as a validity and reliability measurement tool are detailed by Carlson (p. 1102). Although member checking may be controversial, it is still an acceptable method for qualitative validity and reliability.

The third technique is the use of triangulation. This procedure entails gathering and analyzing data in more than two ways (Curtin & Fossey, 2007). Data may be collected from different people or groups, at various times, and from different places. It

may also be obtained in different ways such as interviews, questionnaires, observations, and archival data (Creswell & Miller, 2000; McMillan, 2004). The premise is that if researchers can substantiate these various data sets with each other, the interpretations and conclusions drawn from them are likely to be trustworthy (Carlson, 2010).

Rationale for Study

This study is important because of the increased number of single-parent households, women returning to the workforce, people working longer hours, men in non-traditional roles in their families, stress and health-related issues, and the need to care for children and the elderly. Implementing and expanding policies and procedures to achieve WFB will assist families in creating balance in the day-to-day lives and activities. Some studies have indicated that when women enter the workforce, their ability to focus on family and home life is compromised. Work, then, represents a conflict and a major contributor to an imbalance in the home and work domains (McElwain, Korabik, & Rosin, 2005; Rothbard, 2001).

Ferguson, Carlson, Zivnuska, and Whitten (2012) theorized that the resources of coworker support and partner support positively influence WFB, which influences job incumbent satisfaction with both job and marriage, and also crosses over to influence partner family satisfaction. Domain-specific effects of social support are especially strong, i.e., support from the partner reduces family-to-work conflict, whereas support from one's supervisor or co-workers reduces work-to-family conflict (Bellavia & Frone, 2005). Research has further shown that over 80% of male managers feel that they are overworked (Works Management, 2004). According to Zappone (2005), 65 out of 100

male executives surveyed about WLB responded that they desire occupations that enable them to have successful careers as well as leisure time to spend with their families and friends. Of the 500 male executives surveyed about achieving a balanced life, 64% reported a desire to have more time with their families than finances and another 71% wanted more time versus job promotions (Zappone, 2005). These statistics support the argument that time spent between work and home are conflicting and provide justifiable rationale that time spent with family outweigh economic and career gains.

FWAs may be a measure to address having to make a choice between career, economics, and family. Nearly 80% of workers say they would like to have more flexible work options and will use them if there were no negative consequences at work. However, most workers do not have access to FWAs and barriers to their effective implementation persist in many organizations (Allen et al. 2013; Galinski et al. 2011; Hill et al. 2009).

Greenhaus et al. (2003) has suggested that to gain a complete understanding of the consequences of balance, it is important to include measures of outcomes in the work domain. The Work Foundation, in association with Employers for Work-Life Balance, has commissioned some research into whether working people are feeling a 'time squeeze' and how they are managing their WLB. The results of the survey (to which 500 people responded) were evident despite (a) the increased profile of WLB, (b) government legislation, and (c) people still feeling a time squeeze (Jones, 2006).

Sladek and Hollander (2009) found that implementing WFB policies increases organizational profits and employee loyalty. Sun Microsystems, IBM, and Accenture

achieved millions of savings dollars per year in real estate costs by offering more flexible work options. Many employees of these companies have no official office, but instead take advantage of virtual work and telecommuting. Sladek et al research posited that organizations offering workplace flexibility programs could achieve measurable cost savings that benefit employers and employees.

Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

Participants were provided an electronically emailed consent form, approved by Walden University IRB to protect their human rights (See Appendix B). In addition, participants were informed that all information would be destroyed after data collection, analysis, and study approval.

Further, participants were informed

- That the responses collected are confidential.
- That only the minimum amount of personal information necessary is sought.
- How the data are collected.
- How the questionnaire results are processed.
- Who, in addition to me, have access to the data collected.
- How respondents can access their responses to correct or edit their answers.
- How respondents can contact the researcher.

Participants were invited to visit the questionnaire home page, which outlines and provides general information about the research (e.g., purpose, procedures, risks and benefits, invasion of privacy, and confidentiality).

Summary

A researcher applying phenomenology is concerned with the experiences of the people (Guignon, 2012; Reeves et al. 2008). Achieving balance at home, work, social events, and religious commitments can become a juggling act. Further, attempts to achieve home and work balance equally can create adverse effects and conflict in various domains if not handled properly and as individual entities. The research methods and findings contribute to the existing WFB and FWAs literature on the positive and negative effects of attaining balance in work and home domains.

The purpose of the study was to explore how flexible work arrangements assisted employees in meeting work and family obligations. Common and unique situations that create conflict as it relates to time spent between work and home have been identified. The goal was to discover if there is an intervention medium, specifically, FWAs, that could assist households to achieve work and family balance. The significance of this study demonstrates to organizations that policies and programs geared towards WFB reduce WFC. The dichotomy of WFB and FWAs further attracts and retains highly-skilled workers, reduces or lower employee stress, increase organizational profits, contribute to economic stability in society, and increases employee loyalty.

Positive or negative results could well impact social change. The findings may determine that FWAs decrease WFC and contribute to WFB. Results could demonstrate that instituting FWAs relieves employees and employers of work constraints, reduce health and stress-related issues, as well as provide more time and opportunity to participate in other areas that will positively impact society. Chapter 4 includes a

discussion of findings from FTF interviews and the on-line questionnaire in response to primary research questions.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to report the analysis of the data collected and used to answer the central research questions:

1. How do FWAs increase or decrease the balance between home and work domains?
2. What is the ideal alternative work arrangement that will assist in balancing both domains?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of FWAs?

A confidential, online questionnaire and face-to-face interviews were the instruments that I used to collect information. The interviews were semi-structured, which means that the questions, although prepared in advance, are of open nature which allowed for freedom in the answers. They were also semi-standardized, meaning that all informants were asked approximately the same questions, with some variation also taking place, depending on the answers given by the informant to previous questions (Coenen & Kok, 2014). Walden IRB approved all data collection methods (IRB Approval #09-26-14-0112012) to undertake the needed research.

Participant Background

I chose this organization because it offers FWAs to assist employees in achieving balance in home and work domains. Employees represented a variety of professions, offered a broad range of ages, diverse cultures, moderate to high-income levels, benefits

package (healthcare), and encompassed employees from non-traditional households. Societally, there are commonalities and experiences that are shared irrespectively of culture, gender, economic status, religion, occupation, or marital status. In Chapter 4, I explored how FWAs impacted the lives of men and women that work for a Midwest defense contractor. Participants had various work and household situations and agreed to share their experiences managing their dual roles. Criteria, for selecting participants, consisted of employees that may have elder care/childcare issues, single parents, dual-income families, and ranged from ages 22 through 70. Demographic questions were included within the content of the questionnaire and face-to-face interviews to gather and confirm these data (see Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1

Face-to-Face Interview Participant Demographics

	Age	Race	Marital status	Children	Childcare/ Elder Care Issues	Occupation	Income level
Male							
Interviewee 1	50	Caucasian	Married	2	Yes	Engineer	\$150,000K +
Interviewee 2	48	African American	Married	2	Yes	Material spec	\$75,000 +
Interviewee 3	56	Caucasian	Married	2	No	Buyer	\$75,000 +
Interviewee 4	44	Caucasian	Married	2	Yes	Material analyst	\$75,000 +
Female							
Interviewee 5	40	Caucasian	Married	2*	Yes	Financial analyst	\$100,000 +**
Interviewee 6	49	African American	Married	***	No	Security specialist	\$100,000 +**
Interviewee 7	36	Caucasian	Single	1	Yes	Buyer	\$75,000 +
Interviewee 8	50	Hispanic	Single	***	Yes	Buyer	\$75,000 +
Interviewee 9	55	African American	Single	***	No	Financial analyst	\$75,000 +
Interviewee 10	42	Caucasian	Married	0	Yes	Engineer	\$100,000 +**
Interviewee 11	49	African American	Married	3	No	Material planner	\$100,000 +**
Interviewee 12	49	Caucasian	Married	1	Yes	Program analyst	\$150,000 +**
Interviewee 13	45	African American	Single	1	Yes	Buyer	\$75,000 +
Interviewee 14	38	Caucasian	Married	3*	Yes	Buyer	\$75,000 +

Note. *Special needs. **Combined income. ***Adult children.

Table 2

Online Questionnaire Participant Demographics

Variable	Frequency
Gender	
Male	6
Female	22
Age range	
25-34	5
35-44	4
55-64	6
65+	1
Race	
African American	8
Caucasian	19
Asian	1
Marital Status	
Married	18
Divorced	6
Single	4
Occupation	
Manager	3
Financial Analysts	3
Buyer	13
Administrative	3
Production (Union)	2
Production (Non-Union)	2
Income Level	
\$25-50K	2
\$50-75K	3
\$75-100K	11
\$100K+	13

Recruitment

I contacted participants through personal emails, text messages, and social media (e.g., LinkedIn). A Letter of Invitation (see Appendix A), Consent Form (see Appendix B), Confidentiality Agreement (see Appendix C), and a link to the online questionnaire was provided. Consent forms were signed and acknowledged by all that contributed to this data collection. FTF interviewees were provided hard copies of consent the form and offered a copy for their files. A tertiary means of contact were personal communication with potential research participants. For example, while attending a retirement luncheon, several employees were discussing issues about having enough time to attend such events. I engaged in the discussion about the research study and asked if they would be interested in taking the questionnaire or being interviewed. For those who expressed interest, their email addresses were secured and a link to the questionnaire was forwarded.

Of the 59 participants whom I invited to partake, 48 responded. However, only 27 responded to all questions. FTF interviews were requested online and individually by researcher to ensure a diverse group of participant input. Of the 19 people who were invited to be interviewed FTF, 14 actual interviews were conducted and recorded for clarity and member-checking. Interviewees were also invited to take part in the online questionnaire since the data collected online was more extensive and requested more whoinformation than was asked during the interview process. Appendix D is a compilation of all questions presented to participants.

My goal was to choose participants who meet the criteria and willing to share their WFB experiences. The sample size is representative enough to conduct a valid, credible study. There is a point of diminishing return to a qualitative sample—as the study goes on more data does not necessarily lead to more information (Ritchie, Elam, & Lewis, 2003). This was the case for the FTF interviews conducted. As the interview process proceeded, identical and similar data were indicative that a point of saturation was becoming imminent. Based on similar qualitative studies, the online questionnaire coupled with the FTF interviews has provided sufficient data.

Limitations of Participant Selection

There are several limitations to participant selection this study. Senior level, management personnel were omitted due to their high-income levels. Research indicates that higher income earners experience less work and family balance issues because of their abilities to have stay-at-home spouses, can afford au pairs, live in nannies/babysitters, and have sufficient income to support part-time and full-time childcare. A further limitation was that very few males responded and a clear picture of their work and family balance issues were not fairly represented. Across the spectrum of those in employment, working fathers are most likely to experience conflict with employers' expectations of high presenteeism, due to their desires to invest more time in their children's upbringing (Burnett et al. 2010; Lewis & Cooper, 2005; Swan & Cooper, 2005).

Data from participants in the age range of 22-35 are also minimal. Those most likely to begin families or have younger children could provide information relevant to

how millennials perceive balancing work and family obligations. In early adulthood (age 18-30), individuals focus on their identity (Erikson, 1968), which manifests through such tasks as furthering their education, beginning a career, or starting a family (Evans & Bartolome, 1984; McDaniels & Gysbers, 1992).

Methodology and Instrumentation

I chose to conduct a qualitative study. The goal was to capture experiences of everyday everyday people who face challenges with family and work-related issues. Research topics involved questions that consider how and why people do what they do or how they feel or interact when faced with choices in work and family-related situations. The questions were developed to collect data that describes participant experiences with FWAs and how it affects home and work responsibilities and obligations. Demographic data were collected to identify those backgrounds or circumstances that show similarity, themes, or patterns in lifestyles.

Data Collection

An online questionnaire entitled The Better Work-Life Balance (2005) administered for this study consisted of 59 questions related to participant work environments, knowledge of their FWAs organizational policies, and use of FWAs. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section I requested participants to check the appropriate response according to three choices: *yes*, *no*, and *don't know* in response to their knowledge of their FWAs organizational policies. Section II requested participants to check the appropriate box to indicate the importance and use of FWAs given the four choices: *very important*, *important*, *not important*, and *don't know*. Section III was a

combination of questions and statements encompassing work environment, use of FWAs, WFB, and management support of these efforts. Choices of responses were: *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *uncertain*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. There were comment boxes available to share additional information under each section.

Summary of Findings

Online Questionnaire Results

The purpose of this chapter was to explore how FWAs assisted employees in meeting work and family obligations. The online questionnaire results show that 63% of the respondents have not seen or received a copy of the organization's FWAs policies. Fifty-two percent of the respondents did not know if the organization has written copies of the policies; 41% of the respondents did not know when and how employees can use the organization's policies; and 48% suggested they did not understand when and how these policies pertain to them as employees. Results showed that 37% of employees believe the organization makes it difficult to use the FWAs policies, and when trying to balance work and family responsibilities, 44% of participants find it is easier to work things out with colleagues than to get management involved. Results further demonstrate that not all levels of management apply the WFB policies in the same manner; it is subjective to management discretion versus an overall organizational mandate to be used equally in all departments. One respondent stated, "It's a win-win situation for both company and family" (Online respondent, R002, 2015). Another participant emphasized:

I felt that family was not a priority. If you were not sitting at a desk, you were not billable to the customer, and therefore anytime you were not there, they expected

to use vacation or make up the time. Doctor appointments were expected to be on off-Fridays. Personal time was in a written policy, but God forbid you try to use it. I had to use vacation time for a friend's funeral. My friend was laid off after being targeted for leaving for prenatal appointments and picking up sick children from daycare – they had a six page document for all of her coming and going, and sat her across from someone that would keep tabs on her. She eventually got laid off after being denied part-time in her attempt to balance her home and work life. My decision to have children was based on how mothers were treated, and I resent the company for that. Just having a 9/80 schedule does not mean that you have a life – in fact, I would get home so late that I could not accomplish anything and spent the off day just catching up. Not to mention the mandatory 10% or 20% or 50% overtime that I have been forced to do many times. (Online respondent, R003, 2015)

A third participant stated:

The obligation for a balanced work/life experience is not only on the company, but on the employee. Building trust with management is the key; those who work hard and are conscientious are more trusted than those who waste time and then ask for time off or reduced workloads when personal issues arise. (Online respondent, R004, 2015).

Face-to-Face Interview Demographics

I conducted 14 FTF interviews consisting of eleven females and four males.

Three meetings took place at mutually selected restaurants where the ambience and the

environment was not distracting to the participants or myself; eleven were conducted at the researcher's home office. Their ages ranged from 37 to 55, and their occupations were in the areas of engineering, supply chain management, defense security, administrative assistant, and were married, single, or divorced.

All interviewees had children or eldercare responsibilities. The interview times ranged from 15 minutes to 40 minutes depending upon the questions and digitally recorded. All questions were pre-approved by Walden IRB and research committee.

Questions were centered on FWAs and how the benefit assisted or hindered work and home relationships. Additional questions discussed the participant use of FWAs and what would they do to change or amend the current policy. A complete listing of questions and subtopics are found in Appendix E.

FTF Interview Results

Interview results have been condensed and paraphrased due to the extensive exchanges between myself and the interviewees. Critical responses and elements are included that suggest balance, imbalance, work-family conflict, or other relevant data conducive to the research questions and goal. Respondents are listed according to assigned file numbers that I coded.

Interview 1: Male, Caucasian, 50, engineer, one child. FWAs did not affect him because his management position required him to work 12-16 hours daily regardless of the organizational policy. He had a stay-at-home wife, and she handled the majority of household duties. Due to the job demands and extensive travel and hours worked, the one area where he suffered was his ability to assist his daughter with homework. He

missed the interaction with his child and now helps with homework over the phone. Grades diminished since they did not share the time and physical interaction. His home life suffered because of his job demands.

Although the impact was not so great for him, in his management position, he oversaw 300 employees and saw how it affected his employees. One of his key employees was contemplating leaving the organization because of his inability to balance both domains. He further stated that many of his employees have approached him considering taking other jobs for less money because of their inability to balance home and work, and the flexibility in time is not enough. The organization as a whole was experiencing a very high attrition rate, and he believed it was due to the inability to work from home because of the organization's current FWAs policy.

He was in agreement with his employees that the organizational FWAs are not enough. He recommended more flexibility in time schedule and telecommuting or the ability to work from home. He also stated that the organization is implementing a pilot telecommuting program to see if it will reduce the attrition rate, increase employee morale, and reduce absenteeism. He does not believe the pilot program will go over very well because it is very rigid, only selected employees will be eligible, very strict criteria, and not widely accepted by management.

Due to his years and position in the organization, the current FWAs policy, unlike his employees, would not be a predominant factor for him to leave the company. The ideal arrangement to suit his work and family needs is to establish a telecommuting environment.

Interview 2: Female, Caucasian, 38, buyer, three children. She stated it was imperative to have a flexible schedule for convenience purposes. Her husband is a stay-at-home father. A flexible schedule allowed her to assist her husband at home with the children, schedule doctor appointments on her day off, do grocery shopping, clean the home, attend and allowed her to volunteer at the children's schools and sports activities. She likes the convenience of coming in early and leaving early (with management approval). Her level of stress was significantly reduced because of the FWAs benefit. If FWAs were not available, she would seek another job.

The consequences for her was that she has often had to work on weekends and work late to make up time. FWAs' schedule, although convenient, has caused conflict in the marriage. One reason for the conflict is that her husband bears the responsibility for childcare issues. When she works late and weekends, her husband harbors animosity, which, creates arguments and conflict. In addition, she rushes to and from work because she has a one-hour commute to and from work. She has had car accidents and received tickets trying to get to work or when going home. Much of this has subsided since she is now under a new manager. Her previous manager stated, "since your husband stays home, he should bear the responsibilities of all home situations, i.e. arranging doctor appointments, attending school events, taking children to sports activities, etc."

She further stated that her use of FWAs under the previous manager was brought up at her mid-year and yearly reviews. She believed it is held against her for promotions, job assignments, and salary raises. She had also experienced many health ailments

(anxiety attacks, depression, stomach problems). Her current manager is more positive with her use of FWAs. Her ideal situation was to telecommute and have a flexible work schedule. She stated FWAs increases balance at home and work.

Interview 3: Female, African-American, 45, single-parent, one child. The organizational FWAs policy for this interviewee was not conducive to her time schedule. She described her work and home situation and began to discuss that she has one son that started school later than other regular school times. As a result, she had to assure that he was at the bus line on time and then she proceeded to work. Her commute to work was one hour both ways. She further stated that her parents are elderly and lived quite a distance from her, and her son's father was not consistent with his word or dependable. Her situation caused high-stress levels, anxiety, depression, weight loss, and social withdrawal. She also stated that the safety of her son was "a high emotional roller coaster" since he had to walk home from the bus line and was home alone for at least two hours. Her primary concern was no parental supervision. She further discussed how leaving a 12-year-old alone is asking for trouble. She trusts that her son will do the right thing (i.e., homework, fix a snack until she got home to cook, and do his chores).

The worry and anxiety began to show in her productivity at work. Her remedy was to go to the human resources department to discuss her working on the off-Friday so her son would not be at home so long by himself. She stated that Human Resources management was supportive, but the decision was up to her direct management. She followed the directions from HR to request the adjustment to her schedule through her manager, but it fell upon deaf ears. Her immediate manager failed to address the

situation, and that was the end of her attempt to reach a mutual resolution. She says that her son would be in high school next year, and she would just continue with the stress and anxiety. Her ideal work situation would be telecommuting, and a one-day a week rotation schedule within department. Even with these intense situations, she says that FWAs do increase balance in her household and work domains.

Interview 4: Female, Caucasian, 49, financial analyst, one child, part-time employee. Having FWAs were beneficial to this interviewee. It allowed her to take and pick her son up from school daily and not have to utilize latchkey services. It also allowed her to care for her elderly father who suffers from early signs of dementia. She stated that her husband frequently travels so having FWAs afforded her the opportunity to handle household responsibilities and well as perform eldercare duties. According to this interviewee, “having a flexible schedule has saved our family from spending money on latchkey. The money we save goes towards my son’s college education.”

In contrast, although she liked working under FWAs, she also experienced disadvantages. Working a flexible schedule, she works from home daily. She estimates that she works 60-70 hours, suffers from high anxiety and stress, and confirms that her workload is not conducive for a part-time employee. She further stated that since she takes advantage of the FWAs, she had not received a promotion or career advancement. Her direct manager is supportive of FWAs possibly because the manager’s wife works part-time. However, her upper-level management “jokingly” asked when she is coming back to work full-time, and she interpreted a hidden message in the upper management’s context. In addition, she stated that the long working hours at home creates high family

conflict. Her husband argued that “if you are a part-time worker, why do you work so many hours---and are not being paid?” Her son often sarcastically mimics her work-related stress and anxiety.

Her suggestion of the ideal work situation was the implementation of telecommuting. The interviewee also stated that having FWAs increases WFB. If FWAs were not available, she would seek other employment.

Interview 5: Male, Caucasian, 44, IRM/accounting *analyst*, *twin daughters*.

This interviewee stated that FWAs was an organizational policy on paper only. I asked him to explain this statement. He currently had childcare and eldercare issues. In addition, his travel commute, in good weather, was approximately 90 minutes one-way. He stated the FWAs policy was intended as one of assistance to the employee, but more of a benefit to the company in terms of higher work demands and increased productivity. He further stated the demands of work and family were not considered as separate entities and are destructive to the family structure. The long commute, working hours, and time away from family had created an extremely stressful situation in his home. More household and childcare responsibilities were placed on his wife, and often led to intense arguments. In addition, his parents are both elderly and require his attention often. When he asked for more flexibility and fewer job responsibilities, the request was denied, and then cited as a negative in his mid-year and yearly reviews. Prior to accepting this job, the subject was laid off and out of work for a significant time. He does not feel comfortable enough to continue to voice his concerns, so he accepted the conflict in both domains.

Ideally, this study participant would like to have the opportunity to have a flexible work schedule, compressed workweek work, and the chance to work from home occasionally. Although his FWAs' organizational policy does not truly assist balance in his home and work domains, he would have to seek another job if the policy were not available. He concluded by asserting FWAs increase WFB.

Interview 6: Female, Hispanic, 50, senior buyer, adult children. This study participant did not take advantage of the FWAs because of the relatively high number of hours she worked weekly, and her manager did not have issues with her leaving early or coming in late. She considered FWAs-beneficial to both employer and employee. Her workload was extremely heavy. She worked seven days a week, and often comes in early to accommodate her clientele/suppliers who are often in a different time zone. She is extremely loyal to the organization and her clients. She stated that FWAs had no impact on her home or work life and did not reflect on her career path or pay scale. She further stated that she would not seek another job because of the organization's FWAs policy, however if she were to find another job, a flexible work schedule would be an asset. Her ideal alternative work arrangement would encompass compressed work schedule and telecommuting.

Interview 7: Male, African American, 48, material analyst, two children. FWAs are crucial to this subject's home and work environments. He liked having the freedom to come in early and leave early in order to handle household situations. He indicated that rarely does he face conflict in schedules with work and home situations. On occasion, he had to choose home over work as it pertains to childcare issues; but

without FWAs, adversity in his home and work situations would be highly-stressful. If FWAs were not available, he would seek employment within an organization that offers FWAs or an alternative work schedule.

He further stated that his ideal alternative work arrangement was telecommuting. He believed telecommuting was a way to sustain family responsibilities and to show loyalty to the company. In contrast, he also believed the benefit of telecommuting would require working more hours, and may cause some conflict in the home domain. Overall, he stated that having FWAs increases WFB.

Interview 8: Male, Caucasian, 56, supply chain section manager, adult children. During the interview, this study participant felt that having FWAs should be standard in organizations. Although he was comfortable with his current organization and did not plan to seek other employment, he would be skeptical if another companies did not offer an alternative work arrangement. His overall feeling was that a benefit of FWAs is a happy and productive employee, as well as an advantage for attracting new talent.

I inquired if he had experienced any conflict in either his home or work situations as a result of organizational FWAs policies. He did concede that conflicts in his and his wife's work schedule did contribute to minor confrontations. To get the participant to share information further, I then asked what he considered the ideal FWAs. He then started to discuss what he felt was an actual flexible policy, suggesting that adjustments in starting and ending times, as well as flexibility in lunch schedules, would be advantageous. He gave an example relative to getting his hair cut during his lunch hour

and at times, when he was late coming back from lunch. If he was able to use his lunch hour as part of the flexible schedule, he would have fewer “bad haircuts” due to his rushing of his stylist. This interview required more guidance towards answering the questions directly and goading the participant to elaborate more on his responses. Once he started discussing his haircut situation, he opened up more about not having FWAs as being unfair to spouses and families, especially to those who had young children. He further elaborated on how having options in starting and ending times was always a good thing as long as you did not take advantage of the benefit. He had no interest in working from home.

After listening to this participant’s ideas about flexibility and work arrangements, I reiterated one of the central questions: “Do FWAs increase, decrease, or have no impact on balancing work and family domains?” He stated that although he had not realized how important it is having FWAs’ benefit, he believed that FWAs do increase WFB because of the freedom he has to alter his work schedule to meet family and personal obligations.

Interview 9: Female, Caucasian, 40, financial analyst, two children (both with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)). The interview with this person was one of the most intense of all that were conducted. Although she takes advantage of the flexible start times, she stated the benefit was to the organization and not the employee. She had both childcare and eldercare issues. Her children, husband, and father have medical issues that require a supportive wife, mother, and daughter. Her husband has a minor challenge with attention deficit disorder (ADD), but her children have more severe

afflictions. In addition, her father suffers from Alzheimer's disease. She is a joint caretaker of her father and needed to be available to address his issues when they arose.

When asked if she feels that the FWAs assist her in meeting the above responsibilities, she indicated that it was "frowned upon" to take advantage of this benefit. She passionately described how she seldom could attend her children's school or outside activities. She further detailed how her daughter (age 8) was unable to walk for seven weeks and the negative feedback received from her management as a result of spending time at the hospital. She further indicated how she spent 10 to 12 hours at work, and often worked from home to assure her job responsibilities were not neglected. She stated that she survived this very intense time because her husband also had FWAs and can support his family responsibilities without retribution or repercussions. She also stated that she does not feel she overtly suffers repercussions because she is recognized as a loyal employee. The participant went on to discuss the favoritism of males over females in her department. Male co-workers, although tasked to pull their own weight and adhere to the time mandates, did not honor the policy. Management often reiterates what time to be in the office and that no one was allowed to leave work before 4:15 p.m. regardless of how many hours may have been worked during the week. From her perspective, it was inherently aimed at females.

She then began to elaborate on the drawbacks of the FWAs' policy, and further reiterated that the policy was on paper only. Employees were afraid to use the policy because of repercussions. Although it is an overall organizational policy, it was implemented at management discretion. She was afraid to apply for other career

advancement opportunities for fear of how another department implements the flexibility policy.

She then began to discuss the “secret” pilot program that allowed selected individuals to work from home. This pilot program was offered only to selected individuals and secretly discussed (if you are not a part of the program, you are not supposed to know that it exists). Criteria, however, and other attributes excluded the basic employee. The program is a failure, in her eyes, because only selected grade levels are eligible and have the tools to take advantage of the program. Although she has the tools, she had not been formally sanctioned to work from home.

I then steered the conversation towards how her job situation affects her home domain. She stated her home was a very stressful environment, and there was high marital strife. One of the main problems, she stated, was that she and her husband have very different views on work ethics and work flexibility. His flexible work schedule is very accommodating to family responsibilities, resulting in his handling of more family-related issues. This places more responsibility on the care of medical issues with their children on him, and he was more resentful towards her. She is currently being treated for depression and stress. She attributes this to the inability to balance her home and work responsibilities. The participant’s ideal alternative work arrangement was to omit the day off under the FWAs policy and allow employees to work a minimum of two days a week from home. She stated that this would allow her more time with family and would eliminate the long commute to and from work.

Despite the obstacles, it was very evident from this interview that the participant was very loyal to the organization and had a high work ethic. She stated that the FWAs' policy did increase her WFB; and that if the company did not have the benefit, she would seek another job. She further stated that until employees felt they could utilize the FWAs' policy, attrition would continue. She added that most employees were not leaving the company for money; rather they are seeking better flexible benefits. Her closing comments centered on a judgment that the company was genuinely trying to assist families with balancing work and family, but "failing terribly" in its attempts.

Interview 10: Female, Caucasian, 36, purchasing agent, one child. This participant takes advantage of the FWAs' policy and found it beneficial and accommodating to assist with childcare responsibilities. She is divorced and shares custody with her ex-husband. Her management allowed her to make up her hours, including working through lunch and weekends to accommodate her custody agreement. Using the FWAs, assistance from her parents, and support of other parents, she has been able to meet her job and home obligations. However, she stated FWAs had negatively impacted her pay raises, promotion, job responsibilities, and career advancement. Her ideal alternative work arrangement was to have the option to work from home. Her commute to and from work in good weather is one hour; in bad weather, it has taken three hours or more. Although she stated that FWAs increased her ability to balance work and family, she feels FWAs were more beneficial to the company than to her family. However, without this benefit, she would have to find another job that offer FWAs.

Interview 11: Female, African-American, 49, material planner, three children. Both spouses in this household have FWAs. However, this participant stated that there was a severe imbalance in her household. Her husband has a more lenient flexible work schedule than what is offered to her, but his frequent traveling disrupts the family domain. She takes advantage of her FWAs' benefit as a backup to her husband's lenient schedule. She saw the ability to start work early and leave early as advantageous because it gave her time to attend to matters other than childcare. Getting the children back and forth to school solely rested on her husband. Her flexible start time enabled her to drop off and pickup children if required.

Being a union employee, the participant was not regulated by the same rules as management employees. The benefit is the same, but the consequences are not. She is on a different pay scale, not subject to reviews for pay increases, and seeks career advancement only by choice. She would not experience any repercussions as long as she adhered to her designated start and end times. She stated her disadvantage was her desire not to leave the union and become a management employee because she was unsure how the shift would affect her home life. However, without the flexibility, more responsibilities would fall on her husband; and she would seek other employment. Her ideal situation was to work from home, with a compressed work schedule and flexibility in start and end times. When I reiterated the central question of how FWAs assist in balancing work and family, the participant stated that it had no impact.

Interview 12: Female, African-American, 49, defense security specialist, two children. This participant felt having FWAs was beneficial with both advantages and

disadvantages. The ability to choose when your day starts and ends was advantageous because it allowed her to participate in sports activities; attend exercise classes; further her education; and set appointments on her day off. The disadvantages were working longer hours, more time spent in traffic, and less time with family. During this line of questioning, I asked if the FWAs' policy has created conflict in her home domain. She stated that it increased the balance in her home resulting in her children becoming more independent and responsible. Her ideal alternative work arrangement would encompass flextime, a compressed workweek, job sharing, and telecommuting. Alternating days off in lieu of "off-Fridays" would also be good." If FWAs were not available, she would seek other employment.

She suggested that management embrace the policy more organizationally. She had not seen overt repercussions by taking advantage of the FWAs, but felt there was a strong disconnect with implementation of the FWAs policies and management.

Interview 13: Female, Caucasian, 42, engineer, no children. Interviewee 13 stated that she was in a unique situation when it came to FWAs policies. Because she does not have children, eldercare issues, and her husband owns his own business, she uses the FWAs benefit for personal and social reasons. She was very active in her church and participated in many sports-related activities. A FWAs policy afforded her the opportunity to partake in her athletic responsibilities before reporting to work. She also stated a very good rapport exists between her and management and had not experienced repercussions or adversities in her use of FWAs. She believed the amicable relationship exists between her and management due to her loyalty to the organization and her job.

She had yet to experience any issues if she wanted to leave early during the day. However, she also stated that she often came to work before the mandated 6:00 a.m. as established by the FWAs' policy, and remained at work longer than the 4:00 p.m. departure time.

The organizational FWAs' policy increases her WFB, and she did not desire to seek employment elsewhere. When asked what she felt was the ideal alternative work arrangement, she responded, "we have it." I further asked if she felt telecommuting might be an option. She responded, for the engineering field, it would not work. This, in turn, posed the question if she felt that FWAs should be job specific. In her opinion, engineers should be physically available because engineering is a "hands-on" occupation. After discussing the different types of alternative work arrangements, her overall comment was that "as long as you get your work done, [you] do what works for you." FWAs increases WFB in her household to do such simple tasks as running errands and running marathons.

Interview 14: Female, Caucasian, 37, procurement analyst, part-time employee, three children. FWAs have had a negative impact on her job, health, and family, according to this respondent. She stated that the use of FWAs was "frowned upon" and felt she had been penalized because she takes advantage of the policy. She felt it had been detrimental for career advances and raises. She referred to FWAs as "jail time." Her taking advantage of the flexible hours was mentioned in her mid-year and yearly employee review and she further stated that the company did not provide

assistance in trying to maintain a strong family and remain a loyal employee simultaneously.

She will not leave the company, because she is a part time employee. This is mainly due to the high pay scale for a part-time employee. However, she would not seek full-time employment at her current company. When and if she does seek a full-time job, that decision would be based on work flexibility. Her ideal work arrangement is for flexible work policy implementation to be used as an organizational policy company-wide, not used at management discretion. FWAs had a negative impact on her job and home life and often the cause of problems in her marriage.

In summary, the interviewees in this study agree that FWAs are beneficial and increase WFB. However, repercussions in the form of longer working hours, more job demands, health-related issues, hindrance in career advancement, and pay raises are also associated with FWAs. The following section describes data gathering techniques, interpretation, and analysis. Themes and patterns were also identified which were found by both data gathering instruments.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

I collected data over a 3-month period using both an online questionnaire and FTF interviews data collection instruments. Survey Monkey was the instrument used to upload the online questionnaire and collect data. NVIVO software was also used to assist with data analysis. Keywords and phrases were queried in NVIVO (i.e., family-balance, flexible work schedules, childcare, home and work management, for example, to search for themes, similarities, patterns, and open-ended responses). Demographic background

information and FTF interview audio was also uploaded into NVIVO to further search for themes, patterns, and similarities. Personal, methodology, and theoretical notes were compared with interviews and the online questionnaire to develop the findings.

Central research questions used in both formats from the two different data collection techniques are as follows:

1. How do FWAs increase or decrease a balance between home and work domains?
2. What is the ideal alternative work arrangement that will assist in balancing both domains?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of FWAs?

Responses that I deemed as important, significant, and problematic are as follows:

1. Organization has implemented a flexible work schedule policy. The majority of respondents did not know about it, have not seen it, or do not understand it.
2. Employees were afraid to use the benefit because they are fearful of repercussions.
3. Although the benefit is to assist employees with balancing work and family, FWAs are creating more stress, work –family conflict, and imbalance in families.
4. The majority of respondents utilize the benefit in some capacity; generally, the start and end work time schedule option.
5. The policy is an organizational mandate, but disseminated and instituted at manager discretion.

6. A secret pilot telecommuting program was implemented, but is not available to lower management employees.
7. Job demands have significantly increased, and the majority of employees work longer hours during the day and on weekends.
8. High attrition rate rates will continue until implementation of FWAs reflect employee home balancing needs and are used organizationally versus only departmentally.
9. Despite obstacles with the FWAs' policies, employees are loyal to the organization, have high work ethics, and are satisfied with their jobs.

In a reiteration of this study's purpose, I sought to explore if there are commonalities within households that create conflict as it relates to time spent between work and home. In addition, a core question must again be asked: Does the benefit of work flexibility retain current employees, attract available new talent, maintain employee loyalty, create less stressful home and work environments, and have satisfied employees? Galinski et al. (2013), and Aumann et al. (2011) suggested that FWAs increase WFB. Their findings, however, came with both positive and negative consequences.

Key Findings

Research findings suggest there are advantages of having FWAs. Participant experiences indicate the following benefits:

- More time to partake in social and pleasurable experiences away from work
- Choices of start and end work times

- More convenient scheduling of appointments (employees have every other Friday as a day off)
- Three-to-four consecutive days off when holidays are celebrated on Mondays or Fridays.
- Greater facility in meeting childcare and elder care responsibilities
- Key disadvantages of working within a flexible schedule-for some participants were:
 - Higher job demands
 - Longer working hours
 - Decreased family time
 - Stress-related health issues
 - Stifled career advancement
 - Marital strife

Employees found FWAs beneficial despite the disadvantages, and most assert they would seek other employment opportunities if FWAs were not available.

Emerging Themes

The following themes, advantages, and disadvantages were identified with the use of FWAs as shown in Figure 2. The themes and patterns identified the following.

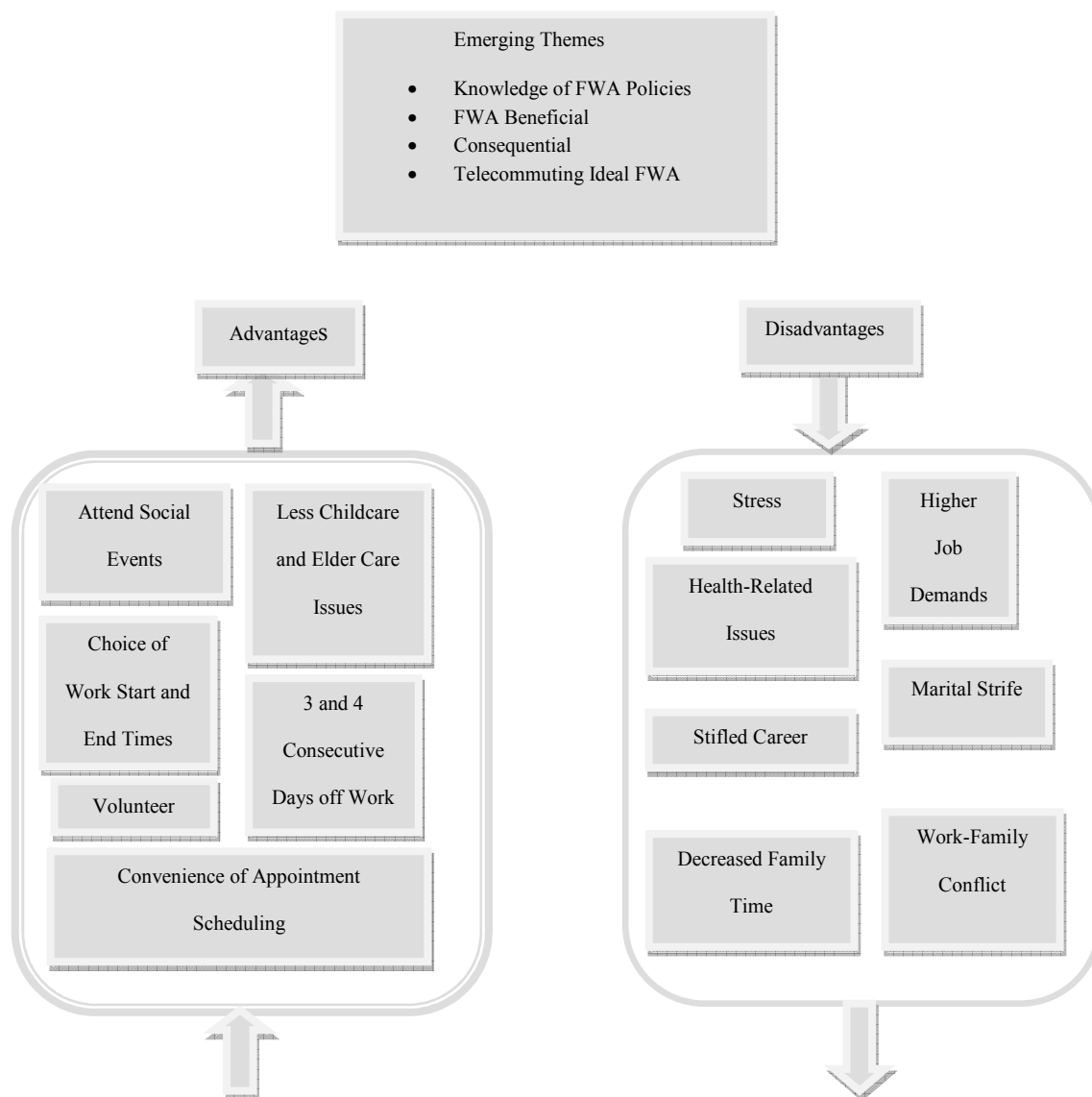


Figure 2. FWA's emerging themes.

Relationship to organizational policy. Fourteen (14) people or 52% did not know if the company had written FWAs policies; Seventeen (17) or 63% had not seen a copy of the policy, and thirteen (13) individuals or 48% did not understand the policy. Employees more familiar with the plan agree that is not applied the same throughout the organization and used at manager discretion.

FWAs are beneficial. It is particularly useful for parents of young children and those responsible for the care of elders. As participants discussed their use of FWAs, their use was in alignment with the organizational policy and not by their personal preferences. Many participants indicated that if FWAs were not available, they would seek other employment that did offer an alternative work schedule.

FWAs consequences. Longer work hours, career stagnation, more job demands, higher stress levels, and conflicts at home are sometimes experienced with FWAs; and they outweigh the benefits.

Ideal alternative work arrangements. Many of the participants had long commutes to and from work. The preferred, ideal work arrangement is the freedom to work from home at least one day a week, with more days granted in the event of bad weather or sick children. Those participants who did not have long commutes agreed that telecommuting should be a viable option. Most participants felt they would be more productive and loyal to the organization if telecommuting were an available choice.

Strategies Employed to Ensure Quality Data

Four measures were taken to enhance the quality of the data:

First, observation notes were taken during the interview process and when reviewing online questions results. Indications of nervousness, comfort level, interest of subject, passion for the topic, boredom, trust, or distractions were noted during FTF interviews. Notes were categorized as methodology notes, personal notes, and theoretical notes as suggested by Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2004). Second, credibility, confirmability, transferability, and dependability criteria as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as a crucial technique for establishing credibility and validity was applied individually to research topic. Research questions fulfilled each criterion successfully.

Third, transcribed data of what was stated during the FTF interview were provided to interviewees. Researcher afforded opportunities to verify the information and ensure interpretations of transcribed data were correct as part of the member-checking process. Member-checking confirms data, interpretations and conclusions are in alignment with participant testimony (Curtin & Fossey, 2007; Doyle, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Fourth, the interpretations of findings were discussed with participants and peers to ensure truth, sustenance, and value of data and information to society. The following section identifies significant findings and how they relate to previous and current spillover, boundary, border, and work-family conflict theories.

Links to the Literature Theories

Spillover Theory

Spillover theory suggests work life and family life greatly influence one another negatively or positively. Prior studies have shown that job demands are associated with

negative outcomes for workers, such as work-to-family conflict (e.g., Boyar, Maertz, Mosley, & Carr, 2008; O’Driscoll, Brough, Kalliath, Jones, Burke, & Westman, 2006) and noted that among job demands, time-based (e.g., number of hours worked) and strain-based predictors (e.g., work overload) have received the most attention. When employees are overwhelmed by job demands or lack crucial job resources, permeable work and non-work boundaries may allow these work experiences to spill over and negatively affect other areas of life (Grotto & Lyness, 2010). Interview participants 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, and 14 exhibited high indicators for experiencing negative spillover bi-directionally. These participants are challenged daily with work overload, job demands, childcare issues, and other family responsibilities and struggle with separating work life from home life resulting in this negative spillover effect. Negative spillover exists when experiences from one domain inhibit the fulfillment of demands in another domain (Allen, 2012).

Grotto and Lyness (2010) found that with or without controls for employee demographic characteristics, job demands, job resources, and organizational supports were related to employees’ reported experiences of negative work-to-nonwork spillover. However, their study found that job complexity and the availability of FWAs improved the work and family dynamic.

Findings from this study conclude, as suggested by King et al. (2009), future research should continue to identify elements of work and home that can assist to optimize positive spillover and help minimize negative spillover.

Work-Family Conflict

A common theme found among employees is the implementation of the FWAs' policy and its discretionary use. Although "abusive" is a harsh term for this discretionary use, it is indicative from study participants that managerial bias exists or an inherent abuse of power is imminent. Tepper (2000) found that abusive supervision relates to WFC. Hoobler and Brass (2006) also argued that after abused subordinates leave the workplace they return home to displace their aggression by engaging in family undermining behaviors as perceived by their partner. They theorized that subordinates are "put down" by their supervisors and then are motivated to "put down" others in the family domain. Participants 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, and 14 revealed their job demands, stress, and non-supportive management have spilled over to their home domains resulting in impatience with children and spouses that are indicators of WFC.

Researchers have yet to conceptualize and examine the process through which a subordinate's experience of abusive supervision spills over and crosses over into the family domain in a meaningful way (Carlson, Ferguson, Perrewe, & Whitten, 2011). Findings suggest that lack of supervisory or management support, intense job demands, childcare and eldercare issues, and abuse of power are clear indicators of a negative cross-over experience.

FTF interview participants 1, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 13 have managers that support flexibility in their work schedules, implement the FWAs policy as organizationally intended, have good manager/employee relationships, and in accord with the importance of balancing work and family. These findings suggest that supportive management, implementing alternative work policies organizationally and not departmentally,

flexibility in family-related non-work issues, and embracing work and family balance policies might contribute to positive cross over from work to home domains.

The findings suggest that abusive, non-supportive management significantly influences an employee's non-work interaction negatively. Data also suggest that non-abusive management and management that support the work and family balance dynamic will have a more loyal workforce, higher productivity, and retain valuable employees. Cooperative efforts with managers may conceptualize and change the way subordinates manage crossover into non-work environments in a meaningful and positive way.

Boundary Theory

Work and family domains serve specific purposes and are separate entities and places. Research has shown that individuals have a preference or a need for a particular level of segmentation or integration of boundaries (Bulger, et al. 2007; Cho et al. 2013). The findings suggest impositions have occurred within employee home domains, and they are experiencing boundary blurring. Boundary blurring is when policy separates work and family life versus overlapping them (Hayman & Rasmussen, 2011).

Job demands and fear of utilizing FWAs has given the power and ability to manage home responsibilities to the organization for many study participants. Of the 14 FTF interviews conducted, 13 participants cited working longer and hours and spend more time working than attending to family responsibilities; the remaining FTF participant is a union employee and management policy does not affect her in the same manner. Online questionnaire results also show the average employee works 50 hours or more.

Border Theory

Work-family border theory is bi-directional in work and family and suggests more power and emphasis will partake at the border that is more dominant. Unlike spillover theory, which suggests home and work lives contribute to WFB, border theory suggests creating a balance between work and family domains. Research findings from this study are indicative of the organization being more powerful than the home domain based on job demands, hours worked, and employee loyalty.

Interview 3, 10, and 1 discussed the burnout, lower job productivity, health challenges, and stress associated with securing adequate childcare they were experiencing. This finding is in agreement with Brookins (2010), Chua and Iyengar (2006) and Iyengar & Lepper (2000) which suggested flexibility in work schedules might create adverse effects such as uncertainty to participate in flexible schedules and cognitive overload. According to Hobsor, Delunas, and Kelsic (2001), some of the most critical consequences of poor WFB include stress, stress-related illness, family strife, violence, divorce, reduced life satisfaction and substance abuse. Such consequences have been proven in research to translate into escalated absenteeism, turnover and healthcare costs, as well as reduced productivity, employee satisfaction, commitment and loyalty towards the organization – all of which negatively impact on organizational performance and, consequently, organizational profits (Rodgers & Rodgers, 1989; Thomas & Ganster, 1995).

Helping employees balance their work and family life is viewed as a social and business imperative since work-life imbalance experienced by employees negatively

impacts employers and society as a whole (Kattenbach, Demerouti, & Nachreiner, 2010). Nienhueser (2005) suggested that FWAs might not be the solution to balancing work and family. In contrast, Khan et al. (2013), Kumar et al. (2013), and Aumann et al. (2011) found FWAs beneficial to both employees and organizations. Although interviews 1, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 13 supported a more positive response to FWAs, research from this study are aligned with Nienhueser's (2005) argument. The findings are also in alignment with Downes and Koekemoer (2012) that suggest negative perceptions surrounded their use of FWAs. Online data suggests FWAs contribute to balancing work and family. Both formats, however, suggest high levels of stress, career and salary obstruction, work-family conflict, and work overload are consequences associated with FWAs.

Analysis Research Limitations

Significant limitations are evident in this research. A major limitation is The Better Work-Life Questionnaire administered has more questions that are job-related versus family-centered. Questionnaires or surveys that have an equal distribution of family and job-related questions would provide more beneficial to WFB research. A further limitation relates to the use of one particular organization in this study, which may imply that the themes identified and discussed in the research are organization and policy specific. Another limitation is there were few participants under the age of 35. The extent of how millennials perceive organizational FWAs within the organization is not explicitly captured; the median age range of participants is 35-45. Future research should target the 25-35 age range. Employees at this organization are degreed professionals and have a median income level of \$75,000-100,000. Targeting low-income earners and

those less educated is also a topic for future research studies. An all male gender study would prove beneficial, as the majority of participants are females. There is minimal research available that targets males specifically and their challenges with balancing work and family with FWAs.

Although the online questionnaire contained more work-related information than family-related information, FTF interviews provided sufficient data to confirm the online information. Limitations in the area of male respondents, although minimal, contributed significant data as they relate to issues with work and home life. In relationship to millennials, low-wage earners, and data collected from a single organization, the findings suggest FWAs are applicable to gender, small and large organizations, and occupations. The limitations stated do not undermine the research conducted because findings are in alignment with previous and current FWAs/WFB research that argued FWAs are paramount in attaining balance between work and home.

Summary

WFB literature suggests there is a dynamic between balancing work and family and FWAs. Analysis and research conducted indicate that there is a definite need for FWAs. The use of different methodologies and themes varied depending on what questions were posed and responses that I received. However, to what extent, was dependent on individual circumstances. Various studies conclude that FWAs increase organizational profits, reduce familial conflict, allowed more time for family, increase employment choices, and enhance organizational loyalty and profits. Constructs such as dual-working couples, low-income workers, students and their future career choices, and

the opportunity to work full- or part-time were used for this research. The majority of research participants concluded that family is a high priority, and career choices are often based on how corporations handle the work-to-family domain. Further, research suggests employers that offer FWAs have employees who are more inclined to stay at their place of work. Employers who do not provide some flexibility run the risk of losing valuable employees who might well seek employment at companies offering FWAs.

The findings also showed negative consequences are associated with flexibility, to include overwhelming job demands, stifled career advancement, management repercussions, and high-stress levels. Further, the findings confirmed the ability to balance work and home domains might be attributed to an organization's FWAs. However, there are indicators and factors as suggested by previous WFB theories that non-supportive management, service industries, and lower wage earners face challenges with FWAs.

Overall, I found flexible work arrangements increased WFB. The ideal alternative work arrangement is telecommuting paired with flexible starting and ending times. The advantages of FWAs are a choice of start and end times, ability for scheduling appointments conveniently, obligations for attending social functions, and increased flexibilities with childcare and elder care responsibilities. The disadvantages are higher job demands, stress-related health challenges, longer hours, management repercussions, and decreased family time. The results show employees find FWAs to be largely beneficial, but-mainly to the organization rather than the employees.

In Chapter 5, I conclude with a study summary discussion, conclusions, and recommendations for employee-organizational gain.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose the study was to explore how FWAs assisted employees in meeting work and family obligations. Data was provided from an online questionnaire and first-hand accounts through face-to-face interviews. Since one-third of adult lives are spent at work, I wanted to explore how workers balance work and home life equally. Coupled with family obligations, workers are looking for ways to handle both domains and maintain a sense of well-being. Work-family balance researchers have suggested that flexible work arrangements are instrumental in maintaining balance.

The following central research questions were addressed:

1. How do FWAs increase or decrease the balance between home and work domains?
2. What is the ideal alternative work arrangement that will assist in balancing both domains?
3. Where are the advantages and disadvantages of FWAs?

The study's methodology was qualitative to allow participants to discuss and provide information on their daily life experiences. The online questionnaire contained 59 questions, and the FTF interviews were semi-structured. Participants were full-time or part-time workers, single, married, or divorced; and they had either childcare or eldercare responsibilities.

The findings revealed that FWAs increase WFB but come with both negative and positive sequences. This chapter will discuss an interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, implications for social change, and conclusions.

Interpretation of the Findings

Previous work-family balance studies have concentrated in the area of work-family conflict with various constructs (i.e., work interference with family, family interference with work, and work-family enrichment). I focused on the use of alternative work arrangements, specifically flexible work arrangements, to address work-family conflict and work-family balance concerns.

Alternative Work Arrangements

Flextime, compressed work schedules, telecommuting, job sharing, and working reduced or part-time are types of FWAs. Two constructs, flextime and a compressed work week, were used because it is the most used alternative work arrangement (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2009; Shockley & Allen, 2012). Distinguishing between the two constructs is important because the two forms of flexibility are not interchangeable (Allen et al. 2013; Johnson, Kiburz, & Johnson, 2013). Allen et al. (2013) suggested aggregating them into a single construct may mask differential effects. For example, individuals may have the flexibility in scheduling, but are required to complete work by a specific day. Likewise, individuals may be able to complete all work on a designated day, but be required to follow a rigid time schedule.

Alternate start and end times and the ability to work from home occasionally is my interpretation of research findings. Telecommuting or working from home is the overall consensus in assisting with balancing work and home domains equally. Data reflects that more family time is high on the list of concerns and that telecommuting would achieve the goal of more time spent with family.

Work Family Conflict

Participant data shows that the conflict experienced relates to time spent at home versus time spent at work. Many individuals were experiencing high-stress levels and challenges meeting job demands. Employees felt undervalued, dissatisfied with their jobs, and were neglecting their family responsibilities. Experiences are in alignment with those observed by Bulger et al. (2007), and Clark (2000) that suggested boundaries and borders between work and family increases WFC. It is evident from the data gathered that participants face challenges with meeting work and family demands.

The data collected further shows that women focused on FWAs and family-related matters, while men were more concerned with work-related issues. Women were also willing to put in extra hours during the week and on weekends, if it meant they could attend more events involving family. Men were inclined to work extra hours for career goals and find FWAs advantageous to partake in social and sporting events. Men asserted that the benefit does allow them to share more in household and caretaking responsibilities.

Home and Work Life Impact

Also per the data, flexibility in schedules enabled workers with school-age children to report to work after dropping off children, thus lessening the burden on their spouses. The ability to choose start and end of work times was the most mentioned factor in both data collection formats, followed closely by having one day off a week. Those individuals that did not have children or childcare issues stated they were able to participate in more educational, social, and sporting activities. While enjoying more time with family and at social events, the consequences negatively impacted aspects of their lives. WFC, as argued by Nienhuser (2005) has evolved in many domains and have adverse effects with the use of FWAs.

The majority of participants stated that having FWAs increased their WFB. Few subjects indicated it had no impact. Hayman's (2010) study on flexible schedules and employee well-being demonstrated the importance of flexible work policies. He argued the negative impact of work conflict with one's personal life. In addition, these results provide confirmation that flexible schedules and working from home were associated with positive enhancement of personal life on work and vice versa.

Ideal Work Arrangements

Telecommuting, or the ability to work from home, was the overwhelming response when asked the ideal work arrangement. The ability to work from home was found to be the most advantageous, although some respondents felt it was dependent upon job occupation. For example, employees in the fields of supply chain management and finance feel they can perform their jobs from home with no difficulty, assuming, they have the needed tools. Those individuals in the area of engineering felt they needed to be

available on-site, since their field requires a more ‘hands-on’ approach. An option to combine alternative work arrangements, e.g. flexible schedule, compressed workweek, telecommuting, and rotating off days (currently employees have every other Friday off) was also referenced to further home and work-life time and equity.

When workers are given more autonomy and flexibility, they will be less taunted with stress, boredom, fatigue or work-life conflict (Barney & Elias, 2010; Hill et al., 2010), more satisfied with their job, and more committed to the organization (Kelliher & Anderson, 2008). However, telecommuting and flexible work schedules may also have negative effects as they can also lead to work intensification (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010).

Researchers have investigated the effects of telecommuting and flexible work schedules on the people involved as well as on organizational performance (Barney & Elias, 2010; Hill, Erickson, Holmes, & Ferris, 2010; Kelliher & Anderson, 2008, 2010; Ollo-Lopez, Bayo-Moriones, & Larraza-Kintana, 2010). These practices positively affect organization performance by decreasing absenteeism (Baltes et al., 1999), decreasing turnover intentions (McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2009), and improving productivity (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Ollo-Lopez et al. 2010).

Research Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. Participant income levels averaged \$75,000-100,000 annually. Income levels were more than researcher expected, and data on lower-wage earners are not available. Comparing low-income earners with higher income earners would contribute to this study by comparing similarities independent of

income level. Researchers suggests part-time and low-wage earners experience more WFC, health-related issues, and disciplinary actions from employers. For those mothers working at the lower end of the income spectrum, part-time work may be all they can obtain as employers economize on labor and benefit costs by reducing or eliminating full-time employees (Webber & Williams, 2008). With these caveats in mind, several analyses show that mothers experience a wage penalty after their first and later children, with one study placing the penalty at 7% per child (Budig & England, 2001) and another noting that the penalty is much higher among low-income mothers (Budig & Hodges, 2010).

The lack of male respondents was also a limitation in the study. Recent research argued that men experienced higher WFC and flexibility constraints than women. Although males that responded to the study contributed significantly, higher participation may have contributed knowledge from single and millennial males and their challenges with balancing work and other family or social obligations. The majority of male respondents are over 40 and married with children.

Definitions of the various types of FWAs were available for review in the online questionnaire and presented as handouts before FTF interviews were conducted. The use of two constructs (flextime and compressed workweek) to identify relationships with FWAs and WFB may be confusing to the reader. One theory may suggest measurement of appropriate constructs, while other theories suggest separation of the home and work domain is the key proponent. Shockley and Allen (2007) found work interference with family (WIF) to be a significant factor and suggest future researchers consider the

moderating effects of other variables in both domains, such as family responsibility, the organization's face-time orientation, or more individual differences reflective of both domains such as WFB self-efficacy. WFB's and FWAs' current and previous research have identified areas where additional research is needed. A few of these areas are listed in the following section.

Recommendations for Future Research

The stigma attached to individuals who seek equity in their home and work-life has proven to have adverse consequences for career progression, child-rearing, health, and marriages. Constructs in the area of WFB and FWAs would serve well if researched individually. Flexible schedules, telecommuting, and a compressed workweek, for example, should be treated as individual constructs rather than labeled as *flexible work arrangements* or *alternative work arrangements*.

Concentration in the area of how FWAs affects minor children is found to be minimal in the WFB and FWAs literature. As the workforce grows, employees seek adequate childcare institutions, and lower-paid workers face another economic challenge to pay for these services. Results from this study indicated that parents are less productive, suffer from anxiety and high-stress levels, and have become physically ill worried about the well-being of their children. Lower-paid workers and high-salary earners both have challenges with time away from children. I coin this as parental-guilt theory (not to be confused with Freud's theory of guilt; McLeod, 2013) but may affect working individuals irrespective of gender, occupation, religion, culture, or economic status. Research on how children handle their parent(s)' FWAs might contribute to WFB

and FWAs literature. Evidence from this study suggests some children become more independent and responsible; other evidence proposes it leads to laziness, lower grades in school, and delinquency.

The social consequences of alternative work arrangements are well-documented in the scientific literature. Albertsen, Rafnsdóttir, Tómasson, and Kauppinen (2008) argued the need for intervention studies, longitudinal studies, and studies focusing on the influence of schedule, consequences regarding children's development and well-being, and marital satisfaction. Research findings from this study align with their arguments.

Aumann et al. (2011) emphasized that, for many men, there is a desire to work fewer hours and spend more time with their families; however, there remains society pressure to focus instead on their financial contributions. This conflict between professional and personal responsibilities may result in some men feeling a sense of role overload or stress. Men's socialization to focus on their career roles may mean that, for some men, as their family responsibilities change or increase, they are actually more likely to cope by increasing their hours at work (Higgins et al., 2010). The increasing number of men in nontraditional roles deserve research specific to their issues with juggling work, childcare, and responsibilities traditionally associated with (i.e. grocery shopping, laundry, house cleaning). Although there is WFB and FWAs literature available that focus on male-related career issues, I found minimum research on those who are divorced, single-parents, and millennials and how they handle operating within a non-traditional household.

Implications for Social Change

Previous and current theories suggested FWAs increased employee loyalty, decreased WFC, increased organizational profits, attracted and retained workers, and reduced employee stress and health-related challenges. WFB's and FWAs' theories also suggested adverse consequences are experienced when individuals work long hours and neglect household responsibilities and obligations. An important aspect of WLB is the amount of time a person spends at work. Evidence suggested that long work hours may impair personal health, jeopardize safety and increase stress (OECD, 2014).

Developing FWAs policies and procedures should be a priority for organizations of the 21st century. Research, media, legislators, and community have come to understand workers need help with balancing work and family environments. To maintain a reliable, dependable, and productive workforce, families need assistance. Help may come in the form of on-site day care or simply allowing people to work from home. The overall goal is to have a dynamic between employer and employee that will provide contentment in the workplace and crossover to the home environment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Researchers, media, legislators, organizations, and community have come to understand workers need help with balancing work and family environments. Individuals elected to represent society's best interests must enact legislation to provide assistance to make work and home life manageable. To maintain a reliable, dependable, and productive workforce, families need assistance. Help may come in the form of on-site day care or simply allowing people to work from home. The overall goal is to have a

dynamic between employer and employee that would provide contentment in the workplace and crossover to the home environment.

In this qualitative study, I explored the experiences of employees of a Midwest, defense contractor. Experiences and challenges was shared by workers faced with managing both domains with the benefit of flexible work arrangements. Information gained from this research, in alignment with previous studies, suggests alternative work arrangements are desirable FWAs relieve employees and employers of work constraints, reduce health and stress-related issues, increase organizational profits, and decreases lost time at work. Flexible schedules provided more time and opportunity to participate in other areas that would positively impact society such as volunteer time and community involvement.

Managing work and home equitably do not differentiate by gender, culture, occupation, or economics. Organizations must be more sensitive to the needs of their workforce. Company leadership may find this study useful when attrition rates are increasing, organizational policies are revised, and recruitment strategies are being developed. FWAs policies and procedures should be a priority for organizations of the 21st century.

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Appendix A: Letter of Invitation

Request for Questionnaire Participation Balancing Work and Family with Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs)

As you may know, I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. Part of the doctoral program is to conduct research for my dissertation. My dissertation is on balancing work and family with an alternative work arrangement; specifically FWAs. This email is to invite employees of Company X to participate AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH COMPANY X AS AN ORGANIZATION AND IS SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF MY RESEARCH. I would greatly appreciate your participation in a confidential, online survey regarding your ability to balance work and family with the use of FWAs. In addition, I am requesting that you forward this invite to other Company X personnel via their PERSONAL EMAILS ONLY (if available). This process is called “snowballing.” Snowballing will enable me to garner more participants and provide a vast diversity of experiences from individuals with balancing work and home domains and FWAs.

It is a violation of Company X and Walden University policy for this questionnaire to be conducted or forwarded on Company X time without permission from Company X personnel. Since this questionnaire has nothing to do with Company X as an organization, electronic mail on Company X time will void your response and your experiences will not be analyzed as a part of this important research. This aspect of the questionnaire will be closely monitored by me to assure that such violations do not occur.

In addition, as part of this research process, I will be requesting 12-15 participants for an opportunity to interview face-to-face (FTF). This process is also a requirement for this particular research project and completely confidential. This is also voluntary, and I further request any interested parties to contact me directly to arrange a time and place at your convenience. I may also contact some of you that I know personally for this FTF interview process.

Procedures & Privacy

The questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and required for my analysis within 10-15 days. A link (via SurveyMonkey) will be provided to access the questionnaire. All questions in the area of age, job title, and other personal information is for demographic purposes only and will only be shared with my university if required. Your participation ends once the survey is completed. Summary results will be available once my dissertation is complete and will be available (if requested) by contacting me directly. My contact information will be provided on the online questionnaire. PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. If you agree to participate, please do not access survey during company time. Lunch hour, after work, or at home is my recommendation.

Please note the following:

- Responses collected will be confidential and only shared with Walden University (if required).
- Only the minimum amount of personal information necessary will be sought.
- Information will be available as to how the questionnaire results will be processed (analysis).

- How respondents can access their responses to correct or edit their responses.
- How respondents can contact the researcher.

I thank you in advance for your participation. Your knowledge and experience will benefit many in the field of FWA and balancing work and family domains.

Appendix B: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study of how a flexible work arrangement (FWAs) affects balancing home and work domains. The researcher is inviting those persons most likely to have work and family balance (WFB) concerns. Based on WFB/WFC literature, WFB crosses all cultures, gender, age, and occupations. You have been invited to participate in this research because you meet the criteria of one of the following: (a) a professional working at a Midwest defense contractor, (b) single parent, (c) have elder care/childcare responsibilities, (d) part of dual-income working family, or (e) over the age of 22 and under the age of 70. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Sandra Forris, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as a former co-worker, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to assess how FWAs assist in creating balance at home and work domains.

Procedures:

- If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
- Complete an on-line questionnaire via survey monkey (link to be provided). Complete and return the questionnaire within 10 days. Questionnaire consists of 59 questions and should not take more than 10 minutes to complete.
- Participate in a voluntary face-to-face interview

Here are some sample questions:

1. How does company X Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) assist you in balancing or cause imbalance in your home and work domains?
2. Explain the benefits of FWAs.
3. When can you tell that FWAs are disrupting the balance in either your home or work domain.
4. Tell me a situation where you had to choose home responsibilities over work responsibilities or vice versa.
5. How will not having FWAs impact your home responsibilities?
6. What would you tell other organizations that do not offer FWAs to their employees?
7. What is the ideal alternative work arrangement (AWA) based on the definitions read earlier? Why?

8. If Company X did not have FWAs or alternative work schedule, would you seek an organization that does offer AWA?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. I will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at your organization will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time and may have a copy of this consent.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

Benefits of the Study:

Identifying commonalities and shared or unique experiences will extend knowledge in the areas of Work-Family Balance (WFB) and Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) so that, prescriptions, guidelines, and/or legislation may be written to include current, previous, and recent information. The results of this proposal will benefit employees and employers alike.

Payment:

No payment or stipend is provided for your participation.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. The electronic data from this study will be retained in encrypted form for five years on a password protected computer and then destroyed. Data collected in paper form and audio will be stored in locked file containers. After five years, electronic data will be deleted, and data in paper and audio form will be shredded. This is mandated by Walden University.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-xxx-xxxx, extension xxxx. Walden University's approval number for this study is 09-26-14-0112012 and it expires on September 25, 2015.

The study will consist of a questionnaire and interviews of employees of Company X. The methodology used will be phenomenological to understand and capture the experiences of the participants.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By returning a completed survey, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

For face-to-face interviewees, please sign below:

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Please print/retain copy for your files.

Appendix C: Confidentiality Agreement

Name of Signer: Sandra E. Forris

During the course of my activity in collecting data for this research: **Work, Family and Flexible Work Arrangements**. I will have access to information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement I acknowledge and agree that:

1. The information obtained from this survey will be kept strictly confidential. It will only be shared with Walden faculty. If requested, data will be provided to outside individuals with written permission from the participant. This data are being collected to assist with analyzing Supply Chain Management leadership styles and methods and probable causes for inefficiencies.
2. I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification or purging of confidential information.
3. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that I will perform.
4. I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications.
5. I will only access or use systems or devices I am officially authorized to access, and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

Signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

Signature

Date:

Appendix D: Face-to-Face Interview Demographic Information

Date: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Children: Yes _____ No _____ M/F _____ Age(s) _____

Income level: _____ w/spouse (if available) _____

Combined Income Level: _____

Gender: _____

Profession: _____

Nationality: _____

1. Do you confirm that you work for an organization that offers an alternative work arrangement? _____

(Please refer to the handout entitled “Types of Flexible Work Arrangements”)

2. Do you confirm that you are participating in this FTF interview on your own accord and not under any stress or duress?

3. Do you acknowledge that you are aware this interview is being recorded?

Any questions that you feel are invasive or choose not to respond, please feel free to acknowledge that fact.

Appendix E: Face-to-Face Interview Questions

Discussion Topic: Work-Family Balance and Flexible Work Arrangements

Name: _____ Interviewee No. _____

Interviewer _____ Date: _____

Part I:

1. What do you think about Company X FWAs?
 - a) What would you change?
 - b) How do you think FWAs affects women? Men?
 - c) What specific area of FWAs, i.e. starting time, ending time, day(s) off assists in creating a balance at home?
 - d) What specific area assists in creating imbalance in your home ?
2. Explain why and if FWAs creates a balance or imbalance in your home situation.
 - a) How do you determine that there is a balance or imbalance at home?
 - b) How do you determine there is a balance or imbalance at work?
3. Tell me a situation where you had to choose home responsibilities over work responsibilities or vice versa.
 - a) How did it impact the household?
 - b) How did it impact your work-life?
 - c) Explain how having FWAs reduces conflict within your home?

- d) Explain how having FWAs increases conflict within your home?
4. How will not having FWAs impact your home responsibilities?
- a) How will not having FWAs impact your work responsibilities?
 - b) Explain where a conflict occurred and what happened?
 - c) What conflict has occurred in your home environment where your work schedule caused disagreements?
 - d) What health challenges have you experienced (if any) resulting in conflicts between work and home (stress, ulcers, etc.)?
5. What would you tell other organizations that do not offer FWAS to their employees?
- a) Explain the advantages and disadvantages based on your personal experiences?
 - b) What is the ideal alternative work arrangement?
6. Does FWAs increase, decrease, or have no impact on balancing home and work domains? _____

Part II: Interviewer Comments/Notes:

Where does the majority of the imbalance occur (work or home)?

How does it affect family and employer?

What role does flexibility play in assessing the imbalance?

What is the most critical issue that, if resolved, will contribute to balance in both domains? _____

Appendix F: Flexible Work Arrangement Definitions and Examples Handout

Workplace Flexibility 2010 defines “Flexible Work Arrangements” (FWAs) as any one of a spectrum of work structures that alters the time and/or place that work gets done on a regular basis.

FWAs includes:

1. flexibility in the *scheduling* of hours worked, such as alternative work schedules (e.g., flex time and compressed workweeks), and arrangements regarding shift and break schedules;
2. flexibility in the *amount* of hours worked, such as part time work and job shares; and
3. flexibility in the *place* of work, such as working at home or at a satellite location.

Our research indicates that workplaces today offer a wide range of FWAs. What arrangements are provided, and how they are defined, can vary widely. For purposes of discussing *policy approaches* for advancing FWAs, therefore, we have attempted to impose some coherence on the range of such arrangements by categorizing them along the lines of our definition above – i.e., flexibility in work scheduling; flexibility in number of hours worked; and flexibility in place.

The goal of this document is thus primarily to give you a sense of what the “it” is when we talk about FWAs. To achieve that goal, we have provided definitions and examples of the most commonly provided FWAs within each category. This document should be used as a glossary reference for our other FWAs overview memos. We believe the level of specificity we have provided you in this document is sufficient to discuss policy approaches for increasing and enhancing FWAs in the workplace. Obviously, to implement any particular FWAs in a workplace, a much greater level of specificity about the FWAs would be required. When reading this document, please remember that the effective implementation of any FWAs will necessarily be very workplace-specific, and

will offer different levels of control and flexibility to both the employer and the employee.

A. Flexibility in Work Scheduling

1. Alternative Work Schedules: Any schedule other than that which is standard to the work setting.

a) **Flextime:**

Schedules based on worker needs within set parameters approved by a supervisor.

Examples:

A worker must work 40 hours per week and be present on a daily basis during “core hours” (e.g., from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm), and may, for example, adjust arrival and departure times as he/she wishes on a daily basis, or define new standard work hours (e.g., a set schedule of 7:00 am to 3:00 pm every day, or of 7:00 am to 3:00 pm on Tues/Thurs and 10:00 am to 6:00 pm on Mon/Wed/Fri).

A worker must work 40 hours per week (but “core hours” do not apply), and may, for example, vary start and end times on a weekly, or even daily, schedule; set a standard schedule as 7:00 am to 3:00 pm on Tues/Thurs (in order to meet the school bus, take a college class, etc.), and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Monday/Wednesday/Friday (this form of flextime may be modified to allow the worker to vary a standard schedule as needed, e.g., at exam time, early school dismissal days); occasionally work extra hours one day to make up for shorter hours worked another day; or aside from a weekly staff meeting on Friday mornings, work at night to better serve clients in a European time zone. These flextime arrangements may be modified to include situations where the worker is working, but is not present at the worksite (i.e., is teleworking/telecommuting) for all or some portion of the workweek.

- b) **Compressed Workweeks:** Workers work full time hours in less than the traditional 5-day workweek by increasing daily hours worked.

Examples:

A worker works 10-hour days, 4 days per week (e.g., Monday–Thursday, 8:00 am–6:00 pm). Over each two-week span, a worker works 9-hour days Monday through Thursday of each week and takes every other Friday off (i.e., works an 8-hour day on the Friday of the first week and does not work the Friday of the second week).

These arrangements may be modified to include situations where the worker is working, but not present at the worksite (i.e., is teleworking) for all or some portion of the workweek.

2. **Arrangements Regarding Shifts and Breaks**

- a) **Shift Arrangements:** Workers who are assigned shifts by their employers enter into arrangements with their employers giving them more flexibility regarding the shifts they are assigned.

Examples:

A husband and wife working for the same employer enter into an arrangement to ensure their shifts are staggered so that they will have child care coverage for their 3 children.

A worker who cares for an elderly mother during the evenings enters into an arrangement with the employer ensuring that he/she will not have to work the evening or overnight shift.

- b) **Break Arrangements:** Workers who generally can only take assigned breaks enter into an arrangement with their employers giving them more flexibility over when they take breaks.

Example:

A worker with diabetes is allowed to set his/her own break schedule in order to ensure an opportunity to eat snacks and meals every three hours.

B) Flexibility in the Amount of Hours Worked

1. Part Time Work/Reduced Hours Schedule: Workers who usually work less than 35 hours per week.

Examples:

A worker works a three-day per week Monday/Wednesday/Friday schedule on a regular basis.

A worker works 20 hours per week and determines her own schedule on a weekly basis.

A worker goes from working full time to 30 hours per week as she phases into retirement.

2. Transition Period Part Time: Workers gradually return to work after a major life event (e.g., birth or adoption of a child) by working part time for a set period and eventually returning to full time work.

Examples:

Following a six-week maternity leave, a worker returns to work three days a week for six months, four days a week for the next six months, and then to full time work thereafter.

A worker's spouse dies unexpectedly and the worker takes off a full month from work.

The worker returns to part-time work for two years and then returns to working full time when her children have adjusted to the changed circumstances.

3. Job Shares: Two or more workers share the duties of one full time job, with each person working on a part time basis.

Examples:

One worker works Tuesday/Thursday and the other worker works Monday/Wednesday/Friday. Per the employer's direction, they share some tasks of the job and split the others in a way that ensures that the work gets done.

Two workers split the work of a single position 60%/40%, share the salary accordingly, and are in the office 2 days per week at the same time.

Two workers share a single position and decide together when each will work and which tasks each will perform.

Two workers have unrelated part time assignments but share the same budget line.

4. **Part-year Work:** Workers work only a certain number of months per year.

Examples:

A semi-retired accountant works for an accounting firm during its busy season from January through May. He takes the remainder of the year off to travel.

A teacher works a nine-month year.

An otherwise full-time professional does not work for 8 weeks in the summer.

C. **Flexibility in the Place of Work**

1. **Telework/Home Work:** Workers work remotely from their own homes, using a telecommunications connection to the workplace if necessary.

Examples:

A worker teleworks from home on Monday/Friday, and works at the office Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday.

A garment worker brings materials home from work and sews at her home two days a week (work not involving any telephone or computer connections with the office).

A policy researcher occasionally works from home when working on a complicated or lengthy document in order to avoid being interrupted. She otherwise works in the office.

2. **Telework/Telecommute/Satellite Location:** Workers work remotely from a designated satellite work center.

Example:

A worker works from a nearby telework center Monday through Friday to avoid a long commute to work.

3. **Alternating Location:** Workers work part-year in one location and part-year in a second location.

Example:

A “snowbird” couple works at Wal-mart in New York from April to September, and then moves south for the colder months, working at a Florida Walmart from October to March.

Source: Workplace Flexibility, 2010

Georgetown University Law Center

600 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Room 340, Washington, DC 20001 *An Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Initiative*

has more leave but is paid at a corresponding lower amount of pay across the year)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Bereavement leave (e.g. allows employees to take a minimum leave of 2 days after the death of a family or household member).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Pooling of leave entitlements (e.g. ability to pool all leave entitlements (i.e. sick leave, carers leave, etc.) giving employees a larger number of days if they need it for family reasons)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Unpaid maternity/paternity and adoption leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Paid maternity leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Paid paternity leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Paid adoption leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Opportunity to return to the same job after maternity/paternity leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Safety at work during pregnancy (e.g. changing the work of a pregnant worker to avoid long periods standing or lifting heavy objects)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Prenatal leave (e.g. time for pregnant women or their partners to attend medical appointments during working hours, either using additional leave or sick leave)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Staggered return to work after pregnancy (allows							

employees to negotiate temporary reduction in hours of work

when they return to work

17. Private expressing/breastfeeding room (space at work offering privacy for an employee to breastfeed and provide refrigeration facilities)

18. Lactation breaks (time off to express milk or breastfeed babies if needed)

19. A carers room or bring children to work in emergencies (e.g. provision of a safe location where staff can carry out their regular work duties while caring for dependents until other arrangements can be made)

20. Employer assistance with childcare (e.g. employers paying for or reserving places in an existing or on-site childcare center.

21. Job sharing (two or more people share one full-time job

22. Telecommuting (e.g. where an employee can work from home or outside of the central workplace using his/her own or the organization's equipment)

23. cap on overtime (a limit on the number of hours overtime that can be worked

24. Opportunity to negotiate

- 31. Health programs (e.g. quit smoking programs, flu vaccinations on site, dietary advice programs)
- 32. Parenting or family support program (the organization provides a formal education program on parenting)
- 33. Exercise facilities (the organization provides on site or subsidizes exercise facilities/gym membership)
- 34. Relocation or placement assistance (where an employee has to move for work purposes, the organization helps the whole family adapt to the new environment)
- 35. Equal access to promotion, training and development (providing equal access to promotion, training and development by providing encouragement and assistance to those employees with family responsibilities)

Comments:

Formality of Policies Don't know No Yes

Please read each statement below and check appropriate box either (1) Don't Know, (2) No, or (3) Yes

36. Does this organization have written copies of the work-life policies?

37. Have you seen or been given a copy of this

organization's

work-life policies?

38. Is it easy to understand when and how these work-life balance policies can be used by employees?

Comments:

Your experiences at the organization

Strongly Disagree Disagree UC Agree Strongly Agree

Please read each statement below and check appropriate box from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" to indicate your level of agreement with each statement

39. All levels of management apply the WLB

policies in the same way

40. All employees are treated the same way when using this organization's WLB policy

41. This organization gives male and female employees the same level of access to WLB policies

42. This organization treats part-time and full-time employees

similarly

43. In this organization, it is frowned upon by management to take leave for family-related matters

44. The management of this organization seem to put their job ahead of their family and personal life
45. Employees are encouraged to use WLB policies at this organization
46. This organization encourages the involvement of employees' family members in work celebrations
47. The organization has social functions at times suitable for families
48. In this organization, employees can combine career and family
49. The management of this organization is accommodating of family-related needs
50. In this organization, it is acceptable to talk about one's family or personal life at work
51. To turn down a promotion or transfer for family-related reasons is like the kiss of death
52. Many employees here resent people who take time off for family reasons (e.g. maternity leave)
53. In order to get noticed in this organization, employees must constantly put work ahead of their family or personal life

54. Employees are often expected to take work home at night

or on weekends

55. Employees are expected to put their jobs before their family

or personal life

56. To get ahead employees are expected to work more than

50 hours a week

57. In practice, it is made difficult by this organization to use the

WLB policies

58. When trying to balance work and family responsibilities, it is easier to work things out among colleagues than to get

management involved

59. This organization is serious about equal opportunity and anti-discrimination

Comments:

I – Important VI – Very Important UI – Unimportant UC – Uncertain

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