

CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

Deirdre Anderson



**A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF STUDIES WHICH EXAMINE THE
FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES OF MANAGERS AND
PROFESSIONALS**

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

MRes THESIS

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CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

MRes THESIS

Academic Year 2003-2004

Deirdre Anderson

**A systematic review of studies which examine the flexible
working practices of managers and professionals**

Supervisor: Dr. Val Singh

August 2004

**This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Research**

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ABSTRACT

This systematic review examines studies of flexible working practices when used by managers and professionals. The various definitions of the term "flexible working" which appear in the literature are discussed and the need for a case relevant definition in any study is put forward. Particular attention is given to spatial and temporal flexibility.

The benefits and disadvantages of flexible working practices to both organizations and individuals are discussed, revealing the contradictory nature of this subject. Conflicting evidence is revealed about the effect of working in a non-traditional way on career advancement or potential, and the language used is seen as an important factor in understanding this.

Theories are used to increase understanding of a field where research is very practitioner driven with little theoretical underpinning. Institutional pressures may be key factors in this organizational response to individual role conflict. Similarly, resource dependence theory, agency theory and the transaction cost perspective are considered as possible explanations for the introduction of flexible working practices as part of work/life balance policies. The importance of aligning such policies with organizational goals can be a crucial factor in their take-up and success.

Theories of role conflict and identity are explored as these may inform us about the motivations of individuals in adopting such practices, linking to boundary theory which explains the segmentation or integration of work and nonwork domains.

Most of the extant literature is written from the practitioner's perspective and implications and recommendations are therefore put forward.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Initiatives to promote flexibility encourage employees to consider where, when and how to work, in order to suit their own particular needs. There is little agreement in the literature on use of terms and a lack of clear definitions of flexible working practices or alternative working arrangements. The general organizational response to many work/family issues has been to offer a range of options, such as on-site nursery facilities, flexible hours, home-working, job sharing, reduced hours and term-time working. One longitudinal study (Jansen, van der Velde, & Telting, 2000) attempted to examine the effect of 105 different human resource practices on the varying numbers of men and women working at different hierarchical levels. Not surprisingly, Jansen et al pointed out the limitation of being unable to distinguish between such practices in their findings.

The main aim of this dissertation is to systematically review studies of flexible working practices when used by managers and professionals. It is set in the wider context of a consideration of the links between such practices, role conflict of individuals and the quest for career/life balance. Career progression is an important part of career/life balance for people who have high role salience in both work and nonwork domains, placing value on career success as well as life success. The commonly used term, work/life balance, is more often portrayed as juggling demands from the two domains, dealing with the immediacy of everyday life. The idea of balance seems to be elusive as individuals are pulled from one domain to the other. As Perrons (2003) points out, *"flexible working seems to be more concerned with accommodating life to rather demanding and unquestioned working hours rather than one of reorganizing work to allow time for domestic and caring responsibilities"* (p69).

The scoping study which preceded this dissertation examined the areas of work/life balance, role conflict, and career theories, as well as flexible working practices.

Chapter 1 introduces the systematic literature review, setting out the aims. Chapter 2 details the methodology, explaining the original protocol and providing justification for any changes which have been made. Chapter 3 presents the findings of the review,

critically appraising the relevant research. Finally, Chapter 4 presents conclusions from the detailed analysis and identifies a possible research gap to take forward for my PhD research.

1.2 Research rationale

Findings from the scoping study provided an overview of the state of the current knowledge and thus informed the research questions of this study. Flexible working practices were interpreted as organizational responses to employees' quest for work/life balance. Other forms of such response were mentioned by Ingram and Simons (1995) who also assessed the provision of "*cheap responses – benefits that do not require the same degree of financial expenditure or other organisational investment*" (p. 1472), such as unpaid paternity leave or information about local childcare facilities. They saw this option of organizational response as a symbolic compliance to societal pressures, ostensibly offering family friendly policies whilst actually masking non-conformity.

1.2.1 Recent UK legislation

Governmental initiatives also inform the rationale for research in this area. In April 2003, new legislation was introduced in the UK giving parents of a child under six years of age, the right to request flexible work including a change in working hours, days or place of work. Eighteen months later there is considerable interest in the success of this legislation. A report published by the Department of Trade and Industry (2004) showed that 37% of women employees with children under the age of six requested flexible working since April 2003, whereas only 10% of men with children under six made the same request. The survey asked about reasons for not requesting flexible working but did not offer anything to do with career as a possible answer. Despite this, Trade and Industry Secretary Patricia Hewitt comments that men fear "career death" as a result of seeking work/life balance using flexible working practices (The Observer, April 4, 2004). An earlier report (Department of Trade and Industry, 2004) looked specifically at flexible working in the IT industry. Priorities for action involved designing suitable flexible work options, offering support to managers in executing such options, providing challenging careers for all and creating a culture that is truly supportive of flexible working. The idea of "challenging careers for all" is

something that has been alluded to by researchers. Kirchmeyer (1998) points out that employers need support and guidance in their quest to provide the opportunities needed by both men and women to experience equally successful careers.

Table 1 reflects the latest available numbers of UK employees with flexible working patterns. It is notable that the figures for women working flexibly are consistently higher than for men. An interesting comparison will be made when the 2004 figures are released, as the effect of the above legislation can then be quantified.

Another UK government initiative is the creation of the Women and Work Commission which was announced in July 2004. The Commission will begin its work in Autumn 2004, and will focus on several key issues affecting women's employment, including:

- the gender pay gap.
- the effect of men and women's education and skills on the jobs they can get.
- promotion and career progression.
- women's experiences in the job market before and after having children.
- the different experiences of women working full-time and part-time.

Undoubtedly, flexible working arrangements will come under scrutiny with this agenda.

1.3 Research questions

As a result of the scoping study and the subsequent review process, I have identified several research questions for this systematic literature review:

- What are the findings from empirical studies on managers and professionals who work flexibly; how many studies, which country, sample size, methodology, industry sector?
- What are the different types of flexible working which have been studied?
- What is a workable definition of flexible working?
- What links have been established between flexible working and career progression for managers and professionals?

Table 1

Employees with flexible working patterns: by sex, spring 2003

	Percentages	
	Males	Females
United Kingdom	17.9	26.7
North East	17.8	29.9
North West	19.7	27.2
Yorkshire and the Humber	15.3	27.6
East Midlands	16.8	25.2
West Midlands	15.6	26.5
East	15.8	25.6
London	17.6	23.8
South East	18.9	26.5
South West	19.8	28.7
England	17.6	26.5
Wales	21.2	27.5
Scotland	21.1	28.4
Northern Ireland	12.6	23.3

1 Includes those on flexi-time, annualised hours, term-time working, job sharing, nine day fortnight, four and a half day week and zero hours contract (not contracted to work a set number of hours but paid for the actual number of hours worked).

2 These data are not seasonally adjusted and have not been adjusted in line with the Census 2001 population estimates.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics; Department of Economic Development, Northern Ireland

2 Methodology

2.1 The systematic literature review

The aim of the systematic literature review process is to establish, in an objective and standardised way, what is currently known about an area of research, and therefore to lead to the question of what is not yet known. The emphasis on the systematic nature of the process results in explicit reasons for the inclusion or exclusion of papers and allows for the existence of a clear audit trail. The stages which have been followed in this review are in Table 2. This dissertation is Step 8, reporting the findings, and leads to Steps 9 and 10 which will be addressed in the latter stages of this paper, informing research and practice.

Table 2: Stages of systematic literature review

Stage 1	Planning the Review
Step 1	Forming a review panel
Step 2	Mapping your field of study
Step 3	Producing a review protocol
Stage 2	Identifying and evaluating studies
Step 4	Conducting a systematic search
Step 5	Evaluating studies
Stage 3	Extracting and synthesising data
Step 6	Conducting data extraction
Step 7	Conducting data synthesis
Stage 4	Reporting
Step 8	Reporting the findings
Stage 5	Utilising the findings
Step 9	Informing research
Step 10	Informing practice

2.2 The initial review protocol

The initial review protocol was submitted for the MRes Review with the scoping study.

2.2.1 Purpose and overview

The original aim of the systematic literature review was to map and assess the existing literature in the fields of career theories, work/life balance, role conflict, and flexible working practices in order to increase the understanding of the linkages in these areas and to identify a possible research gap leading to a research question to take forward for my PhD.

The purpose of the protocol was to provide a clear methodological guide for conducting such a review and to detail explicit methods for identifying, selecting and critically appraising current literature in order to extract and analyse the data from those studies. Predetermined criteria were listed to explain inclusion or exclusion of studies and a checklist was provided to assess the methodological quality of each study.

The review process allows for some flexibility in order to allow a creative approach to discovery and development but the guidelines mentioned above were used to minimize researcher bias. Changes to the protocol were made as a result of the MRes Review and these will be explained. Other changes made during the systematic review process will be clearly stated and justified.

2.2.2 Consultation process

In order to have a collaborative review process, informed by practitioners working in the field, as well as academics in the area, a panel was consulted which also included an information scientist (see table 3). Literature recommendations from the panel were included and logged in the database and advice regarding direction and focus was welcomed and acted upon.

Table 3: The review panel

Supervision	Dr Val Singh (Centre for Developing Women Business Leaders) Prof. Susan Vinnicombe (Centre for Developing Women Business Leaders)
Bibliographic search and review process	Dr. David Denyer (Cranfield Advanced Management Research Centre) Mrs. Heather Woodfield (Cranfield Information and Library Services)
Academics in the field	Dr. Clare Kelliher (Cranfield People & Organizations Group) Dr. Silviya Svejnova (Cranfield Strategic Management Group)
Practitioners in the field	Mrs Anouska Wilson (IBM Business School, Warbrook) Mrs Pauline Boughton (Independent Consultant)

2.2.3 Databases and other information sources

In the initial protocol, two databases were specified for use in the review:

ABI Proquest

EBSCO Business Source Premier

These two databases are the standard ones used in doctoral research in management as they cover a wide range of management expertise. ABI/INFORM Global is well established as a scholarly and comprehensive way to explore and understand business topics, covering over 1700 business periodicals. EBSCO Business Source Premier is the largest full text business database in the world and is updated on a daily basis.

Relevant books would be included if their findings had not already been included from journal articles.

Conference papers and working papers recommended by members of the Review Panel would be included.

Reports by government departments (eg. the Department of Trade and Industry), public bodies (eg. Equal Opportunities Commission) and professional bodies (eg. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) would be included.

2.2.4 Brief description of search strategy

The keyword search was a fundamental step in this systematic literature review and was performed by inserting various search strings into the databases.

The keywords and the search strings were formulated using several different strategies;

- 1- Review of the articles included in the scoping study and analysis of keywords, titles and abstracts of the most relevant ones
- 2- Discussion with supervisors and practitioners
- 3- Pilot searches and comparison between the results obtained and the most relevant papers belonging to the scoping study, to check if they were included
- 4- Pilot searches to assess the feasibility of certain searches

The identification of keywords was the first step in this process. The main challenge was to find exhaustive sets of keywords that could express the four main concepts which were to form the basis of the proposed literature review. A clear rationale was offered for each set of keywords and as a result four groups of search strings were formulated.

2.2.5 Selection and assessment criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were formulated as a result of awareness gained during the scoping study from reading widely around the subject.

A Study Quality Assessment table was devised to further select which papers would be included. Four aspects would be rated:

1. contribution to understanding
2. implication for practice
3. methodology

4. theory

See Appendix A

2.2.6 Data extraction and synthesis

Data will be extracted from those studies which meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria and are judged to be of suitable quality when compared against the four areas mentioned above. ProCite will be used to log extracted categories of information which will include:

- citation information (author, article title; journal title, year, volume and issue)
- descriptive information (country, business sector, type of staff in sample eg clerical staff, professional or managers)
- methodological information (empirical/theoretical, quantitative/qualitative, case study/survey);
- thematic information (key concepts, theories, approaches, emerging themes).

The synthesis of the data will bring together the findings in a novel way which will add to the understanding of the field with new connections and patterns identified. It is important to choose a method which is appropriate to the research being synthesised and which can cope with diffuse data. A main reason for conducting a systematic review is to go beyond a narrative description. As this literature review will be submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MRes, it is critical that the method of synthesis will allow enough detail from the original studies to allow the reader to interpret the results.

2.3 Alterations to the protocol

As a result of the MRes Review, revisions were suggested by the researcher and approved by the Review Panel. These will be clearly explained before detailing changes that were made during the systematic literature review process itself.

Firstly, it was recognised that the fields of literature I needed to cover were huge and time constraints would prove a major obstacle in conducting a systematic review on such a scale. As a result of discussion, the review was narrowed to focus on the literature on flexible working practices used by managers and professionals with an emphasis on the overlap into the work/life balance literature covered by

work/nonwork spillover. The title was changed to: "A review of studies which examine the links between flexible working practices and work-nonwork spillover of managers and professionals." The research questions stated in the introduction were agreed as appropriate aims for this review.

2.3.1 Search strings

The keywords and the search strings were formulated using several different strategies:

- Review of the articles included in the scoping study and analysis of keywords, titles and abstracts of the most relevant ones.
- Discussion with supervisors and practitioners.
- Pilot searches and comparison between the results obtained and the most relevant papers belonging to the scoping study, to check if they were included.
- Pilot searches to assess the feasibility of certain searches.

In addition to ABI ProQuest and EBSCO Business Source Premier, a third database was used. PsycINFO is an abstract database of psychological literature with material which is of relevance to psychologists and professionals in related fields such as management.

The following search string was used on ABI ProQuest:

((flex* work*) OR (reduced AND (hours OR load)) OR telecommut* OR (home W1 work*) OR flex*time OR (remote W1 work*)) AND (manage* OR professional*)

Appropriate adjustments were made for use on PsycINFO and EBSCO Business Source Premier.

There is a huge range in the terms used to describe the different flexible working practices in organizations. Discussions with academics and practitioners led to the inclusion of some that are less common in existing literature such as "mobile worker".

However, when trying out the search string it became clear that very often a list of flexible options offered by organizations is included in an article. This allowed me to rule out some of the keywords such as “compressed hours” and “annualized hours” as the number of hits did not increase when these were used and articles using these phrases were included in the results.

I also used a search string for work/family conflict and spillover but on PsycINFO alone, this led to 588 hits with 83 articles of possible relevance. Again, time constraints were a major factor in the decision to remove this search string from the review, a decision which was taken after discussion with several members of the panel. So the systematic literature review presented here includes papers from the “flexible” search string, from the scoping study and from recommendations from panel members. This resulted in the final change to the title to the current one:

“A systematic review of studies which examine the flexible working practices of managers and professionals.”

2.3.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria detailed in the initial protocol were far too broad and tighter criteria were approved. An additional criterion has since been added regarding employment status of the subjects.

Table 4: Inclusion criteria

Criterion	Rationale for inclusion
Sources: academic papers in scholarly journals, academic conference proceedings, books, reports from relevant professional institutions and government bodies	The major sources of relevant management research.
Research based in both the public and the private sectors	The public sector has been using flexible working policies for longer than the private sector and so there may be some relevant findings even though the researcher hopes to conduct the study in the private sector.
<p>The main subject of the paper should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexible working practices <p>with relation to managers and professionals in each case.</p>	Searches on databases for “flexible working practices” leads to many thousands of hits. It is necessary to focus on papers where the topic is the key area under investigation.
Subjects of the study should be managers or professionals	Many of the studies have non specific samples which make it difficult to compare findings.
Subjects of the study should be employed by an organization, not be self-employed or contractors.	Again, non-specific samples make comparison difficult. There would be different issues for workers in these categories.
Theoretical and empirical studies and both qualitative and quantitative papers.	Knowledge in the field has been amassed from a range of approaches.

Table 5: Exclusion criteria

Criterion	Rationale for exclusion
Research from before 1990	There is no one landmark study or meta-analysis which provides a clear cut-off date. But there is an accumulation of indicators about the changing emphasis on the way in which work and family is viewed. For instance, Schein (1990) revised his work on career anchors, introducing the lifestyle anchor, applicable to people who seek to integrate their own personal needs with the needs of the family and career needs. Language used showed the positive shift in thinking from "conflict" to "balance" (Hall, 1990; Lobel, 1991; Kirchmeyer, 1993; Bailyn, 1992, 1993).
Papers about functional flexibility or flexible benefit plans	Not related to flexible working practices
Papers about flexible working with marriage, family therapy, or adolescents as the main focus	Eg. Ludlow & Alvarez-Salvat (2001)
Papers about flexible working with personality traits as the main focus	Eg. Sumer & Knight (2001)
Papers about flexible working with stress or mental health as the main focus	Eg. Elloy & Smith (2003)
Articles published in newspapers or magazines.	Flexible working is a popular subject and is predicted to be an issue for the next General Election so there may be a significant number of articles which will report issues already picked up from the original reports or studies.

3.Findings

3.1 Descriptive statistics

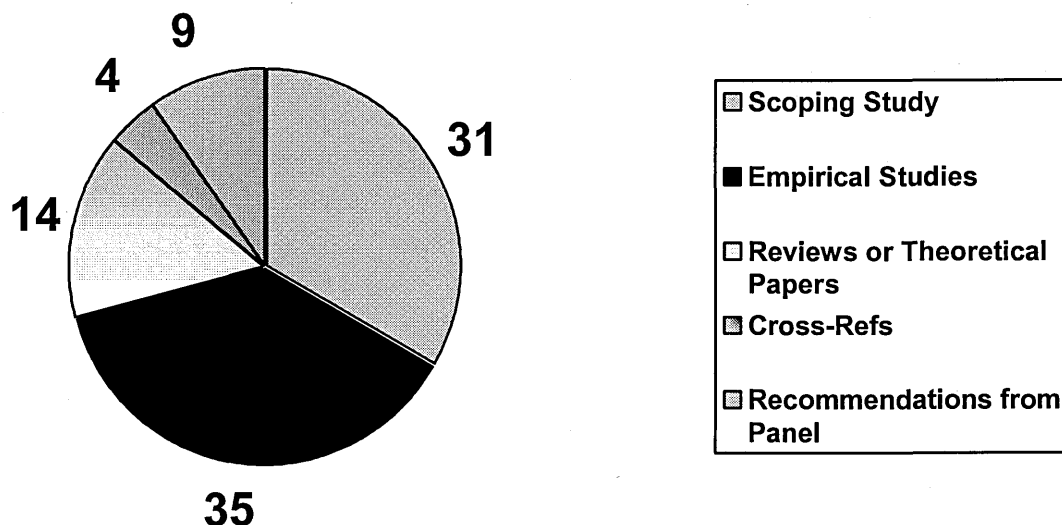
Using the “flexible search string” in the three search engines resulted in a final total of 76 articles, after removing duplicates (see table 6)

Table 6: summary of hits from search engines

	ABI ProQuest	EBSCO	PsycINFO	Total
Total hits	474	314	122	910
Number selected after reading titles and abstracts	45	38	15	98
After removing duplicates	-	-	-	76

Those 76 papers were compared against the exclusion and inclusion criteria, and considered for quality. The papers were compared against the inclusion and exclusion criteria and 18 were removed on this basis. Examples of reasons include inappropriate sample. For instance, a sample may consist of mainly self-employed workers, or telecommuting may have been defined to include people working extra hours at home rather than contracted hours. The importance of this criterion became clear when working on a definition of flexible working (see section 3.2.4). A further 9 papers were excluded because of poor quality. This left 35 empirical papers and 14 which were either theoretical or a review of research. Cross referencing led to a further 4 papers being included in the systematic review. 31 papers were brought forward from the scoping study and 9 were recommendations from the panel. These last two groups included some books or chapters (see diagram 1).

Diagram 1: source of papers in review



The grand total of journal articles, conference proceedings, books, chapters and unpublished work comes to 93.

Flexible working practices are of interest to academics working in very many fields, evidenced by the diverse range of journals that these papers came from. I have included in Table 7 any journals which contained more than one of the papers in the review. Other journals included several in the fields of sociology, psychology, accounting, and communication.

The field of flexible working is currently receiving much attention and it is interesting to consider the year of publication of papers included in the review (see Table 8). In the early 1990's there were only a few articles, whereas over the last five years in particular, there has been a greater number, demonstrating the increased interest in the topic. Looking at the eight empirical studies located in the UK, the earliest was published in 1997. A contributory factor for the increasing interest in the subject is the involvement of government as mentioned in the Introduction.

Table 7: Most frequent journals.

Journal	Number of papers
Academy of Management Journal	5
Academy of Management Review	4
Journal of Management Development	3
Journal of Organizational Behaviour	3
Human Relations	2
Human Resource Development Quarterly	2
Human Resource Management	2
Information and Management	2
Journal of Applied Psychology	2
Journal of Business Ethics	2
Journal of End User Computing	2
Journal of Family and Economic Issues	2
New Technology, Work and Employment	2
Organizational Dynamics	2
Personnel Review	2
SAM Advanced Management Journal	2
Women in Management Review	2

Table 8: Papers reviewed according to year of publication

Year	No. of publications	Year	No. of publications
pre 1990	7	1997	5
1990	0	1998	7
1991	2	1999	14
1992	2	2000	13
1993	2	2001	7
1994	1	2002	13
1995	2	2003	13
1996	0	2004	4

Other details including sample, method, industry sector and location of study can be found in the summary of key findings – see Appendix B. The thirty one empirical studies from the systematic search are included in the table along with any other studies which were about flexible working. The latter are in italics, to allow them to be easily identified.

3.2 Definitions

There is no universally agreed definition of the phrase “flexible working practices” although there appear to be two clear areas in the literature. One section of literature refers to the huge range of working patterns which differ from the traditional 9 to 5.30 approach and are offered by organizations as part of their response to work/life balance issues. These approaches to flexible working are sometimes also known as alternative working arrangements and it is this type of flexible working which is of interest in this paper.

The second type of flexible working practice describes work design, covering job rotation, job enlargement, job enrichment and teamwork. These are workplace practices which focus on efficiency and effectiveness, with the emphasis on allowing work units to operate with fewer employees whilst ensuring increased employee participation in work decisions (Lonti & Verma, 2003). Employee involvement practices are also covered, including employee attitude surveys, suggestion programmes, quality circles and problem solving teams. This type of flexible working is not discussed in this review.

3.2.1 Problems with lack of definition

In his 2001 review of research on teleworking, Baruch points out that there are problems with the lack of agreed definition, which apply also to the broader subject of flexible working. From an academic stance, it is difficult to compare findings from different sources and it also prevents generalizing to a wider context. Practically, it is almost impossible to find out how many people and organizations undertake flexible working. One review included in the scoping study illustrated Baruch’s points. In their 1998 review of research on telecommuting, McCloskey & Igbaria noted the very mixed samples which have been studied, with part-time and full-time employees being studied together, clerical and professional workers, and even some self-employed workers being included. They suggested that this places limitations on conclusions which can be drawn and the generalizability of findings.

Sullivan (2003) takes a different view and challenges the argument that academic research is hampered by the lack of a recognized single definition of telework or work

at home. Instead, she suggests that the important thing is that any definition used in a research project should have a clear rationale and be based on meaningful reasons and goes on to offer various defining criteria which may be project specific. The following discussion of definitions used by other researchers illustrates this point made by Sullivan.

3.2.2 What is meant by the term “flexible working practices”?

It was pointed out in the Introduction that organizations offer a range of options which fall under the general umbrella of flexible working practices, such as reduced hours, flexitime (or flextime in the United States), part-time working, job sharing, home-working, and term-time working. As part of a larger study of organizational culture and decision making in public accounting firms, Romaine (2002) identified emerging themes which prevented professionals making use of flexible working patterns which were ostensibly available to them. She focused on four types of flexible working patterns:

- Flexibility of scheduling
- Ability to work at home
- Part-time work arrangements
- Alternative career paths (less demanding routes than the usual progression to partnership)

In her study, flexibility of scheduling was the only acceptable pattern, which had no negative overtones.

“Being able to schedule one’s own work to some extent is typically one of the ‘perks’ of a managerial or professional job.” (p.101)

However, there were two significant constraints to such scheduling. The overall workload of individuals was so great that there were few hours available to spend in the nonwork domain. Secondly, meeting deadlines is an accepted part of the professional’s role, but such deadlines may be set by clients or senior managers and

may sometimes seem arbitrary to the individual providing unwelcome limits to one's own flexibility.

Working at home was considered a less traditional approach which was favoured by some of the parents in the sample, although they recognized the positive emphasis on face-time in the office and so their chosen method of working required some resilience. The part-time approach was greeted with even more resistance from senior partners, who appeared to view the arrangement as one which benefited only the employee. But this pattern was recognized as a necessary method of retaining valued staff members and linked to the alternative career path with the acknowledgement that either a longer time would ensue before reaching partnership or that partnership was not something a particular person aspired to.

Frank & Lowe (2003) use the term alternative work arrangements to describe working patterns which offer temporal or spatial flexibility, including full time hours worked at times to suit the individual, compressed work weeks where the full number of weekly hours will be worked in four days, and part-time and seasonal work. Fallon (1997) describes similar patterns as alternative work schedules which are part of family supportive policies which exist to ease the potential conflict of family and work responsibilities. 'Distributed work arrangements' is yet another term which includes alternatives to working at the traditional office, such as satellite offices and home based working (Belanger & Collins, 1998).

3.2.3 Teleworking, telecommuting or homeworking

The overwhelming majority of papers in this review examine the use of teleworking or telecommuting, but even then, some refer to homeworking as interchangeable with teleworking (Baruch & Nicholson, 1997). Other researchers differentiate between teleworking and telecommuting. For instance, Ellison, in her 1999 examination of the state of the art in telework research, cites Nilles (1998) as defining teleworking as *"any form of substitution of information technologies for work-related travel"* and telecommuting as *"periodic work out of the principal office, one or more days per week, either at home, at a client's site, or in a telework centre"* (p.341). Ellison then distinguishes telework from homework. The defining feature of telework is that it is done outside the central office, but in a place where employees are co-located i.e. a satellite office. Homeworking refers merely to the fact of working in the home,

regardless of the use of communication technologies. For still others, it is that very usage of telecommunications which helps define the workers being studied. Madsen (2003) describes teleworking; *"it often involves electronic processing of information and always involves using telecommunications to keep the remote employer and employee in contact with each other"* (p.38). Riley & McCloskey (1997) offer a similar description, referring to telecommuting as *"a means of using technology so that work can be completed without regard to physical location."* (p.133). For Kurland & Bailey (1999), the telecommunication link is an important part of the definition but can simply be a telephone.

Another factor is mentioned by Shin, Sheng and Higa (2000), who specifically include the notion of reduction in commuting time as a reason for working at home or at a satellite office nearer to home. Their definition of telecommuting thus excludes self-employed people operating businesses from home and also employees who work hours over and above their contracted hours at home. They highlight the importance of the spatial element. Working at a satellite office may alleviate some of the concerns which arise from working at home, such as visibility and professional and social isolation. Similarly, issues such as monitoring and coordination may be less of a concern for managers of teleworkers based in satellite offices.

Other researchers introduced a time element into their definition with telecommuters working away from the main office one or more complete days per week, (Hartman, Stoner & Arora, 1992; Duxbury, Higgins & Neufeld, 1998). The importance of this factor was mentioned as one of the limitations in a study by McCloskey, Igbaria & Parasuraman (1998). They noted that the majority of the telecommuters in the study worked in this way for only one to three days per month and the authors acknowledge that results may differ if employees telecommuted more frequently.

Some clarity is offered by Hotopp (2002) with regard to the UK Labour Force Survey which refers to "all teleworkers" and "TC teleworkers" to differentiate between those who could work without a telephone or computer and those for whom such equipment is essential. The term "all teleworkers" includes *"people who:*

- *mainly work from home in their main job, 'teleworker homeworkers'*

- *work from home in various locations but use their home as a base, 'home-based teleworkers'; and*
- *do not usually work at home or use home as a base but did so for at least one day in the reference week, 'occasional teleworkers'." (p.312)*

3.2.4 A case relevant operational definition

So there are certain criteria which affect the definitions under consideration: work location, commuting time, use of technology, and time spent away from the office. The final criterion of relevance to this review is the contractual arrangement. Those who are self-employed and work from home will face different issues to those who are employed by an organization and so papers examining this group were excluded. Also excluded were those with individuals who worked from home only outside their normal working hours at the office. As 'reduced hours' is a common flexible working practice, full-time or part-time work will be clearly differentiated. As mentioned above, Sullivan (2003) suggests that the emphasis on different aspects of these criteria will change according to the focus of the study. An operational definition can be defined accordingly. For instance, if studying the career progression of those who work from a home base for a substantial part of their total working hours, it would seem less relevant to differentiate between those workers who use information and communication technologies as an intrinsic part of their work and those who do not. In that instance, the amount of time spent away from the office would be a key factor.

For the purposes of this review, I have included articles which use many terms and I will use the term specified by the authors, clarifying the appropriate dimensions wherever possible.

3.3 Benefits and disadvantages of flexible working to the organization

Shin, Sheng & Higa (2000) examined telework from the theoretical perspective of organizational effectiveness, which is generally understood as an ultimate goal of organizational design and changes. This provides a useful viewpoint to consider some of the factors that contribute to the well established business case for the use of flexible working practices. They used the competing values framework (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983, cited in Shin et al, 2000) which examines the effectiveness of management information systems, identifying four primary dimensions of organizational effectiveness.

From an **open systems perspective**, the response to the external environment is considered such as reduced pollution from less commuting, in line with the 1990 Clean Air Act in the United States (Gainey, Kelley & Hill, 1999; Igarria & Guimaraes). The **rational goal view** places the focus on economic goals such as lower overhead costs from reduced office space requirements (Riley & McCloskey, 1997), operational and numerical flexibility (Branine,2003) and higher productivity (Baruch, 2000; Belanger, 1999; Eaton, 2003; Endeshaw & Tung, 2000, Hartman, Stoner & Arora, 1992; Whitehouse, Diamond & Lafferty, 2002). The **human relations approach** looks at behavioural issues such as increased organizational commitment (Eaton, 2003), improved morale, job satisfaction (Baruch, 2000;) and means of attracting and retaining valued employees (Rau & Hyland,2002; Branine, 2003). The fourth is the **internal process dimension** which emphasizes organizational communication and control (Duxbury & Neufeld, 1999; Riley & McCloskey, 1997). An organization may also benefit from considering the success of flexible working practices along such dimensions, as a way of identifying possible strengths and weaknesses which can be used in directing future strategy.

Of course, care has to be taken when exploring causal effects. Taking the example of increased productivity, Shin et al (2000) question how this conclusion has been reached. They suggest a number of feasible reasons which question this apparent

benefit to the organization. For instance, the definition of productivity can be explained as the ratio between quantity of input and output and yet this may not be appropriate for the measurement of knowledge work because of difficulty in its quantification. The difficulty of defining and measuring productivity was mentioned as one of the main barriers to the evaluation of effectiveness of family responsive policies mentioned by Auerbach (1990, cited in Glass & Estes, 1997, p303). Also noted was the questionable causality between such policies and outcomes. For instance, higher productivity of teleworkers could be the result of increased working hours. Several researchers noted that workers put in longer hours, using the time saved from commuting (Endeshaw & Tung, 2000; Whitehouse, Diamond & Lafferty, 2002). Other explanations for higher productivity included fewer administrative tasks which may have been delegated to on-site workers (Shin et al, 2000) and the benefit of greater concentration as a result of fewer interruptions and distractions. Glass & Estes (1997) also point out that such results are often perceptual measures, based on self-report questionnaires, rather than behavioural observations.

These and other seeming contradictions are examined by Pearlson and Saunders (2001) in a paper which details the inherent paradoxes which can be found in telecommuting, from a manager's perspective. These paradoxes arise specifically from the fact of remote working and seem to centre on the different perspectives of the manager and the teleworker. For instance, the teleworker may appreciate the increased temporal and spatial flexibility available from working at home, but the manager may have to add new structure to ensure sufficient interaction between the remote worker and the on-site workers and to keep track of work coverage.

3.4 Benefits and disadvantages of flexible working to the individual

A wide range of effects on the individual has become equally accepted as part of the business case for the introduction of flexible working practices. The human relations approach mentioned above includes increased job satisfaction (Igarria & Guimaraes 1999; Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright & Neuman 1999) and increased commitment as a result of appreciation of the chance to work flexibly. But the effects of flexible

working seem to be much more variable, taken from the individual perspective. For instance, Igbaria and Guimaraes (1999) describe increased job satisfaction as a result of greater autonomy and control over discretion and completion of work. But they also describe decreased job satisfaction due to feelings of isolation and alienation. These can result from lack of social interaction with colleagues, increased interference in mode of working, limited feedback and fewer career advancement opportunities.

3.4.1 Isolation and visibility

The effect of employee isolation is discussed by Gainey, Kelley & Hill (1999). They present a model which looks at the impact of telecommuting on corporate culture and position employee isolation within this. Yet another paradox is introduced; telecommuting can weaken corporate culture in the sense that the informal communications, which reinforce the basic norms, values and beliefs of a particular culture, are much more infrequent. The opposite view could be taken; telecommuting can strengthen company culture as a result of employees being more self-reliant, committed and productive. The crucial issue in understanding this seems to be the differing amounts of interaction needed to maintain a given culture. The authors focus on social isolation, recognising the needs of humans for the opportunity to interact with others and to form enduring relationships.

Professional and social isolation are differentiated by Cooper & Kurland (2002) in their study which compares the impact of telecommuting on public and private employees' perceptions of professional isolation. Respondents described missing out on social interactions which occur simply as a result of being around friends and colleagues. Their concern for professional isolation centred around being away from the work place and therefore potentially missing out on opportunities for progression and organizational rewards.

This study provides an example of triangulating the data gathering process as part of a grounded theory approach. The research was conducted in four North American organizations, two high technology firms and two city governments, which were chosen because of their shared commitment towards the success of their established telecommuting programmes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, either

face-to-face or on the phone, with thirty seven telecommuters, twenty five non-telecommuting co-workers, and their supervisors. One limitation of the study is that only four of the telecommuters did so full time and a further four telecommuted only one or two hours per day, several days a week. The telecommuting patterns of the remaining twenty nine are not detailed.

The basic finding of the study was that both public and private employees perceived that professional isolation impacted upon employee development activities. Having differentiated between professional and social isolation, the researchers subsequently found that this was an unnecessary distinction as both types affected the development activities. The informal social interactions form an integral part of professional relationships and have an impact on the three types of developmental activities which telecommuters felt they missed out on. Interpersonal networking with others in the organization, informal learning, and mentoring from colleagues and supervisors all occurred less frequently for the telecommuters and, not surprisingly, the greatest impact was telecommuting frequency. Overall, the private organization employees were more concerned about telecommuters missing out on these opportunities than the public organization employees, although all felt that professional isolation would affect future professional development. However, the public organizations had more formalized promotion procedures, and so opportunities were perceived as less dependent on the benefits of networking, informal learning and mentoring. Kurland and Cooper (2002) used the data from the private organizations in another paper where the focus was on the link between managerial control and professional isolation. As well as frequency of telecommuting they also noted a similar effect depending on the length of time an individual had been telecommuting and whether they were in a position where they were hoping for promotion.

In an empirical investigation of factors affecting attitudes towards teleworking, Lim & Teo (2000) also found that respondents recognized the importance of visibility and direct daily interaction with managers, supervisors, and colleagues. This was viewed as a method of staying informed with happenings in the office. The decrease in such interaction which would be a result of teleworking led to a less favourable attitude towards it. Visibility was acknowledged as important within this working environment

for promotability. Interestingly, they found that organizational commitment was negatively associated with attitude towards telecommuting, suggesting that highly committed employees would not wish to distance themselves from the office environment.

3.4.2 Effects on career

After considering the effects of visibility and professional isolation, this paper moves on to a more thorough examination of the interaction of flexible working practices with career enhancement or progression. There is considerable discussion in the literature about whether absence from the workplace due to telecommuting will result in being passed over for promotion.

A pilot study at a large telecommunications firm in the United States identified this fear and found that good design of the telecommuting programme and support from management mitigated the perceived ill-effects (Riley & McCloskey, 1997). Having employees work in the office for some time each week allowed them to continue to identify with the corporate culture and objectives and to maintain their presence as a valued individual. So in this case participation in a flexible working programme was not found to have a restrictive effect on career advancement. Presence within the workplace also facilitates the building and maintenance of networks which can be crucial in having the contacts which lead to knowledge of promotional opportunities (Melamed, 1995).

In a review of research on telecommuting, McCloskey and Igbaria (1998) question whether the impact on career advancement may be important for professional employees, but of less relevance for clerical workers who typically have more limited promotional opportunities anyway. So telecommuting may affect the career advancement prospects of people at different levels of jobs to a greater or lesser extent.

Limited career opportunities are believed to have a negative impact on other work outcomes such as job satisfaction and turnover intention. Igbaria went on to explore differences in employee turnover intentions among 104 telecommuters and 121 non-telecommuters who were salespeople in a large company in the United States

(Igbaria & Guimaraes, 1999). They specifically sought to determine any differences in career success outcomes, as measured by job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Telecommuters reported feeling more satisfied with their job as a result of working from home, experiencing less role ambiguity and role conflict. This reduced the likelihood of their leaving the company, as did the higher level of organizational commitment. But a cause for concern was the reported lower level of satisfaction with peers and with promotion, which may be due to less time spent interacting with co-workers, and the resulting limited networking opportunities. Telecommuters may benefit from detailed information about how such a work pattern fits in with the promotion process within the organization, to provide reassurance about future prospects. Suggestions for future research include examining the career paths of telecommuters and non-telecommuters and the relationship between career orientation and the types of position held by these two groups.

In a further attempt to address the specific question of career advancement of telecommuters, McCloskey and Igbaria (2003) conducted research in a large, highly competitive telecommunications firm based in the United States. The sample consisted of telecommuters and job-matched non-telecommuters and the supervisors of both groups who were all professional employees. They suggested that job performance evaluations can be divided into the task dimension, including productivity and quality of work, and the relationship dimension, addressing issues such as cooperation and commitment. They questioned whether telecommuting may result in a positive impact on the job dimension and a negative impact on the relationship dimension. However, findings indicated no negative impact on either dimension and there was no significant difference in the supervisor's assessment of career advancement prospects for telecommuters or non-telecommuters. Although the amount of time spent telecommuting was not found to be relevant, the authors acknowledged that those in the sample did not have a high level of participation in telecommuting. Both telecommuters and non-telecommuters worked similar full time hours and the researchers reported how frequently each of the respondents telecommuted. They found that a majority did so only one day a week, working in the office for the remainder of the time. So although this was encouraging in terms of demonstrating no impact on career advancement prospects, more

research was called for with participants telecommuting on an increased basis to further alleviate the concern of career stagnation.

A different approach was taken in three separate studies which all used an experimental design to explore the relationship of career progression and flexible working patterns in public accounting firms (Cohen & Single, 2001; Frank & Lowe, 2003; Rogier & Padgett, 2004).

Firstly, Cohen and Single (2001) examined whether senior colleagues perceptions of an individual's professional success and anticipated turnover were affected by whether that individual was working flexibly. Gender was a controlled variable and did not have an effect. As well as a questionnaire about the hypothetical manager's profile, open-ended questions were used to find the factors which were perceived to be most likely to help or hinder career progression. Results from the questionnaire indicated that participating in a flexible working arrangement had a negative effect on an individual's professional success. Table 9 shows the results of the open-ended questions regarding career progression. Several items are of particular interest. First, the 'ability to balance' is seen as important for the manager working flexibly, and 'lack of balance' is described as a weakness for the manager working traditionally. Cohen and Single suggest that this may be an important skill in this profession and that, without the chance to demonstrate it, the 'traditional' manager may be considered more of a risk in the future, especially given the possible "future desire for a family". A second point is the mention of 'burnout potential' for the 'traditional' manager. Clearly, there are also negative perceptions associated with working too many hours. But lack of time is seen as a hindrance for those working flexibly, described as working three, rather than five, twelve-hour days. Presumably, there is no adjustment to the percentage of time spent on mentoring or development activities. They just disappear as all the working time now has to be face-time on client activities.

Table 9: Factors that will enhance/hinder career progression for a female/male participant in a flexible work arrangement

Manager on a flexible work arrangement	Manager not on a flexible work arrangement
<p>Factors that enhance career progression</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. high profile client/keeping client happy 2. mentoring activity 3. good performance rating 4. commitment 5. training activity 6. flexibility/ability to balance <p>Factors that hinder career progression</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. lack of practice development activities 2. limited exposure/lack of face time 3. lack of time for training activities 4. lack of time for mentoring 5. negative perception of others 6. reduced workload 	<p>Factors that enhance career progression</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. high profile client/keeping client happy 2. long hours/hard worker 3. practice development activities 4. mentoring activity 5. involvement in office 6. technical competence <p>Factors that hinder career progression</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. performance evaluations not good enough 2. burnout potential 3. lack of balance 4. future desire for a family 5. importance of personal/leisure time

(Source: Cohen & Single 2001, p.324)

A similar hypothetical case scenario was used by Frank and Lowe (2003) in an American study which examined the effect of the work arrangements of management accountants on performance evaluations, job commitment, and career progression judgements. They suggest that many organizations, and particularly professional

service firms, still have a culture of presenteeism where motivation and commitment are interpreted as a direct consequence of hours worked and especially face-time. The study focused on temporal and spatial flexibility, comparing three work arrangements: traditional working hours, flexitime where individuals can adjust their start and finish times but still complete their contractual hours each day or week, and telecommuting, which was defined here as allowing employees to work at home or another remote site on a regular basis. Although participation in alternative work arrangements did not affect perceptions of current performance and job commitment, such participation led to significantly reduced perceptions of long-term career potential, particularly for telecommuters. Gender was controlled in this study and no interaction was found, either with gender of respondent or gender and work arrangement.

The third study using a similar experimental design explored the potential career consequences for women using an alternative work arrangement, in this case a twenty per cent reduction of contracted hours, resulting in a four day week (Rogier and Padgett 2004). Again the setting was an accounting firm, but this time respondents were MBA students, ninety per cent of whom were currently employed on a full time basis. Three factors emerged from factor analysis. Job-career dedication described perception of commitment level and suitability for advancement; advancement motivation referred to perceived level of ambition and desire for advancement; and capability referred to ability and competence. Job-career dedication and advancement motivation were rated lower when the subject was described as working flexibly but capability was not, suggesting that career progression is not based solely on ability, but on perceptions of commitment and ambition.

The third study specifically chose to focus on women, discussing the issue of progression of women to senior positions, and claiming that women are more likely to take advantage of flexible working patterns. I think that an opportunity was missed in terms of comparing results for women and men; given the research design, gender could easily have been a controlled variable as in the other two examples. So at this stage, the evidence regarding flexible working and impact on career advancement is mixed.

In another study which focused on women, Hill, Martinson, Ferris and Baker (2004) differentiate reduced hours from traditional part time work which they described as usually associated with lower status, less pay and fewer career opportunities. They looked at a sample of 687 professional women working for IBM in the United States, comparing those who worked less than 35 hours with those who worked at least 35 hours per week. The women working shorter hours experienced greater work/family balance and did not report less perceived career opportunity, although there was an acceptance of a trade-off, putting career on hold while they were working fewer hours with the understanding that they would be able to make significant progress once they worked full time hours once again. This was also reflected by Kropf (1999) in her description of the flexibility initiative at the US practice of Deloitte & Touche where *“a reduced workload arrangement for a defined period of time may affect the timing of career progression but will not affect ultimate career potential”* (p.185).

Similar findings emerged when Stanworth (1999) conducted an investigation in a London borough into the effect of reduced-hours work on careers amongst a mixed sample of professionals and clerical staff. She found that respondents held the perception that working flexibly had a detrimental effect on their chances of career progression. She reported that career advancement to senior positions was only accessible to those working a traditional pattern and careers of flexible workers were on hold despite self reports of high career orientation.

In the last three cases (Hill et al, 2004; Kropf, 1999; Stanworth, 1999) the language is very important as it suggests that time is an issue. Kropf's "career potential" refers to the future and maybe the perceived career opportunities in Hill et al's study are also in the future. If researchers are asking about the career opportunities available in the present to individuals working flexibly who wish to maintain that pattern of work, then they may have to emphasise that it is current opportunities they are interested in. If workers are accepting that they will be able to progress once they "return" to traditional working patterns, then are they actually also acknowledging that they are currently standing still? What is that if not a perception of fewer available career opportunities? As Cohen and Single say, *“these findings indicate support for the*

attitude that flexible work arrangements may not end career advancement but they do make it more difficult to achieve.” (p.326)

There was a distinct absence of reference to career theories in any of the studies which examined the perceptions of career success linked to flexible working. One such theory which may add some clarity to the area is Rosenbaum's tournament model (Rosenbaum, 1979; 1989).

This model looks at the promotion decisions within an organization and likens them to tournaments i.e. *“systems for selecting the most talented individuals by a series of progressively more selective competitions.”* (Rosenbaum, 1989, p.336).

Tournaments make selections at each stage and then declare some individuals as winners who then compete against each other for the next level. In this way, “losers” are seen to be less able and therefore cannot compete with winners as it is inefficient for them to be holding challenging positions within the career structure. Similarly they should not be taking the time and attention of supervisors away from the “winners”. Rosenbaum suggests that once an individual has “lost” a competition, or been passed over for promotion, they are stigmatised and so future opportunities are limited.

Do many organizational cultures support, maybe subconsciously, such a career model? There are many instances when number of hours worked is seen as a measure of motivation or commitment (Simpson, 1998; Kirchmeyer, 2002; Judiesch & Lyness, 1999) or a prerequisite of success (Mallon & Cassell, 1999). Flexible working practices often include fewer hours spent at the workplace, whether because of reduced load working or telecommuting. If fewer hours are then equated to lack of commitment, individuals may be marking themselves as “losers” as in Rosenbaum's tournament model. In a study examining the relationship between taking a leave of absence and rewards, Judiesch and Lyness (1999) used archival databases for a sample of 10,584 managers of a U.S. multinational financial services organization. They found that managers who had taken leaves of absence had smaller salary increases and fewer promotions than those who had not and suggested that in a gendered organizational culture, the taking of such leave brings into question employee commitment.

One example of a culture where Rosenbaum's tournament theory is being played out was studied by Hylmo and Buzzanell (2002) when they used Martin's (1992, cited in Hylmo and Buzzanell, 2002) three cultural lenses as a framework for analysing the discourses of both telecommuters and non-telecommuters. The differentiation lens revealed four distinct clusters of employees, based on their own and others' assessments of their potential for promotion. Advancement in the organization, a federal government agency, was described as *"the result of preselection with highly promotable individuals moving rapidly through the system either because of qualifications (the directors' discourse) or sociability (other workers' accounts). People labelled non-promotable or plateaued were not part of the social or political inner circle."* (p.339). An 'us and them' mentality developed between the four clusters of telecommuters and non-telecommuters with the office-based employees recognizing the need to be seen, even when taking part in relatively mundane conversations.

The language used reflects that used by Rosenbaum who presents three predictions about career patterns which may each have a bearing on the impact of flexible working practices. Firstly, the lasting effects of early selections along a career path continue to have an impact throughout the career. If an individual has been identified as an early winner this affects subsequent options they are faced with. Working flexibly may well be seen as a step away from that successful career path with the attendant concern that one may never get back on to it. Again, there is some evidence that the tournament model applies in organizations. Almer, Cohen and Single (2003) found that men were much less likely to intend to adopt a flexible working arrangement than women, referring to *"the social stigma often associated with men 'stepping off the fast track' in our society"* (p.86).

Rosenbaum's second prediction relates to age, which is seen as one way of measuring whether an individual is keeping pace, maintaining their upward climb. Obviously this adversely affects women who take a career break to have children and are consequently older in the same position when they return. Simpson and Altman's (2000) study of career development of male and female managers in the UK illustrates the view of this relationship between age and success, using the age of

35 years as a cut-off between “*high potential and mature personnel*” (p.191). Thirdly, there is the effect of organization growth. In the tournament model, a period of increased growth may allow more winners in each selection round and early losers may actually get another chance at promotion. But in the situation of downsizing, where there are fears of redundancy, employees may feel a much greater need to demonstrate commitment by their presence in the work place. In this situation one could expect fewer employees to take advantage of flexible working practices, wishing to ensure job security. Yet the organizational viewpoint might be that this is one of the benefits, having some people voluntarily work fewer hours when in a position of decreasing growth or even shrinkage. This would require tremendous trust and an open attitude towards flexible working from both parties.

3.5 Motivations for flexible working

Peters, Tijdens and Wetzels (2004) used data taken from the Work & IT 2001 Survey to increase understanding of the factors influencing adoption of telecommuting in the Netherlands. In this study, the focus was on workers based at home at least one day per week. They examined three issues; which employees have the opportunity to work this way, which prefer to do so and which actually practice telecommuting? Their approach centred on both organizational factors (the supply side) and the employee perspective (demand side). As with many of the studies in this review, the research focused on practice with relatively little theory. Yet, exploring the motivation for flexible working, whether from an organizational or individual perspective, provides the opportunity to examine the theories which are informing research.

3.5.1 Why do organizations introduce flexible working practices?

The most obvious answer is that they are part of an organizational response to the work/life balance issue. Rogier and Padgett (2004) state quite clearly that the primary impetus is to attract and retain valued employees who may otherwise leave a particular organization, or indeed the workforce itself. Yet, the presence of recruitment difficulties was not found to be a significant variable in an analysis of workplaces offering the opportunity to work at home (Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea and Walters, 2002).

Lee, MacDermid, Williams, Buck and Leiba-O'Sullivan (2002) questioned an organization's primary concern when implementing a work/life programme as well as how success of such programmes would be evaluated. Some organizations may undertake such a programme without a clear idea of the full effects. Some of the negative effects include an increase in stress if an individual works reduced hours but ends up doing the same job in less time, or an increase in workload for other staff who may pick up the responsibilities no longer undertaken by reduced hours workers.

Organizations have traditionally been defined by their limits – the spatial barriers of walls, doors and fences which have been “guarded” by receptionists and security officers, and the temporal barriers of working hours and activity schedules (Scott, 2003). In the boundaryless or virtual office, activities are no longer bounded by such spatial and temporal markers. Boundaries still exist, but in the heads of the participants, and the managing of such boundaries is one of the fundamental elements of work/life balance. Scott mentions direct sales organizations such as Tupperware, as an example of combining multiple roles which illustrates how the external identities and connections of participants are a primary resource for the organization. These connections provide skills and legitimacy in the wider social environment.

So the boundaries are still there but have been redefined and involve different mechanisms. Rational systems theorists argue that boundaries contribute to organizational rationality and insulate the organization from its social context. So from this perspective there would be huge resistance to the introduction of family/friendly policies which acknowledge the extra-organizational identities of individual participants. Such theorists view these identities as a potential problem to be managed by such means as recruitment criteria and control mechanisms. Recruitment and selection processes should be organizationally relevant and free from influences of other social affiliations in order to ensure the best candidate for each role. This clearly sits comfortably with the current social and legal expectations of non discrimination. But some authors have questioned whether the historical emphasis on full time commitment does actually discriminate against women who typically bear a disproportionate amount of familial responsibilities. Dex, Smith and Winter (2001) found that parents, particularly mothers, are more likely to work hours

which differ greatly from the traditional office hours. In some instances so-called flexible working results merely in a different, but equally rigid, working pattern being imposed.

As work/life balance has become increasingly relevant over the last 15 years, it has been recognised during the same period that conventional career paths through corporations are much less likely. Individuals can no longer expect to join an organization and progress through until retirement. Downsizing and recurrent redundancies are a feature of life. The benefits of various forms of externalization of the workforce have been recognized by organizations as one way of reducing future financial penalties of downsizing. Pfeffer & Baron (1988) identify three ways in which the attachment between firms and workers may be decreased. Reduced locational attachment, with staff working off-site, has been encouraged by developments in technology allowing rapid information transfer. They also mention ease of monitoring work from a distance, yet this is a factor which is often quoted as inhibiting promotion of flexible working because of its difficulty. The second way is to reduce temporal attachment and this is evident in the increasing tendency for organizations to employ part-time or short term workers who historically lack benefits and job security. Finally, there is the reduction in administrative attachment, illustrated by the use of temporary workers who are on the payroll of an agency, and contractors who may be independent or agency workers.

It is interesting to consider that these methods of reducing attachment between an organization and its workers were put forward in 1988, just before organizations began to pay serious attention to the work/life balance issue. Much has been made of the fact that organizations are recognizing their social responsibilities, yet it could be that this is a way of packaging the decreased attachment mentioned above, in order to portray organizations more favourably.

3.5.2 What theories underpin the decisions by organizations to address the work/life balance issue by the introduction of flexible working practices?

Institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) would suggest that organizations adapt to the values of external society. Pressures to conform can be described in three ways;

- Coercive institutional pressures from governmental regulations or laws
- Normative institutional pressures from cultural expectations
- Mimetic institutional pressures from the desire to look like other organizations

Clearly, organizations are facing each of these pressures with regard to work/life balance. The Work/life Balance Initiative was introduced by the UK government in 2000, and in April 2003 legislation was brought in giving parents of a child under six years of age, or a disabled child under 18, the right to request flexible work including a change in working hours, days or place of work. As well as the obvious coercive pressure, the publicity has added to the cultural expectations of people resulting in normative pressure. Some organizations have been at pains to ensure that flexible working is available to all regardless of parental status, fearing resentment from other workers. Indeed there has been a slight shift in terminology away from the oft-used work/family balance or family friendly policies towards work/life balance, in order to broaden the application to the whole of the workforce. Giving similar legal rights to people who have caring responsibilities for older or disabled relatives is currently under review. All of this increases the normative institutional pressures. Mimetic institutional pressures are also clearly demonstrable, with organizations being keen to be seen as an “employer of choice”.

But this takes us back to the reasoning behind the introduction of such policies. The difference between institutionalized and non-institutionalized environments often appears to be simply a matter of rationality. Rationalized myths (the framing of non-rational arguments) are part of the institutional context in which organizations operate and to which they adapt in order to maintain their social legitimacy. In applying

institutional theory to an analysis of a particular organization, it is important to consider how the organization is adapting to its institutional context. However, Goodstein (1994) points out that this emphasis on conformity to institutional pressures can cover up the role of interest and agency in organizational adaptation to institutional environments. Organizations do not always blindly respond to institutional pressures, but may assess the effect of such a response in terms of efficiency.

Oliver (1991) suggested a continuum of strategic responses to institutional pressures, ranging from the most compliant, acquiescence, to the most resistant, manipulation. She suggested that the response chosen depends on a number of factors, including the congruence of institutional norms and organizational goals. This further explains why work/life balance policies may falter in some organizations, when introduced as a response to institutional pressure, but without a clear idea of how they will contribute to organizational goals. For instance, is the primary aim of a family responsive policy to achieve excellence in client service, or to have the ability to attract and retain key talent, or to increase individual job satisfaction and performance? (Lee, MacDermid et al, 2002) Another factor which may be relevant in policies being less than successful was highlighted in a study of 2000 managerial employees at a large telecommunications company in the U.S. by Kossek, Barber & Winters (1993). They found that employees were less likely to accept the use of flexible working arrangements if they felt that the company was introducing them for external reasons such as "copying competitors". Similarly, people are less likely to use flexible working arrangements as they move up in the organizational hierarchy, so its value as a strategy for retaining valued members of staff is questionable (Almer, Cohen & Single, 2003).

Goodstein's (1994) study of 1,239 American organizations with 10 or more employees supported the importance of organizational size as a factor in determining responses to institutional pressures. The size of an organization links to its visibility and therefore its need to maintain social legitimacy. Equally, it is possible that large organizations may have more specialized human resource staff who are able to focus on work/family issues, and more financial resources available to provide

relatively expensive benefits such as childcare. One drawback to this study is the lack of data on the proportion of women employed by each organization.

Ingram & Simons (1995) built on Goodstein's study and integrated resource dependence theory and institutional theory to attempt to explain organizational responsiveness to work/family issues. We have seen how organizations are constrained by social pressures. The basic argument of resource dependence theory is that an analysis of interorganizational relationships within the network of the organization can help managers to understand the power/dependence relationships that exist between their organization and other network actors. Such knowledge allows managers to anticipate likely sources of influence from the environment and suggests ways in which the organization can offset some of this influence by creating counter-dependence. Managing dependencies requires the establishment of countervailing power with respect to the environmental elements on which the organization's dependence exists. So this highlights an issue of criticality and scarcity of resources.

In the study by Ingram & Simons, the countervailing power was the supply of females in the labour market. So organizations with high countervailing power are those in industries with high female unemployment. Ingram & Simons hypothesized that organizations would choose strategies for institutional response by weighing institutional pressures against the ability to use countervailing power and the extent of the expected technical benefit of work/family responsiveness. Most of their hypotheses were supported; however they expected that organizations would be most likely to pursue a compromise strategy when institutional pressures are strong, countervailing power is high, and benefits are low. In fact they found that the benefits had to be high for this strategy to be adopted.

They were using the five predictors of institutional responses put forward by Oliver – cause, constituents, content, control and context. Given the number of women in the workforce under scrutiny, it is not surprising that they considered that an organization would be more responsive if they had a high female population. But this was not the case – probably because women tend to have limited power and so organizational responsiveness is more likely to be related to the number of women managers. But

there is contrary evidence to this suggestion. Bardoel (2003) did not find support for the contention that female managers, or workforces characterised by employees with dependants, would be critical factors for employer involvement in work family issues. Consistent with a rational choice perspective, she found that attitudes of senior managers play a large part in the introduction of work/family practices. Her findings also demonstrated that, contrary to institutional theory, smaller organizations were more likely to be accommodating workplaces. It would seem that organizations are still seeking reassurance about a sound business case for the introduction of work/family practices and so expected efficiency gains must be apparent when board members are considering implementation of these programmes.

Barringer & Milkovich (1998) examine management decisions through two further lenses. The focus of agency theory with respect to adoption of flexible working practices is on the design of optimal employment contracts. The premise of the model is that the interests of principals may conflict partially with those of the agents. Consequently, flexible working arrangements should be designed to motivate employees to act in the best interests of the principal. This links to Hall & Parker's (1993) premise that the underlying aim of family friendly policies is to *"encourage higher levels of engagement in the activities and relationships that make up a job"* and so *"increase psychological availability"* of employees (p.6). This allows people to express their various roles and arrange working patterns which fit those roles, thus leaving them free to be committed to work and to produce agreed outcomes. Outcome based contracts provide clear incentives for agents to be as productive as possible, but all too often in the literature, commitment to the organization, or motivation to work, is measured by hours put in, particularly visible hours in the workplace.

Considering the transaction cost perspective, the assumptions here are that organizations establish structures which minimize the cost of transactions or the exchange of goods and services when the potential for opportunistic behaviour is high. So if critical skills are acquired on the job, turnover can be costly and so organizations adopt internal governance structures which will stabilize employment. Increased retention of valued employees is considered to be a key benefit of offering flexible working. A concern often stated by managers is that productivity is difficult to

monitor when workers are home based or working in remote offices, which are two popular flexible working options. In such circumstances, organizations can adopt governance structures which provide incentives for employees to act in the interests of the organization. So if employees value flexible working, implementation of such practices leads to the desire to maintain continued employment, thus reducing turnover and increasing commitment to the organization.

In a paper which develops an explanatory model of organizational adoption of teleworking, Daniels, Lamond and Standen (2001) concentrate particularly on neo-institutional theory to present a framework which includes variables such as location, use of technology, knowledge intensity, and intra- and extra-organizational contact. They aim to move towards conceptual clarity, recognizing the need for research to focus on theory building and testing to a greater extent in this largely practitioner focused area.

3.5.3 Why does an individual make use of flexible working practices?

Flexible working practices allow individuals to respond to the demands of different domains of their lives in ways that minimise stress, enabling them to maintain a high level of performance in the work place as well as fulfilling responsibilities important to them outside of work. There is some inconsistency in the literature, with some research emphasising work and family whilst other studies allow for work and non-work demands. The benefits of flexible working are not just available to those with parental or other caring responsibilities. For instance, individuals may choose to study, undertake voluntary work within the community, offer professional expertise to a charity, participate in sporting or other leisure activities or simply wish to avoid long commuting journeys.

However, the predominant reason given for adopting a flexible working pattern, relates to family, such as being able to spend more time with family members (Hartman, Stoner et al; Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2002). But people also quote the ability to increase working hours, often due to reduced commuting time, or increased productivity due to fewer distractions, higher quality of work possible (Baruch &

Nicholson, 1997) and reduction in role conflict and role ambiguity (Igbaria & Guimaraes, 1999; Madsen, 2003). But when the research is examined, there are many concerns about the actual consequences of flexible working, especially when it takes the form of home working.

Mirchandani (2000) chose a case study approach in the research to explore some of the contradictory images which are presented regarding working at home.

Respondents were female and male professionals who work at home in Canada. On the one hand, such a working arrangement offers the chance to reduce the stress of role conflict by providing autonomy to manage demands from both domains.

Alternatively, working at home can lead to tensions resulting from unclear boundaries between work time and family time (Harris, 2003).

In a study based on 62 in-depth interviews with homeworkers, Baruch and Nicholson (1997) also found that a major consequence of homeworking is to change the boundary between home and work. Of course, this allows more flexibility in responding to issues which arise. But equally it can result in the expectation of an ever-present response to demands from either the work or home domains “a *protective barrier between work and home has been removed – protective against the spillover of problems from one domain to the other.*” (p. 20). Mirchandani (2000) follows the same theme, describing the integration of work and family activities as a threat and suggesting that organizations are reinforcing the status quo which assumes that organizational needs take priority over family demands. If a homeworker chooses their work hours outside conventional office hours, the organizational expectation is likely to be that they are still available for work phone calls during traditional hours. The danger is that the work hours just expand.

3.5.4 What are the theories which underpin the decisions by individuals to adopt flexible working practices?

Flexible working practices sit within the field of work/life balance, which is the phrase used to describe the state of an individual's life when they feel they are able to address the demands in different spheres of their life without undue stress. It implies the ability to manage and respond to the normal pressures faced in the everyday

course of events and there is also the suggestion of having a level of personal choice over the decisions we make so that we are able to achieve satisfaction and fulfilment in the different domains of life.

On an individual level a key issue for work/life balance is the role conflict which may be experienced at different life stages or different career stages. Identity theory links identities, or self attitudes, to the role-related behaviour of individuals and focuses on the self as comprised of the number of roles an individual occupies (Stryker, 1968; Stryker & Burke, 2000). Identity salience refers to how important an individual considers a particular role to be and the amount of effort s/he puts into that role. Stryker suggests that identities are organised into a hierarchy with those near the top more likely to be activated in a given situation and so more self-defining. Increasing levels of commitment to an identity increases its salience and increases the impact on what an individual think, feels and does. In considering flexible working, therefore, it may be necessary to look at the different roles of an individual and to assess the salience attached to those roles. Does role conflict arise because the hierarchical positioning of those identities becomes less clearly defined?

3.5.4.1 Role salience

In a study which looked at men and women, Lobel and St.Clair (1992) differentiated between those with salient family identities and those with salient career identities, finding that a high level of career salience was associated with a high level of work effort but the effects of career salience were stronger than the effects associated with gender. But salient family identities and salient career identities may not be incompatible. For instance, in a study examining the effects of work-life policies on employee loyalty, Roehling, Roehling & Moen (2001) reflect that role salience as a provider may increase when a man becomes a parent, explaining the higher loyalty to his employer.

3.5.4.2 Role priorities

Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) identified four different groups in their sample of 861 alumni of two American business schools. They called these life role priorities with people in each group having a different life orientation; the career group, the

family group, the career+family group and the self/society group. Their findings support the view that women experience more constraints than men and must make more tradeoffs and they explore the effects of gender yet remove the emphasis on this being an area mostly applicable to women.

3.5.4.3 Role spillover

At one stage there seems to have been an acceptance that concerns for family needs and demands have a negative effect on individual performance in the work place. This gave way to the more realistic acknowledgement that work family conflict can have an impact in either direction, work to family or family to work (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Staines' (1980) spillover theory built on this suggesting that emotions and behaviours in one domain would carry over to the other, regardless of any temporal or physical boundaries.

Work family conflict, as defined by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) specifically excludes conflict between work and a leisure role, focusing on role pressures from the work and family domains. Their literature review suggests three major forms of work family conflict which can take place in either direction.

1. Time-based conflict occurs when pressures from both domains compete for the individual's time and is consistent with a long hours culture. Two forms of this conflict may be observed; time pressures experienced in one domain may make it impossible to respond to time pressures in the other (the familiar need to be in two places at once); secondly, such pressures may create preoccupation with one domain even while physically present in the other.
2. Strain-based conflict exists when strain in one role affects one's performance in another role.
3. Behaviour-based conflict is experienced when particular patterns of behaviour are inappropriate in the other domain.

Time-based conflict is considered to be the most common and is probably the most relevant to this exploratory study. Time-based conflict is linked to the scarcity hypothesis which suggests that the sum of human energy is finite and thus competing demands for that energy lead to conflict if an individual struggles to meet the demands of multiple roles. This is similar to Becker's extension of human capital theory, termed the "allocation of energy model" which suggests that a person

devoting a great deal of effort to one role would consciously seek a role in the other domain which required much less expenditure (Becker, 1985, quoted in Judiesch and Lyness, 1999). This could lead to the conclusion that work/life balance is more about a sum of parts than equality of different domains.

In contrast, Kirchmeyer (1998, p.679) mentions Marks' (1977) expansion model of human energy which *"explains how family involvement expands one's personal resources available for work and enhances work attitudes."*

These two models are considered by Barnett and Gareis (2000) in their analysis of the relationship between reduced hours job-role quality and life satisfaction among married women physicians. They suggest that the expansion model indicates that it is the quality of experience of one's role, including the rewards associated with working reduced hours, that is the predictor, not the number of hours worked, and their hypothesis was supported.

3.5.4.4 Role boundaries and borders

So far there has been an emphasis on understanding the elements of role conflict and the benefits of balance between different domains of life. How can that balance be achieved?

Kirchmeyer (1993) found it useful to distinguish between high domain involvement with the associated extensive time commitment and heightened negative spillover, and high domain satisfaction and reduction of such negative spillover. She took issue with the emphasis on negative spillover from home to work and points out that there are positive aspects of spillover and also points out the risk that reducing nonwork involvements may lead to reducing that positive spillover as well as the negative. However much of the research findings indicate greater negative spillover. A UK study by White, Hill, McGovern, Mills and Smeaton (2003), used data from surveys in Great Britain of employed and self-employed people to examine the possible causes of negative job-to-home spillover and explored the use of "high-performance" management practices. These practices, which include teamworking, training and career development, and performance-related pay are designed to increase participation in decision making, increase learning opportunities and offer greater financial incentives but findings showed that they did lead to an increase in

negative job-to-home spillover. They found that participation in a flexible hours system reduced such spillover for women but made no difference to men whereas discretion over start and finishing times reduced spillover for men. This raises the importance of clearly defining the working practices under consideration.

In a study of self-employed home workers, Ammons and Markham (2004) identified gender differences, finding that men reported more difficulty with work spilling over into home time, whereas women faced the opposite problem. The findings suggested that stage in the life cycle is a factor in how work at home is experienced and managed.

Two related theories explore the idea of segmentation or integration of work and non-work domains and how people can manage the transition from one aspect of life to another.

Ashforth, Kreiner and Fugate (2000) describe the psychological and/or physical movement between roles as a “boundary-crossing activity” and focus on the frequent transitions people make in the course of a normal day, between work and non-work, and between different roles within the work place. They examine the effects of integration where the roles are blurred and so the creation and maintenance of boundaries is more difficult and compare these effects with those of segmentation. Here the boundaries are more defined and this increases the change that is necessary as one makes that transition, which may be eased by rites of passage. Again role identity is relevant as individuals make the change from one highly salient role to another, maybe facing the behaviour-based conflict identified by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985).

The achievement of work/life balance can be affected by both segmentation and integration, and emphasis on one or the other may differ at different life or career stages. One example of this was demonstrated in a study of young workers in a global professional services firm, where Wilson (2003) found that most respondents preferred clear segmentation of work and non-work domains. Another study illustrated the emphasis on telecommuting as a means of increased flexibility, allowing for greater integration of work and family, so that people can manage such issues as childcare with greater ease (Duxbury, Higgins & Neufeld, 1998).

Work–family border theory similarly explains the ways in which individuals manage the work and family spheres in order to achieve balance which Clark (2000) describes as “*satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict*” (p.751). Clark uses Lewin’s distinction of separate psychological domains for work and family with different associations of behaviour, values and rules. She examines the permeability and flexibility of the border and suggests how these two mechanisms affect the level of interaction between the two domains. She also points out that earlier studies of role conflict such as that by Greenhaus and Beutell measured identification with a role by measuring involvement in that role, which is not necessarily accurate, supporting Kirchmeyer’s (1993) comments. . More exact measurement of role identification would link the self concept of individuals with the meaning they find in their responsibilities in a given role.

Mirchandani (2000) takes issue with the use of language, particularly with the use of the word ‘balance’, suggesting that it often reinforces the division between work and family, rather than recognizing the work involved in maintaining a family and the supportive nature of family activities allowing an individual to work.

Two conflicting frameworks were examined by Gutek, Searle and Klepa (1991). According to the rational view, conflict is related linearly to the total amount of time spent in paid and family work. According to the gender role perspective, gender role expectations moderate the relationship between hours expended and perceived work-family conflict, and gender interacts with number of hours worked and work-family conflict.

They conducted two studies, treating the second as a replication study, checking for generalizability and robustness. As measure of “family work”, they asked for hours spent on household chores, household maintenance, basic child care and shopping. They then compared number of hours spent on family work and on paid work. Both studies suggest that the two domains of work and family operate more independently than previous research would suggest. A finding common to both studies was the relative independence of amount of hours spent in paid work and the amount of time spent in family work. They recognised that it is easier to quantify the hours spent in paid work than family work – “*for most people, family work is more elastic than paid work*”. (p. 567). I would question the whole notion of “family work” – the demands of

a family are not just about household issues and basic childcare; very often it is about being there, giving time to people, whether they are young children, teenagers, spouses or elderly relatives. Wanting to attend sports day can be a major source of conflict if it coincides with a last minute request for a client meeting. But such a desire is not “family work”. Leaving work at your contracted time to be home for children returning from school can cause conflict if colleagues think you are less committed, but they may not interpret it this way. These issues may be why Gutek et al say that researchers cannot assume that perceptions of work-family conflict directly reflect amount of time expended. Comparing an objective measure with a subjective measure shows us that level of perceived work-family conflict cannot be inferred. They found that work-family conflict is not simply different from number of hours expended, but it differed in a predictable manner, that is, in a manner consistent with sex role expectations.

3.6 Work/family or career/life balance?

The majority of studies in this review have focused on individual issues, particularly the effects of a flexible working pattern on family life, and the possible career consequences resulting from adoption of such a pattern. But just as Shin et al (2000) point out with regard to teleworking, flexible working practices are an organizational phenomena and success will therefore be measured by organizational factors. Organization theories have been used here to facilitate understanding of the organizational implications of the introduction of flexible working practices. It would seem essential for organizations to assess how flexible working practices, as part of a work/life balance policy, align with organizational goals, in order to stand a greater chance of success. The theoretical perspective is not so clear when applied to the individual although several theories have been included in this review: role conflict theory, work-strain model, boundary theory and work/family border theory.

A different perspective is suggested by Moen and Sweet (2004) who reflect some earlier concerns about the language used, indicating that the topic of work and family focuses on the role obligations of individuals at a given point in time. They suggest that a life course perspective will lead to greater understanding of the dynamic relationships between roles, involving significant others and in particular contexts. A

life course focus emphasizes the different dimensions of time; historical time and the significance of events which shape our lives, biographical time and the importance of individual differences as we grow and develop as both children and adults, and social time, the socially constructed route by which we progress through roles and relationships at culturally accepted points in our lives, such as student, worker, parent, partner. Moen and Sweet use the life course perspective to point out that “careers extend beyond occupational concerns and into other aspects of people’s lives, such as family careers and marking progressions through family forms and structures.” (p. 212). It would seem appropriate therefore, to move towards an examination of careers within the whole lives of individuals, recognising that this will inevitably involve further research looking at couples and families in their wider social context.

3.7 Implications and recommendations for practitioners

In an area which is mainly practitioner focused, it is not surprising that many of the papers in the systematic literature review address the issue of implementation of flexible working practices. Some of the positive outcomes identified above for both organizations and individuals may result from careful planning prior to implementation of flexible working practices (Igbaria and Guimaraes, 1999; Madsen 2003). Such planning is necessary to have a greater chance of successful implementation, especially if it is an organizational initiative which is enforcing home working for some members of staff (Feldman & Gainey). A different emphasis would be needed if the practice was being offered to those who choose to pursue flexible working to balance work and family demands.

The findings from interviews allowed Baruch and Nicholson (1997) to conclude that there are four main areas which have to be in alignment in order for teleworking, (with the majority of work time spent at a home base), to become feasible and effective, shown in diagram 1.

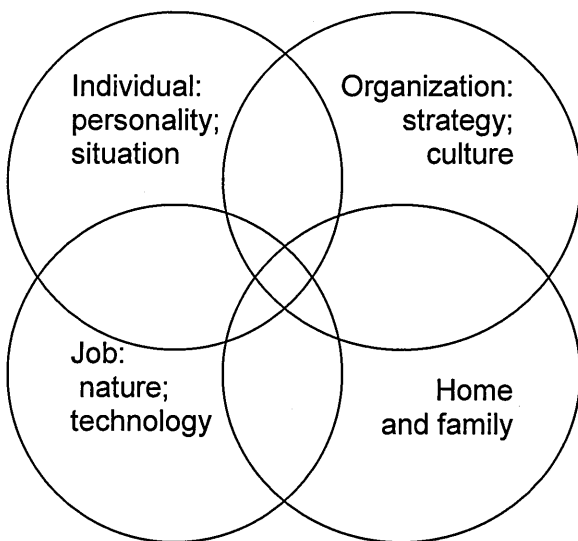


Diagram 1 The four realms of homeworking (Baruch & Nicholson, 1997, p. 27)

They suggest that one reason for the lower than predicted growth in teleworking may be due to the absence of the simultaneous meeting of these demands. Peters et al (2004) used a similar model, examining the employee's organization, job, household

and personal characteristics in order to improve understanding of factors influencing telecommuter adoption. Other authors have highlighted some or all of these different factors (Belanger & Collins, 1998; Guimaraes & Dallow, 1999).

- **Individual differences**

The skills and personality traits of individuals can be matched to the business task. Haines III, St-Onge and Archambault (2002) wished to identify which traits influenced self-reported telecommuting outcomes. They found that self-management orientations, including self-motivation, requiring little supervision, and being highly adaptable to changing demands were likely to describe more positive improvements in work/life quality. Affiliation motivation (described as the need for social interaction) was found to be negatively associated with high levels of satisfaction with the telecommuting arrangement, although they stress that there is no relationship with performance. Some organizations carefully select workers for telecommuting programmes and Shin et al (2000) point out that such selectivity of highly motivated individuals calls into question the generalizability of results and yet Baruch and Nicholson suggest that employees need to experience intrinsic job satisfaction in order to telecommute successfully.

- **Job characteristics**

Clearly jobs which require a physical presence are not suited to teleworking, whereas jobs which are knowledge intensive lend themselves more readily. Baruch and Nicholson suggest two contrasting types of job which are suitable for home-based teleworking.

“First are jobs with a very low level of autonomy, easy to control remotely and technologically simple. For such jobs remote management is feasible, by maintaining a tight control on outputs (results) rather than on inputs (effort, hours of work). The second are highly autonomous jobs and professions, where work is complex with high discretionary features. Self-management and self-control under conditions of high trust govern the management of such individuals.” (p.24)

As Peters et al (2004) mention, this leaves the suitability of a huge range of jobs open to question. They also refer to another aspect of telecommuting that can impact quality of work; lack of distractions when away from the main office which can contribute to higher productivity. In terms of flexibility of hours, there is scope for greater availability to clients at different times of the day, particularly across time zones. The danger of this is an organizational expectation that workers are available at any time, an expectation which can be perceived as extremely intrusive into nonwork domains (Harris, 2003). Baltes et al suggest that Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics model, which predicts that increased autonomy leads to increased job satisfaction, can be used to ensure suitability of jobs for a flexible working pattern. In a UK analysis which used data from the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey, organizations which offer flexible working practices were found to have more varied jobs and workers had greater autonomy in how to do jobs, as well as the pace of work (Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea and Walters, 2002).

- **The organizational level**

Support is a key feature at the organizational level, both in cultural terms and, more specifically, support from supervisors. Haines III et al (2002) found that individuals who reported higher levels of supervisor support were more likely to also report higher work/life quality and job performance outcomes. Technical support was included and Endeshaw and Tung (2000) found that hardware failure, inability to connect with the employer's network, software failure, and lack of technical support were all commented on by respondents in their study. Managing the worker as well as the work requires a culture of trust between the manager and the telecommuter, and possibly new procedures to be introduced. As Pearlson and Saunders (2001) observe, the manager has to consider not only the work required from the individual, but also the work output from the whole work group, which may involve other telecommuters as well as office-based staff, and the interactions necessary between these people to support interdependencies leading to successful completion of tasks and projects.

Managerial attitudes towards any form of flexible working will affect the success and take-up of such programmes. In particular, lack of management trust of employees' ability to telecommute effectively, acts as a barrier to employees adopting such a practice (Harrington and Ruppel, 1999; Guimaraes & Dallow, 1999).

The impact of management communication strategies on job satisfaction of telecommuters was investigated by Ilozor, Ilozor and Carr (2001) highlighting the need for regular contact with job expectations and deadlines clearly emphasised.

- **Home and family**

In spite of the oft quoted view that homeworking particularly appeals to women because of the ability to achieve greater work/life balance, various studies have pointed to the difficulties of merging the spatial boundaries of two key roles (Harris, 2003). The limitation of physical space is a very real problem for some. Not everyone has the space to be able to devote an area entirely to work and even if they have, this can cause resentment from other family members (Baruch & Nicholson, 1997). Gender was not found to have any impact on preference, opportunity or practice in the Dutch study by Peters et al (2004) and perhaps more surprisingly, the more children in the household, the less likely an employee was to prefer to commute.

The main issue to emerge from these studies which considered the activities necessary to successfully implement flexible working practices, and home working, in particular, is the need for training, throughout the whole organization. Senior managers need to understand the alignment of company goals with the decision to move in this direction and to give their support, recognizing the effect that has on the acceptability of taking part in such a scheme. As Almer et al (2003) pointed out in their study of accounting firms, it is necessary to include 'flexible staff' on high profile engagements, in order to contribute to the informal supportive culture. Colleagues and immediate managers or supervisors need to work with their employees in different ways, providing the support, structure and communications to enable staff to be successful. Those wishing to work from home can increase their own awareness

of some of the potential problems such as isolation and can learn the skills of working alone, possibly creating new habits and discipline.

Romaine suggests some useful recommendations for making an organization more receptive to flexible working, citing Catalyst (1998) p.106.

1. *"In measuring and rewarding employee success, focus on outcomes rather than on 'face time' or visibility in the office.*
2. *Reward top managers for modelling flexibility as well as espousing it.*
3. *Encourage dual career fathers, as well as mothers, to take advantage of flexible work patterns.*
4. *hold workshops to educate all managers about the business case for flexibility, and how cultural messages can either encourage or undermine flexible work pattern initiatives.*
5. *Recognize that change, while necessary, is a long-term process."*

As well as considering what steps can be taken to ensure success of flexible working practices, it is worth paying heed to Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, and Neuman (1999) who suggest that the increases in productivity and job satisfaction and other benefits may tail off over time as such schedules become the accepted norm. Another cause for concern was mentioned by Lee, MacDermid and Buck (2000). The formalization of flexible practices could lead to too much rigidity in approach. If jobs are categorized as either suitable or not for flexible working, then a two-tier system may develop with advancement opportunities reserved for full-time job holders only.

4 Conclusions

4.1 On content

Any study of flexible working practices must provide an operational definition of the working pattern under review, taking into account the contractual arrangement, location, amount of time spent away from the office, use of technology and commuting time (or lack of). Flexible working practices can have many positive outcomes which apparently benefit both the organization and the individual, such as increased productivity, greater job satisfaction, increased operational flexibility, greater autonomy and improved work/family balance. But the extent of these benefits can vary greatly and this is dependent on a range of factors including organizational culture and nature of the job. There is an inherent contradiction in the fact that flexible working practices are organizational phenomena and yet are ostensibly introduced as a solution to an individual problem i.e. to allow individuals to achieve work/life balance. Various factors affect the individual's intention to use a flexible working pattern and it is the concern over career consequences which remains part of an unresolved debate. The conflicting evidence presented means that it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the impact of working flexibly on career potential.

There is a great deal of information about the motivation of organizations and individuals for using flexible working arrangements, provided in some measure by the theories described above. The practical recommendations for successfully introducing such measures help to explain how organizations can ensure that people working flexibly will have adequate access to information, resources and the career sponsorship opportunities which are often more accessible to those who work more traditional hours. What we do not know is how career theories can inform understanding of the consequences of individual adoption of flexible working. Adopting a life course perspective, as suggested by Moen and Sweet (2004) would allow examination of the realities of the contemporary workforce in order to increase understanding of the dynamic nature of modern careers set within the whole context of the lives we lead.

4.2 On methodology

This systematic literature review process enabled a comprehensive review of the current research evidence to be undertaken. The use of a protocol, including a conceptual discussion of the problem, provided a clear search strategy and predetermined criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies. This meant that researcher bias was reduced, as all explanations, however contradictory, were presented in the analysis of data.

The main limitation of the review was imposed by time constraints as I had to narrow the fields in which I wished to conduct the review, in order to allow thorough analysis of a manageable number of papers. However, the findings have proved valuable in moving towards identification of a research gap which I can take forward for my PhD. A further literature review will be undertaken as I prepare for my 1st PhD review.

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Appendix A: Quality assessment table

Elements to consider	Level				Not applicable
	0 - Absence	1- Low	2 - Medium	3 - High	
Contribution to understanding	The article does not provide enough information to assess this criteria	The paper contributes little to an understanding of people and organizations at work	Builds on others ideas and makes some contribution to the body of knowledge in this area	Significantly develops existing knowledge filling an important theory gap	This element is not applicable to this paper
Implication for practice	The article does not provide enough information to assess this criteria	Not relevant for practitioners or only relevant to the population studied.	Transferable only to organizations with similar characteristics. Some useful ideas for practice but little comment made	High level of transferability to a different context, providing useful and applicable ideas for practice with author comment on how this may be so.	This element is not applicable to this paper
Methodology	The article does not provide enough information to assess this criteria	Flawed research design with inadequate explanation of data analysis.	Justified research design but could be improved. Study not fully executed.	Methods chosen appropriate to the research question. Clear rationale for sample including size. Clearly outlined analytic framework with auditable analysis trail.	This element is not applicable to this paper
Theory	The article does not provide enough information to assess this criteria	Of little theoretical interest with inadequate literature review	Acceptable theoretical basis with clearly defined concepts but data not entirely consistent	Excellent review of existing literature with strong theoretical basis. Theory development consistent with data presented.	This element is not applicable to this paper

Appendix B

authors	sample	location of study	industry sector	methodology	type of flexible working	key findings
Almer, Cohen & Single 2003	157 seniors, managers and partners	US	assurance services firms	questionnaire	reduced hours, and/or workdays, telecommuting, non-standard stop or start times	Factors affecting intentions to adopt a FWA include family considerations, gender, importance of opinions of professional referents, and rank.
Barnett & Gareis 2000	104 married women physicians	US	medical	survey and follow-up interview	reduced hours	Subjective reduced hours job-role quality was a significant predictor of life satisfaction, whereas the number of hours worked per se was not.
Baruch 2000	62 teleworkers - middle level management and sales personnel	UK	varied	"interview survey" - semi structured interview	teleworkers	Greater satisfaction, improved performance and reduced stress for teleworkers
Baruch & Nicholson 1997	62 managers and professionals	UK	varied	in-depth interviews	homeworking	Four elements are relevant for homeworking to be feasible and attractive: individual personality and situation, organizational strategy and culture, nature of job, home and family
Belanger 1999	71 information workers	US	high technology	questionnaire	telecommuting	Levels of productivity and personal control and autonomy were higher for telecommuters. Women were more likely to telecommute.
Bramine 2003	55 HR or personnel managers, 55 part-timers, 55 job sharers	UK	NHS trusts	Questionnaire for heads of dept, part-timers and job sharers and interview with manager in charge of flexible working practices	part-time and job sharing	From a manager's perspective, part-time work leads to operational and numerical flexibility. Job sharing leads to operational flexibility and the retention of experienced and skilful employees. From an employee's perspective, main reason for choosing to work part-time or job share was family commitment. Part-time work is more popular than job sharing. Part-timers mostly auxiliary clinic or low level admin jobs. Job shares in middle management. No senior managers or doctors worked part-time

Cohen & Single 2001	105 seniors	US	accounting	experimental design - vignette and questionnaire	reduced hours/workload	Results indicate that taking part in a flexible work arrangement is perceived to negatively affect an individual's professional success in public accounting. The perceived ability to "juggle" and the ability to "pull one's weight" potentially affects evaluations of what it takes to be a successful professional in the financial services environment.
Cooper & Kurland 2002	37 telecommuters, 25 non-telecommuters and 30 supervisors	US	two high technology firms and two city govts	semi-structured interviews conducted by phone or face-to-face	Telecommuting to variable degrees - 4 did so full time, 4 others telecommuted only an hour or so per day, several days per week.	Amount of professional isolation of telecommuters depends on the extent to which developmental activities are valued in the workplace, and the degree to which telecommuters miss these opportunities when working from home. Employees in the public and private organizations experienced telecommuting differently.
Duxbury, Higgins & Neufeld 1998	All details as below for Duxbury & Neufeld					<i>Teleworkers had significantly lower levels of interference from work to family, significantly lower levels of interference from family to work, and significantly fewer problems managing their family time than they did prior to telework pilot.</i>
Duxbury & Neufeld 1999	mixed with over 50% managers or professionals - 116 in total	Canada	government depts.	questionnaires and interviews. 3 months later - focus groups, then further 3 months, questionnaires and interviews	teleworking - 1, 2, or 3 days at home and the remainder in the office.	Part-time teleworking has little impact on intra-organizational communications. Telework arrangements reduce the no. of face to face communications and typed memos - seen as a benefit not a concern. Successful managers adapted how they communicated with home based teleworkers. Also improved client communication. Improvements due to becoming more planned, structured and well organized.
Eaton 2003	463 professional and technical	US	bio-technology	survey	flexitime, part-time jobs, working at home, job sharing, compressed work week, unpaid personal leave, sick leave to care for ill children	Greater flexibility over the boundaries of work (i.e. control over time, flexibility, and pace of work) is associated with positive org'al outcomes. No gender difference found in the relationship of perceived usable flexibility to org'al commitment and perceived productivity. Overall, perceived usability is important.

Endeshaw & Tung 2000	54 professionals	Singapore	varied	questionnaire	telecommuting, not homeworking	Reasons given for telecommuting are often practical, such as it is a better form of working and enables higher work productivity. Home-working is negligible in Singapore. Workers in this sample often worked at client site.
Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea & Walters 2002	managers from 277 workplaces with day-today responsibilities for personnel matters in the organization being asked about non-managerial employees	UK	data taken from the 1998 workplace Employee Relations Survey	interviews	Working at home	Larger organizations and those in public sector are more likely to offer wlb employment practices. Those with smaller proportion of part-time contracts, higher proportion of managers and professionals, higher proportion of employees with higher skill levels all more likely. In organizations which offer wlb practices, jobs are more varied, workers have greater autonomy in how to do job and pace of work.
Frank & Lowe 2003	Accounting professionals - 74 had a traditional working arrangement, 86 an unspecified alternative work arrangement.	US	accounting	experimental design - case scenario described hypothetical employee's education, family situation, nature of employment and details of job pfrmnce + questions about the case and personal demographic details.	three types of work arrangements: traditional, flexitime and telecommuting	Participants rated telecommuters lower than either traditional or flexible employees, suggesting that accountants associate "face-time" with productivity. Participation in alternative work arrangements does not impact perceptions of current task performance or job commitment but does reduce perceptions of employee long term career potential as measured by: 1) lower likelihood of selection for special projects, 2) being perceived as having substandard performance in the future, 3) being assigned to less challenging tasks and 4) having promotions delayed
Guimaraes & Dallow 1999	316 non-supervisory telecommuters (72% have bachelor's degree or higher)	US	not stated	questionnaire	telecommuting - 58% 4 days per week at home, 29% 3 days and 13% visited office less than once a week	Benefits from telework are directly related to the characteristics of the telework environment: supervisor characteristics, worker characteristics, work environment characteristics, task characteristics, management support and lack of implementation problems.

Haines III, St-Orge & Archambault 2002	193 telecommuters - 60% had undergraduate degree or above	Canada	govt agency, high tech org, financial institution	questionnaire	telecommuters	Telecommuters report more positive telecommuting outcomes when they perceive more supervisor support, technical support and family support. More positive outcomes also reported when telecommuters demonstrate stronger self-management orientations and lower affiliation motivation
Hall & Parker 1993	400 HR executives were asked about practices in their organizations	US	Varied	Survey	Flexible work arrangements including part-time work, flextime, unpaid family leave	Part-time work for managers and professionals found in 53% of companies. Flextime found in 77%. Only 29% have working away from base office. Greatest impact of FWP's is enhancement of a firm's corporate image.
Harrington & Ruppel 1999	111 Information Systems managers were asked about practices in their organizations	US	varied	survey	telecommuting	Lack of managerial trust of employees acts as a barrier to employee telecommuting adoption and diffusion and has slowed its growth
Harris 2003	41 sales staff	UK	manuf'g company	Company survey 6 months after teleworking began and then again 6 months later. Then focus groups and some individual interviews	teleworking with home as base.	A major tension was establishing the interface between work time and family time. The day was viewed as boundaryless with no clear defining limit between being "at work" or not. Infrequent monitoring led to feelings of invisibility and concern that management was unaware of the actual time spent on company business. Commitment had fallen, due to erosion of trust and feelings of abandonment by management. Informal communication was missing and feelings of isolation.
Hartman, Stoner & Arora 1992	97 mainly professional and technical workers (72%) managerial (22%) clerical(6%)	US	varied		telecommuting	Telecommuters experienced greater personal flexibility, reduced commuting time, increased productivity, ability to spend more time with family but felt that careers had been adversely affected due to such factors as less visibility, and less favourable evaluation by supervisors.

Hill, Martinson, Ferris & Baker 2004	375 women working less than 35 hours per week, 312 women working at least 35 hours per week, all professional women with children under 5	US	IT	online survey	reduced hours	Professional mothers who worked part-time reported significantly greater work/family balance and did not report significantly less career opportunity. Hourly pay was slightly more for those in part-time positions.
Hylmo & Buzzanell 2002	professionals, 13 full-time telecommuters, 24 non-telecommuters (although some teleworked occasionally)	US	federal government agency	open ended interviews and questionnaire	telecommuting at home, in satellite offices, or on client site	The three distinct lenses allow some explanation of contradictory findings of previous research, portraying stability and complexity simultaneously. Of particular relevance regarding careers, there was no display of boundaryless organizing and career enactments.
Igarria & Guimaraes 1999	sales staff (76% had college degree or higher), 104 telecommuters and 121 non-telecommuters	US	manuf'g company	questionnaire	telecommuting - workers who did most of their work at home or on the road	Telecommuters felt that working from home had made them more satisfied with their job, reduced their likelihood of leaving the company, and reduced their role stressors. They also tended to be happier with their supervisors and more committed to their organizations. But on the negative side, telecommuters were less satisfied with peers and with promotion.
Ilozor, Ilozor & Carr 2001	43 IT workers - job titles were asked for details not given	Australia	IT	questionnaire	telecommuting	Several communication strategies, such as regular contact, provision of appropriate equipment, regular reviews and clarity of responsibilities and goals all have significant impact on job satisfaction
Judiesch & Lyness 1999	11,815 managers	US	Financial services	Archival databases	Leaves of absence	Managers who had taken leaves of absence received significantly fewer promotions and smaller salary increases than managers who had not done so.
Kossek, Barber and Winters 1999	1340 Managers	US	telecomms	survey	flexitime, part-time, leaves of absence	Managers who were women or who work group peers who were schedule users were more likely to use each schedule. Managers' productivity concerns were highest for flexitime, then leaves, and least for part-time work

Managers and employees observed that the absence of team synergy, informal learning, intraorganizational, interpersonal networking, and effective remote mentoring could impede telecommuters' professional development and, ultimately, organizational productivity. Managers maintain control by various behaviour and output strategies. Organizations inadequately train all staff regarding telecommuting, potentially causing misperceptions and miscommunications. Perceived professional isolation is most likely when telecommuting frequently or for a long time, or want/expect promotion

telecommuting - some on a full-time basis, others, only an hour or two per day, several days per week.

grounded theory approach using semi-structured interviews

high technology

US

17 supervisors, 24 telecommuters, 12 non-telecommuters - job titles included accountant, business analyst, buyer, operations assistant, software engineer

Kurland & Cooper 2002

An emergent theoretical framework: Accommodation - a firm making the minimal adjustments in response to a request for different ways of working. Elaboration - investigating and even developing new routines in response to a new phenomenon, but without giving up the basic, status quo way of organizing and structuring work and careers. Transformation - a company's greater willingness to move away from the status quo and to actively use an external stimulus, like a request for reduced-load work arrangements, as an opportunity to find new ways of working.

reduced load

case study approach, interviewing the target managers and professionals and in addition, the worker's senior manager, a peer level coworker, spouse or partner and an HR rep of the firm

varied

US

professionals and managers

Lee, MacDermid & Buck 2000

Reduced-loads were successful, with individuals working fewer hours than they had been even after several years. Respondents reported being happier and more satisfied with balance between home and work. Most were satisfied with the likely career implications of the working pattern, feeling they could move laterally and then resume upward progress when they return to full-time pattern. Co-workers sometimes felt frustrated due to extra workload, covering for reduced-load professionals and managers with customers, clients or senior executives. Individual factors were predominant ones facilitating success of the work arrangement.

reduced load

semi-structured interviews

varied

Canada and US

82 professionals and managers

Lee, MacDermid, Williams, Buck & Leiba-O'Sullivan 2002

Lim & Teo 2000	285 information technology professionals currently working traditional pattern	Singapore	IT	survey	teleworking - working at home instead of the office during or outside normal office hours	Organizational commitment was found to be negatively associated with attitude towards teleworking. No gender difference found and support from supervisor and work colleagues was not a significant predictor of attitude.
Madsen 2003	211 matched sample of teleworkers and traditional office workers	US	varied		teleworking,	Teleworkers perceived lower levels of work/family conflict than did non-teleworkers.
McCloskey & Igarria 2003	professionals - 53 telecommuter-supervisor pairs, 44 non-telecommuter - supervisor pairs	US	telecomms	questionnaire	telecommuting - 68% 1 day per week, 32% 2,3 or 4 days per week.	Telecommuting was not found to have a direct or indirect effect on career advancement prospects. Both task and relationship dimension of job performance evaluations were found to have a significant impact on career advancement prospects.
McCloskey, Igarria & Parasuraman 1998	89 professionals	US	telecomms	survey	telecommuting one to three days per month	No significant differences in the reasons men and women choose to telecommute, the amount of time that they work and in their work experiences
Mirchandani 2000	4 professionals	Canada	varied	case study - open-ended interviews during home visits	homeworking	Changing the site of paid work does not in any way allow individuals to simultaneously do paid work and child care. Women continue to hold the predominant responsibility for family work, and "work" is defined in its opposition to the family. "Balance" between work and family is often experienced as the management of the damage borne by the family in the need to fulfill work demands, and the management of the damage to work legitimacy which accompanies the fulfillment of family responsibilities.

The flatter the organization, the more likely an employee preferred and practiced telecommuting. Employees in organizations with more than one business locality were more likely both to be given the opportunity and to prefer telecommuting. Differences in perceived career opportunities were not significant. Level of IT skills did affect telecommuting, the higher the level, the more likely in all three groups. The more children in the household, the less likely an employee preferred to telecommute. No gender impact found.

Peters, Tijdens & Wetzels 2004	849 mixed - employees in an organizational setting	The Netherlands	data taken from the Work & IT 2001 survey	questionnaire	home-based teleworkers	The flatter the organization, the more likely an employee preferred and practiced telecommuting. Employees in organizations with more than one business locality were more likely both to be given the opportunity and to prefer telecommuting. Differences in perceived career opportunities were not significant. Level of IT skills did affect telecommuting, the higher the level, the more likely in all three groups. The more children in the household, the less likely an employee preferred to telecommute. No gender impact found.
Rau & Hyland 2002	142 part-time MBA students who were all working, but no further information	US	not known	Experimental design - using a recruitment brochure for a fictitious firm - Conjoint analysis.	flexitime with core hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and telecommuting from home up to 4 days per week	Attraction of job candidates varies according to type of flexible working practice and also degree of role conflict experienced by individual.
Riley & McCloskey 1997	120 mostly managerial staff	US	telecomms	survey	telecommuting one day per week from home, not Monday or Friday	Increased productivity - decreased customer response time, higher quality work, increase in quantity of work. Improved morale, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, reduced absenteeism.
Rogier & Padgett 2004	107 MBA students	US	accounting firms	experimental design - hypothetical personnel files containing details of either trad work schedule or flexible work schedule were randomly assigned. Subjects then completed questionnaire on their perceptions of the employee	reduced hours - 4 day week	Job/career dedication and advancement motivation were rated lower when working flexibly than when working the more traditional pattern, but there was no difference in her perceived capability.

Romaine 2002	46 professionals	Canada	public accounting firms	interview using open-ended questions	flexibility of scheduling; homeworking, part-time work, alternative career paths	Despite availability, some of the flexible working patterns were not used and organizational culture was explained as a reason for this.
Scandura & Lankau 1997	160 male and female senior managers comprising of 80 matched pairs	US	Varied		Flexible hours	Female managers reported higher levels of org'nal commitment and job satisfaction if working for an org they believed to offer flex working.
Stanworth 1999	120 managerial/professional staff, and 63 clerical/secretarial	UK	local government	questionnaire and interview	reduced hours	Most common reason for working reduced hours was in order to combine paid work with bringing up a family, followed by quality of life reasons. Most respondents were career oriented or highly committed to their current job. Half thought they were not eligible for advancement on the same basis as full-timers, and that working flexibly had a detrimental effect on their chances of progression. Career advancement to senior posts appeared to be effectively closed to those who did not have a more typical 'male' pattern of working hours. Careers were put 'on-hold'.
Tietze & Musson 2003	25 management professionals	UK	varied	interviews during home visits	home-based teleworkers	Most teleworkers and their households employed both clock and task-based modes, fluctuating between these different approaches to temporal ordering. The clock provided regularity and psychological safety; the task provided the focus and psychological benchmark.
Watad & Will 2003	140 middle managers	US	varied	survey	telecommuting	The most important obstacle that must be addressed when introducing a telecommuting programme is related to corporate culture.

Employees with family responsibilities are most likely to be interested in part-time work. Hong Kong finance professionals are much more likely than their American and British counterparts to be interested in reduced-hour arrangements. American finance professionals are least likely to express interest in working part-time, suggesting a strongly American emphasis on a culture of overtime in this US headquartered global company.

Taking part in a flexible hours system significantly reduced negative spillover for women while making no difference to men.

Reasons for enhanced productivity include fewer interruptions, improved quality and quantity of work and time savings. But concerns about isolation in the longer term, possible overload amongst office workers, and the honeymoon effect of longer hours wearing off. Most teleworkers believed they had greater flexibility to accommodate family needs but some org'l policies and practices restricted this, eg the need to be readily contactable during standard working hours. Also many worked longer hours and more senior workers were expected to "surrender" their planned telework days if necessary, especially to attend meetings.

Wharton & Blair-Loy 2002
 269 professionals
 US, Hong Kong & Great Britain
 financial services
 survey
 part-time work

White, Hill, McGovern, Mills & Smeaton 2003
 2132 in 2000; 3458 in 1992
 UK
 Varied
 Questionnaire
 Flexible hours

Whitehouse, Diamond & Lafferty 2002
 varied professional roles; 8 organizations
 Australia
 varied
 case study of 8 organizations using focus groups and interviews
 telecommuting