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**EXAMINING WORK-FAMILY PRACTICE USE
AND EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES
IN A NEW ZEALAND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION**

**A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the
University of Waikato
by
JARROD McKENZIE HAAR**

**University of Waikato
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents. Your support never goes unnoticed and is always appreciated.

To my father – thank you for your inspiration. Although you probably don't know it, your leaving school unqualified and then studying night school while working to gain your accountants qualification has always been an inspiration to me. This has especially focused me on my return to postgraduate study.

To my mother – thank you for supporting me. My new role as a working parent in a dual-career family has highlighted the huge amount of work raising children must have been to you. I can truly say that I now know the effort required and thank you for being a great role model as a parent. I also remember (fondly) you saying, “don't forget your study”. Without that constant message back in 1988-1991, I would never have been able to get to this stage.

Mum and Dad - this qualification is for you too!

This work is also dedicated to my son. Born one month and 11 days after I started my PhD, I have enjoyed the responsibility and challenge of balancing work, family, study and sport. I constantly called this “living my research”. Hopefully this research may lead other parents to be given the chance to spend more time with their children.

ABSTRACT

Work-family practices have proliferated in response to major changes in the workplace, including the increased participation rates of women and mothers, the rise in dual-career families and single parent families, and growth in the elderly population. These changes are seen as providing employees help in balancing work and family commitments. Work-family policies are purported to offer benefits to both employers and employees, for example reduced turnover, increased organisational commitment and greater job satisfaction.

The major focus of the present study was employee use of multiple work-family policies, as the majority of the work-family literature focuses upon single practices. The present study sought to examine the relationship between work-family practice use and work-family conflict, to determine whether work-family practices link with conflict. Also, in response to a failure of the literature in explaining the link between work-family policy use and employee attitudes, the present study used social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity to better explain the relationship. The present study also use a set of organisational justice theories to examine perceptions of the fairness of work-family policies, and the link these perceptions may have with general employee attitudes. Also, for exploring work-family backlash, where the distribution of rewards suggests work-family non-users may hold negative attitudes compared to users.

A single local government organisation, with 203 employees, was the focus of this study. Surveys were distributed at two distinct time periods to reduce common method variance. A total of 100 paired survey responses were received. Findings supported a positive relationship between work-family practices and conflict between work and home, in both directions. Additionally, work → family conflict was associated with decreased job satisfaction and increased work strain. Findings also indicated that work-family practice use predicted work-family specific attitudes but not attitudes towards the job and organisation. Work-family practice

use and perceived benefits of work-family programmes predicted fairness perceptions, however, fairness perceptions failed to predict attitudes towards the organisation and job. Lastly, there was no evidence of a work-family backlash, with users and non-users holding similar attitudes towards the work-family programmes, organisation and job.

Implications include the need for examining the causal nature of the work-family practice and conflict relationship, caution regarding the assumption that work-family policies are automatically beneficial, and encouragement for organisations to proactively test their work-family programmes. Lastly, the lack of a work-family backlash suggests media sensationalism, and, therefore, as non-users are not likely to hold negative attitudes towards the organisation, work-family backlash should not be seen as discouraging organisational adoption of work-family programmes.

Contributions of this research include the examination of multiple work-family practices, which is rare, and the elucidation of the work-family conflict – work-family practice use relationship, which is poorly understood. Theorising the influence that work-family practices have upon employee attitudes is another contribution. While the findings indicated no significant link between general attitudes and practice use, this might highlight a methodological limitation in examining practice use, rather than practice value or frequency of use. Lastly, this thesis indicates that work-family practices do link in multiple ways with employee attitudes under multiple theoretical approaches.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 CHAPTER TWO	3
1.3 CHAPTER THREE	4
1.4 CHAPTER FOUR	4
1.5 CHAPTER FIVE.....	5
1.6 CHAPTER SIX	5
1.7 CHAPTER SEVEN	6
1.8 CHAPTER EIGHT	6
1.9 CHAPTER NINE	6
CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND FACTORS INFLUENCING WORK- FAMILY POLICIES	8
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	8
2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES.....	8
2.2.1 <i>Increased Workforce Participation Rates of Women</i>	9
2.2.2 <i>Increase in the Number of Dual Career Couples</i>	12
2.2.3 <i>Increase in the Number of Single Parent Families</i>	13
2.2.4 <i>Increase in the Elderly Population</i>	14

2.2.4 <i>Summary of Demographic Factors</i>	16
2.3 ATTITUDE CHANGES	17
2.3.1 <i>Attitude Change Critique</i>	19
2.4 CONCLUSION	20
CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE ON WORK-FAMILY POLICIES....	22
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	22
3.2 SUPPORT FOR WORK-FAMILY POLICIES.....	23
3.3 BENEFITS.....	25
3.4 INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS.....	26
3.4.1 <i>Reduced Employee Tardiness</i>	26
3.4.2 <i>Reduced Employee Absenteeism</i>	27
3.4.3 <i>Improved Employee Morale</i>	28
3.4.4 <i>Improved Employee Retention</i>	28
3.4.5 <i>Competitive Advantage</i>	31
3.4.6 <i>Improved Employee Motivation</i>	32
3.4.7 <i>Improved Employee Commitment & Loyalty</i>	33
3.4.8 <i>Improved Customer Service</i>	34
3.4.9 <i>Trained Replacements For Job Cover</i>	35
3.4.10 <i>Reducing Office Space</i>	35
3.4.11 <i>Reduced Health Costs</i>	35
3.5 EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS	36
3.5.1 <i>Improved Employee Recruitment</i>	36
3.5.2 <i>Enhanced Corporate Image</i>	38
3.5.3 <i>Improved CEO Image</i>	39
3.5.4 <i>Meeting Legal Obligations</i>	40
3.5.5 <i>Increased Customer Satisfaction</i>	40
3.6 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS.....	41
3.6.1 <i>Increased Job Satisfaction</i>	41
3.6.2 <i>Decreased Stress</i>	42
3.6.3 <i>Improved Physical Health</i>	43
3.7 IMPROVED ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE	44

3.7.1 <i>Theoretical Framework For Work-Family Policy Support</i>	49
3.8 CONCLUSION.....	51
OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL MODELS	52
3.9 THEORETICAL MODELS INTRODUCTION	52
3.10 THEORY OUTLINES.....	55
3.10.1 <i>Work-Family Conflict</i>	55
3.10.2 <i>Work-Family Benefits</i>	56
3.10.3 <i>Work-Family Fairness</i>	57
3.10.4 <i>Work-Family Backlash</i>	57
3.10.5 <i>Conclusion</i>	58
CHAPTER FOUR: WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT	60
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	60
4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES DRIVING WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT RESEARCH..	60
4.3 CONFLICT BETWEEN WORK AND NON-WORK ROLES	63
4.3.1 <i>Role Conflict</i>	64
4.3.2 <i>Interrole Conflict</i>	64
4.3.3 <i>Work-Family Conflict</i>	65
4.4 SOURCES OF CONFLICT.....	66
4.4.1 <i>Time-Based Conflict</i>	67
4.4.2 <i>Strain-Based Conflict</i>	68
4.4.3 <i>Behaviour-Based Conflict</i>	69
4.4.4 <i>Concluding Comments</i>	69
4.5 THE DIRECTIONAL NATURE OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT	70
4.6 WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT FINDINGS	73
4.6.1 <i>Parenting and Dependent Care</i>	74
4.6.2 <i>Marital Status</i>	76
4.6.3 <i>Gender</i>	77
4.7 HYPOTHESES	79
4.7.1 <i>Relative Magnitude of WFC and FWC</i>	79
4.7.2 <i>Satisfaction With Work-Family Policies</i>	80
4.7.3 <i>Work-Family Practice Use</i>	81

4.7.4 <i>Outcomes of Work-Family Conflict</i>	83
CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY AND THE NORM OF RECIPROCIITY	85
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	85
5.2 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY	86
5.3 THE NORM OF RECIPROCIITY	92
5.4 THE VALUE CAVEAT	99
5.5 HYPOTHESES	101
5.5.1 <i>Hypotheses on Work-Family Specific Attitudes</i>	102
5.5.2 <i>Hypotheses on Attitudes Towards the Job and Organisation</i>	104
CHAPTER SIX: ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE THEORIES	107
6.1 INTRODUCTION.....	107
6.2 DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE	108
6.3 PROCEDURAL JUSTICE & INTERACTIONAL JUSTICE	109
6.4 IMPORTANCE OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE IN RESEARCH.....	111
6.5 DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE IN WORK-FAMILY RESEARCH	113
6.6 LINKING ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE THEORIES WITH WORK-FAMILY RESEARCH.....	118
6.7 FAIRNESS HYPOTHESES	121
6.8 BACKLASH HYPOTHESES.....	126
6.8.1 <i>Backlash Against Work-Family Specific Attitudes</i>	127
6.8.2 <i>Backlash Against Attitudes towards the Job and Organisation</i>	128
6.8.3 <i>Backlash Against Attitudes Towards the Fairness of Work-Family Policies and Policy Users</i>	129
CHAPTER SEVEN: METHOD	131
7.1 INTRODUCTION.....	131
7.2 CONTEXT.....	131
7.3 SAMPLE PARTICIPANTS	132
7.4 MEASURES	134
7.5 PROCEDURE	139

7.5.1 Pilot Testing.....	140
7.5.2 Distribution Method.....	140
7.5.3 Response Rates.....	141
7.5.4 Handling Missing Data.....	143
7.6 INTERVIEWS	143
CHAPTER EIGHT: RESULTS	145
8.1 INTRODUCTION.....	145
8.2 Work-Family Practice Use.....	145
8.3 WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT	146
8.3.1 Results	146
8.3.2 Correlations	147
8.3.3 Analysis of Hypotheses 1 and 2.....	148
8.3.4 Results of Hypotheses 1 and 2.....	148
8.3.5 Analysis of Hypotheses 3 and 4.....	148
8.3.6 Results of Hypotheses 3 and 4.....	150
8.3.7 Analysis of Hypotheses 5 and 6.....	151
8.3.8 Results of Hypotheses 5 and 6.....	152
8.4 WORK-FAMILY BENEFITS.....	153
8.4.1 Results	153
8.4.2 Correlations	153
8.4.3 Analysis of Hypotheses 7 to 10.....	155
8.4.4 Results of Hypotheses 7 to 10.....	157
8.4.5 Analysis of Hypotheses 11 to 14.....	157
8.4.6 Results of Hypotheses 11 to 14.....	160
8.5 WORK-FAMILY FAIRNESS	160
8.5.1 Results	160
8.5.2 Correlations	162
8.5.3 Analysis of Hypotheses 15 to 19.....	162
8.5.4 Results of Hypotheses 15 to 19.....	163
8.5.5 Results of Hypotheses 20 to 22.....	164
8.6 WORK-FAMILY BACKLASH.....	164

8.6.1 Analysis and Results of Hypotheses 23 to 26.....	165
8.6.2 Analysis and Results of Hypotheses 27 to 30.....	167
8.6.3 Analysis and Results of Hypotheses 31 to 33.....	167
CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.....	169
9.1 INTRODUCTION.....	169
9.2 WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT.....	169
9.2.1 Conflict Magnitude.....	169
9.2.2 Work-Family Policy Satisfaction.....	171
9.2.3 Work-Family Practice Use.....	172
9.2.4 Work → Family Conflict and Family → Work Conflict as Predictors	174
9.2.5 Conclusion.....	174
9.3 WORK-FAMILY BENEFITS.....	176
9.3.1 Attitudes towards Work-Family Policies.....	176
9.3.2 Attitudes towards the Job and Organisation.....	178
9.3.3 Conclusion.....	181
9.4 WORK-FAMILY FAIRNESS.....	182
9.4.1 Demographic Variables.....	184
9.4.2 Attitude Variables.....	187
9.4.4 Conclusion.....	190
9.5 WORK-FAMILY BACKLASH.....	191
9.5.1 Conclusion.....	195
9.6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....	196
9.7 LIMITATIONS.....	200
9.8 IMPLICATIONS.....	205
9.8.1 Work-Family Conflict.....	205
9.8.2 Work-Family Benefits.....	208
9.8.3 Work-Family Fairness.....	210
9.8.4 Work-Family Backlash.....	211
9.8.5 Turnover Intention and Organisational Commitment.....	213

9.8.6 Government Policy Implications..... 214

REFERENCES.....**217**

LIST OF APPENDICES.....**256**

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 8.2.1 WORK-FAMILY PRACTICE USE RANKED BY PERCENTAGE	145
TABLE 8.2.2 TOTAL WORK-FAMILY PRACTICE USE BY NUMBER	145
TABLE 8.3.1 CORRELATIONS AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND CONFLICT OUTCOMES VARIABLES	147
TABLE 8.3.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS: CONFLICT AND WORK-FAMILY USE.....	150
TABLE 8.3.3 REGRESSION ANALYSIS: CONFLICT OUTCOMES	152
TABLE 8.4.1 CORRELATIONS AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: WORK-FAMILY BENEFITS VARIABLES.....	154
TABLE 8.4.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS: WORK-FAMILY SPECIFIC ATTITUDES.....	156
TABLE 8.4.3 REGRESSION ANALYSIS: JOB AND ORGANISATION ATTITUDES.....	159
TABLE 8.5.1 CORRELATIONS AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: FAIRNESS PREDICTION AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE JOB AND ORGANISATION VARIABLES	161
TABLE 8.5.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS: PREDICTING FAIRNESS	163
TABLE 8.6.1 MEAN COMPARISONS: WORK-FAMILY SPECIFIC ATTITUDES ..	166
TABLE 8.6.2 MEAN COMPARISONS: JOB AND ORGANISATION ATTITUDES ..	167
TABLE 8.6.3 MEAN COMPARISONS: FAIRNESS ATTITUDES	168

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 3.7.1.1 FRAMEWORK FOR WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMME SUPPORT	50
FIGURE 3.9.1 THEORETICAL MODEL INTERACTION	55
FIGURE 5.3.1 RECIPROCITY LOOP: LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE	94
FIGURE 5.3.2 WORK-FAMILY RECIPROCITY LOOP: EMPLOYEE-ORGANISATION EXCHANGE	96
FIGURE 5.4.1 MODEL FOR WORK-FAMILY PRACTICE-ATTITUDE RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING THE VALUE CAVEAT	100

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a concise outline of the present research. It details the importance of work-family practices within the field of Human Resource management, and proceeds to provide a brief explanation of each chapter that relates to this study.

There has been much interest in work and family in the literature over the past two decades. Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) suggest that generally work family policies are recognised as progressive and innovative. Proponents of work-family policies (e.g. Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Hall, 1990; Osterman, 1995) cite various benefits to employers and employees of implementing work-family practices. The benefits to employers are said to include: increased performance (Hall, Parker & Victoria, 1993; Mason, 1991), reduced turnover (Collins & Magid, 1989), and greater employee commitment (Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Leonard, 1998; Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh & Reilly, 1995). Employees are said to benefit through greater job satisfaction (Ezra & Deckman, 1996; Judge, Boudreau & Bretz Jr., 1994; Saltzstein, Ting & Saltzstein, 2001), reduced stress (Hand & Zawacki, 1994; Mason, 1993), and improved morale (Martinez, 1993; McCampbell, 1996). Thus, there are many potential advantages associated with work-family policies.

The work-family literature often identifies the changing composition of the labour force as a major determinant of firm adoption of work-family programmes (Cowperthwaite, 1997; Goodstein, 1994; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Magid & Codkind, 1995; Michaels, 1995; Moore, 1997; Morgan & Miliken, 1992; Pringle & Tudhope, 1997). These changes include increased participation rates of women and mothers in paid employment (Goff, Mount & Jamison, 1990; Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Kaufman, 1997; Rubis,

1997) and the rise in dual-career couples (Goodstein, 1994; Magid & Codkind, 1995; Morgan & Miliken, 1992). The expansion of single-parent families (Cooper, 1998; Kossek, Noe & DeMarr, 1999; Lobel, Googins & Bankert, 1999; Michaels & McCarthy, 1993) and the growth of the elderly population (Goodstein, 1995; Hendrickson, 2000; Magid & Codkind, 1995; Wilkinson, 1998) have also contributed to the adoption of work-family programmes. Lastly, the changing attitude of workers, where work is not necessarily the central focus of employee lives (Hochschild, 1997; Loscocco, 2000; Magid & Codkind, 1995; Schor, 1991; Wheatley, 1997) has also encouraged firms to adopt work-family policies, so employers and employees can benefit from high performance at work and at home. The total effect of these changes is that organisations face an employee base vastly different from 30 years ago, with new demands and new attitudes. Therefore, organisations might adopt work-family programmes as a way of meeting these new demands, and this in turn can lead to advantages for both employers and employees, as noted above.

This research examined the relationships between work-family practice use and employee attitudes in a New Zealand local government organisation. New Zealand organisations have been slow to adopt work-family policies, compared to other countries, such as the United States. New Zealand has only begun to embrace these policies in the last decade (Callister, 1996). This study is the first exploration of multiple work-family constructs within New Zealand. The study investigated the following aspects: work-family conflict, work-family benefits, work-family fairness and work-family backlash. A sizeable proportion of the work-family literature focuses upon the positive impact work-family programmes can have on employees and organisations. However, the majority of this literature is unsubstantiated or non generalisable. For example, often IBM is shown to be a leader in work-family policies (Kraut, 1990; Martinez, 1993; Mason, 1991), yet a corporation of that size is rare in the United States, and non-existent in New Zealand. As well as examining multiple work-family related theories, the present study also examined multiple work-family practices, which would be more aligned with what organisations offer. The work-family literature has been limited

by focusing on single work-family practices; for example, childcare centres (Kossek & Nichol, 1992; Rothausen, Gonzalez, Clarke, & O'Dell, 1998). This research, which explores an organisation offering six work-family practices, differs markedly from the single practice studies of the literature. This new focus has resulted in data that enhances our understanding of how multiple work-family practices influence multiple work-family aspects, such as work-family conflict, attitudes towards the job and organisation, and the fairness of the policies and their users. This thesis examines each of these aspects in detail, according to the outline and brief summary of each chapter provided below.

1.2 Chapter Two

Chapter Two provides an overview of the factors that have influenced the adoption of work-family programmes worldwide. These factors can be grouped into two categories: demographic changes and attitudinal changes. The demographic changes generally have occurred in both the West and East, indicating they are global changes (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Lobel, Googins & Bankert, 1999; Loscocco, 2000; Magid & Codkind, 1995; Michaels, 1995; Moore, 1997; Pringle & Tudhope, 1997; Rifkin, 1995). There are four major factors in the demographic changes, which include the increased participation rates of women and mothers in paid employment, the proliferation of dual-career couples, the rise in single parent families, and the growth in the elderly population. Combined, these groups create a much more diverse workforce than employers experienced 30 years ago, and encourage creative solutions, such as work-family policies, as a way to better manage the workforce. It has also been suggested that employees have changed their attitudes towards work, and increasingly want to balance their work and family commitments. Overall, this chapter indicates that the workplace of today is greatly different from a few decades ago, and the contributory changes have led to organisational adoption of work-family policies.

1.3 Chapter Three

Chapter Three provides an overview of the multiple benefits reported with work-family policies. While these advantages are manifold and numerous, the work-family literature fails to provide a complete and concise inventory of benefits. This chapter seeks to compile the advantages and provide an over riding direction for the benefits literature. Benefits are grouped into three areas: internal organisational benefits, external organisational benefits, and employee benefits. These benefits focus on the overall improvement of organisational performance. This performance enhancement can be achieved through a combination of multiple benefits, such as reduced turnover, greater job satisfaction, and reduced work-family conflict. In addition to indicating the many advantages suggested by work-family policy adoption, this chapter highlights the need to examine these benefits from a theoretical perspective, in order to address a current weakness of the benefits literature.

1.4 Chapter Four

Chapter Four begins with a theoretical overview of the three theories used in the present study. These are (1) interrole conflict, focusing upon work-family conflict; (2) social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity; and (3) a set of organisational justice theories. These are illustrated diagrammatically to show the interaction between the theories and the central focus of this study, which is employee use of work-family practices.

Chapter Four continues with an exploration of the work-family conflict literature and the relevance of using this theory to explore work-family practice use. It is important to note that this research explores conflict bi-directionally, that is, work to family conflict and family to work conflict. This has become accepted as a valid way to explore conflict, rather than taking a uni-directional approach. Hypotheses examine differences between work → family conflict and family → work conflict. Significantly, work-family practice use is used to predict work-family and family-work conflict, which have seldom been examined. In addition to hypotheses

predicting work-family conflict, this study also examines conflict between work and family as predictors of conflict outcomes relating to job satisfaction and workplace strain. These outcomes of conflict are of particular importance for organisational managers.

1.5 Chapter Five

Chapter Five examines social exchange theory and focuses upon the norm of reciprocity as a theory for explaining the benefits associated with work-family policies. Lambert (2000) has used the norm of reciprocity to explain links between employee use of work-family practices and employee attitudes towards the organisation. Theoretical representations of the norm of reciprocity and the relationship between organisational provision of work-family policies and employee reciprocation are offered to illustrate the potential relationship. Hypotheses are developed that focus upon two distinct types of attitudes: attitudes specific to work-family policies, and attitudes towards the job and organisation. The work-family literature has recently found some differences between these two attitude groupings and work-family practice use (Rothausen, Gonzalez, Clarke & O'Dell, 1998) and this study builds on this differentiated focus.

1.6 Chapter Six

Chapter Six explores a set of organisational justice theories, and forms the basis for two components of the present study. Organisational justice is used to explain: (1) perceptions of the fairness of work-family policies and attitudes towards male and female users of work-family policies; and (2) the potential backlash associated with non-users of work-family policies, who might feel neglected and excluded by their organisation. These theoretical approaches are distinct; therefore separate hypotheses are developed for each of these two aspects. The work-family fairness component of this study also suggested the fairness attitudes might predict attitudes towards the job and organisation. While many studies have examined the link between fairness perceptions and attitudes towards the job and organisation, none of these fairness perceptions have been related to work-family policies.

1.7 Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven outlines the methodological aspects of this study. It details the local government organisation chosen as the site for this research, the six work-family practices offered, and the composition of the study participants. It also outlines all the measures used in the study, and the procedures used in the research.

1.8 Chapter Eight

Chapter Eight provides the results of the four components of this study. They are (1) work-family conflict, (2) work-family benefits, (3) work-family fairness, and (4) work-family backlash. Work-family practice use was found to predict conflict between work and family, and work → family conflict was found to predict negative work outcomes (job satisfaction and workplace strain). Work-family practice use was found to predict work-family specific attitudes but not those attitudes towards the job and organisation. Work-family practice use and the perceived benefits of work-family practices predicted more positive attitudes towards work-family policies, and more positive attitudes towards male users and female users of work-family practices. However, fairness perceptions failed to significantly predict attitudes towards the organisation and job. Lastly, there was little support for a work-family backlash, with only one attitude being significantly different between users and non-users. However, this attitude from non-users was still positive, indicating no hostile reactions.

1.9 Chapter Nine

This chapter discusses the findings from each of the four components of the study, and provides a summary of the present study's findings. The implications for organisations and policy writers are also discussed regarding work-family policies; along with the overall influence such policies can have on employee attitudes.

Implications include evidence that work-family practices do link with work-family conflict, although further examination of this link is required. The implication

from exploring work-family benefits is that use might not link with attitudes about the job and organisation, contrary to the literature. Research implications are that value of practices, rather than use of practices, might be a more valuable method for exploring the relationship between use and attitudes. Work-family fairness implications include support for the identity relationship, but not for the unit relationship. Future studies examining perceived fairness of multiple work-family practices need to explore identity as well as unit relationships. The lack of support for a work-family backlash has positive implications for employers, and suggests employees take a needs-based principle focus on the allocation of work-family practices. This thesis makes positive contributions to the work-family literature by examining use of multiple work-family practices. Moreover, this research is the first to explore the work-family phenomenon using a framework comprising multiple theoretical approaches. This new research perspective on the phenomenon indicates that work-family practices are, in fact, linked with employee attitudes in a range of complex relationships.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND FACTORS INFLUENCING WORK-FAMILY POLICIES

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the generally accepted driving factors behind the adoption of work-family practices. These factors can be divided into two major categories: (1) demographic changes, and (2) attitudinal changes towards work and family roles. This chapter will outline the various components and, particularly within the demographic changes, illustrate the changes from within a wide international context, as these changes have occurred throughout most Western and some Eastern countries. The sum effect of these changes is that organisations face an employee base vastly different from 20 years ago, with new demands and new attitudes. For example, childcare concerns and employee demands to enjoy their personal and family time have encouraged organisations to adopt work-family practices as a method of allowing employees to better balance their work and family roles, for the benefit of both the organisations and their employees. It should also be noted that this thesis explores work-family balance aspects, and not the wider issues of work-life balance. Within the literature in general, the majority of focus is upon the interactions of employees and their work and family roles than any other wider (life) context, and this thesis follows a similar perspective by focusing solely upon work and family domains.

2.2 Demographic Changes

Many countries around the world share major factors influencing work-family policy adoption and, while the literature is dominated by details from the United States, there are similar trends in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and parts of Asia. The work-family literature often cites the changing composition of the labour force as a major determinant of organisational adoption of work-family programmes (Cowperthwaite, 1997; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Michaels, 1995; Moore, 1997; Pringle & Tudhope, 1997). These demographic changes can

be categorised into four areas: (1) explosion in the participation rates of women in paid employment, (2) rise in the number of dual-career couples, (3) escalation in single parent families and (4) an increase in the elderly. These are explored in detail below.

2.2.1 Increased Workforce Participation Rates of Women

Rubis (1997) states that changes in society and the workforce since World War Two have sharply decreased the proportion of single-earner families with stay-at-home mothers in the United States. Kaufman (1997) states the 'traditional' family view of a working husband with a stay-at-home wife who raises the family clashes with today's current demands of families. These changes have occurred due to the increasing proportion of women in the paid workforce. Kaufman (1997) notes that in the United States about 15% of families nationally consist of a working full-time father and wife who stays at home with the children, although this is higher amongst corporate male managers (at 27%). Goff, Mount and Jamison (1990) state "The typical family of 20 or 30 years ago (husband earner, wife home-maker, two children) exists today in less than 4% of all households" (p. 43).

Increased workforce participation rates of women are common throughout Western countries (Ingram & Simons, 1995) and some Eastern countries (Michaels, 1995), particularly Pacific Rim countries (Michaels, 1995; Pringle & Tudhope, 1997). While traditionally women have stayed at home, a United States survey shows this has changed, with two out of three married women with children under three in paid work (O'Sullivan, 1996). In the United States, employed women aged 16 years and above increased from 38% in 1960 to 54% in 1991 (Ingram & Simons, 1995), and then up to 61% by 1996 (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000). In 1997, this represents 60 million American women working, with 74% of them full-time. Of the remaining 16 million part-time workers, four million of these held multiple jobs (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 1998, as cited in Catalyst, 1998). Not only has the percentage of working women increased, but also the number of working mothers has increased dramatically. This poses unique problems for organisations, for example, dealing with employee

childcare concerns. Working mothers with children aged under six years increased, as a group, from 19% in 1960 to 60% in 1991 (Ingram & Simons, 1995), and up to 63% by 1996 (Greenhaus et al., 2000). Married women with children between the ages of six years and 17 years rose from 39% to 77% between 1960 and 1996 (Greenhaus et al., 2000). Hymowitz (1997) notes that 42% of United States employees nationwide have children less than 18 years old. Proportionally, the figures indicate that working mothers account for a strong proportion overall of working women. Importantly, Berry (1998a) notes that working mothers with pre-school children represent the fastest growing segment of the workforce in America, which may have strong implications for employers.

These trends are reflected in the Pacific Rim. In New Zealand, the workforce participation rates of women increased from 54% in 1988 to 57% in 1998 (Statistics New Zealand, 1998). The Malaysian Government has reported women made up 49% of their workforce in 1993 (Michaels, 1995). It is predicted that in the future women with children will be the primary source of growth in the number of workers worldwide (Magid & Codkind, 1995). Greenhaus et al. (2000) assert women will have accounted for two-thirds of new employees in 2000 worldwide. World trends from 1993 indicate that in Singapore married women entering the workforce had increased to 44%, while in Australia married women increased to 59% of employed women (Michaels, 1995). According to the New Zealand Department of Statistics, New Zealand women in paid work increased from 25% in 1951 to 44% in 1993 (as cited in Pringle & Tudhope, 1997). If the New Zealand context includes those women actively seeking work, the percentage increases to 68% (Pringle & Tudhope, 1997).

Four reasons have been offered for the increase in the participation rates of women in paid employment (White, Cox & Cooper, 1992). First, technological changes enable employers to replace highly skilled male workers with cheaper semi-skilled female workers, as females are typically paid less than men at 84.3% of male average hourly earnings (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Second, because women are marrying later and having fewer children later in life, women become

freed from life long domestic work. Thirdly, more women are seeking work-related self-identities as opposed to marriage-related identities. Finally, economic factors are becoming increasingly important. For example, in the early 1990s, 40% of married women in the United States had husbands earning less than \$15,000 per annum, and therefore most of these women returned to work within a year after maternity leave due to financial pressures (Magid & Codkind, 1995).

The combination of pregnancy, work, and childcare responsibilities pose particular difficulties for working women, and Magid and Codkind (1995) suggest working women may require organisations to develop new ways to work. It is estimated that between 75% and 80% (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000; Magid & Codkind, 1995) of women workers will become pregnant during their working lives. It is also well documented that working women continue to do the majority of household and child-rearing duties (Humphries, 1998; Kossek, Huber-Yoder, Castellino & Lerner, 1997). In New Zealand, women spend 71% more time on domestic duties than do men (Statistics New Zealand, 2001). Michaels and McCarthy (1993) state: "Though the number of working women has increased dramatically, family responsibilities for the most part remain on women's shoulders. Fifty-seven percent of married women who are parents report 100 percent responsibility for home chores" (p. 70). Therefore, as women are increasingly occupying positions in the workforce, and are still responsible for the majority of childcare, their ability to manage both family and work issues becomes increasingly difficult.

The increased participation rates of working mothers has led to other concerns being raised that have seldom been addressed before. Elsberry (1999) states that a frequent problem for new mothers is that they cannot make day-care arrangements, and this is seen as a serious nationwide problem in the United States, where less than 20% of childcare facilities have openings for children under one year old. Similarly, Leonard (1998a) notes that providing childcare to the working poor is a big obstacle that must be faced if employers want access to the largest number of quality employees. Elsberry (1999) says that childcare is a

huge and growing business in America, estimated at US\$30-40 billion annually, fuelled by these changing demographics. Elsberry (1999) also notes that a recent American survey indicates 200,000 preschoolers go to work with their mothers and spend the day in a playpen, car carrier, stroller, or watching TV in an empty office. In fact, some 13 million American children under age six now spend all or part of every weekday in the care of someone other than their parents (Elsberry, 1999). However, while the increased participation rates of women and particularly working mothers suggest multiple difficulties in balancing work and family responsibilities, there are some encouraging aspects. Martin (1992) suggests that with half of all married women now in the labour market, there have been some positive gains made, with employed women enjoying improved physical and mental health through enhanced sources of ego gratification, social support, and personal control.

2.2.2 Increase in the Number of Dual Career Couples

The increase in participation rates of working women has seen the traditional family structure of a husband in paid employment and the wife staying home become replaced by the 'modern family' with two working parents (Goodstein, 1994; Magid & Codkind, 1995; Morgan & Miliken, 1992). A notable increase in dual career couples (also known as dual earners), is found in the United States, with figures showing that the total number of dual-career couples with children under 18 years was almost 60% in 1993, up from 36% in 1973 (Larkin, 1996). In 1992, the figure for dual-career couples with children less than three years in the United States was 67% (O'Sullivan, 1996). The growth in dual career couples has been enormous since 1950, when just 20.4% of families were dual-earner marriages (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 1997, as cited in Catalyst, 1998). Hymowitz (1997) estimates 75% of married employees have spouses who work. Gordon (1998) states that in an earlier time, work-family programmes would have been called paternalistic, but today they are almost a necessity because with both spouses working hard, no one is free to deal fulltime with ever pressing personal issues. In addition, Kaufman (1997) notes that dual careers mean a shift in

priorities away from the workplace amongst working fathers, because without a wife at home exclusively, men now have to play greater roles at home.

Trends similar to these are also evident in the Pacific Rim with Singapore reporting an increase in dual career couples to 44% in 1993 (Michaels, 1995). In Australia, dual career couples has risen from 53% in 1990 (Moore, 1997) to 59% in 1993 (Michaels, 1995). Similarly in 1997, New Zealand dual career couples account for more than 50% of households (Henderson, 1997). Given that women still carry the burden of domestic and childcare responsibilities, it is evident that women will be particularly interested in, and need employer help with, balancing their work and family roles. However, the increased responsibility of fathers in the home has also been highlighted, with worldwide studies finding multiple benefits from having a father at home, such as reduced school problems, sexual assaults, and conviction rates among boys (Smith, 1998). Therefore, while the increased participation of women in paid work has its own range of problems for employers (e.g. childcare), this also flows into dual-career couples and the role of fathers, and suggests the ability of men to undertake some work-related activities (e.g. extensive work-related travel), will be reduced.

2.2.3 Increase in the Number of Single Parent Families

The large increase in the number of single-parent families has also influenced work-family policies (Goodstein, 1994; Morgan & Miliken, 1992). Lobel, Googins and Bankert (1999) note that the number of single-parent households has surged upward. It has been suggested that a working mother heads almost 25% of all American families (Michaels & McCarthy, 1993). New Zealand is very similar, with 27% of New Zealand families headed by just one parent (Henderson, 1997). In 1996, nearly 70% of women who were divorced, separated, or widowed, and had children less than six years old were in paid employment. This number increased to more than 80% of those women with children aged between six years and 17 (Greenhaus et al., 2000). Cooper (1998) states that by 1991 the United Kingdom had the highest divorce rates in Europe, with one-parent families increasing four-fold in the past 30 years. Cooper suggests the long working hours

culture in most public and private sector companies in the United Kingdom is a major contributor to this high divorce rate.

The overall outlook is that a large proportion of employees will have to balance work and family responsibilities on their own at some stage in their working life. Kossek, Noe and DeMarr (1999) suggest that at some time in their childhood, more than half of American children will live in a single parent family. This is because 50% of all marriages end in divorce, and while 80% of all divorced people remarry (Michaels & McCarthy, 1993), more than half of them will divorce again (Weissman, 1997). Weissman (1997) notes that with Western cultures having such high divorce rates, employers may find their employees dealing with combined sole parenting and work responsibilities. As single parent families continue to increase, employers must adopt more flexible methods for managing employees that will enable employees to be more productive.

2.2.4 Increase in the Elderly Population

Another emerging demographic trend that is likely to influence future work-family policies is the projected increase in the elderly population. This is a worldwide phenomenon, encompassing both Western and Eastern countries. Coupled with this trend is the prediction that people will live longer. The number of projected elderly in the United States requiring care is expected to increase from 35 million in the late 1990s to 70 million by 2030, with the cost of nursing-home services set to sky rocket by over 400% (Hendrickson, 2000). As a result of the combination of increased elderly population and cost of care, it is likely that the burden of eldercare will fall upon families. Traditionally it has been women who provide these caregiver roles but, as already noted, more women are in paid employment than ever before. As more of these caregivers are joining the workforce, there will be additional pressures upon employers to facilitate solutions (Magid & Codkind, 1995). To this end, work-family expert Ellen Galinsky, co-president of the New York-based Families and Work Institute, warns that in the United States, eldercare is going to eclipse childcare as a work-family practice (Smith, 1996). Goodstein (1995) states that one of the fastest growing segments in the United States

comprises those older than 65 years, and potentially poses a major challenge to organisations in how they will accommodate the concerns of employees caring for elderly parents.

Leading medical expert Dr. Edward Schneider suggests that the next 20 years of medical science might see at least half the baby-boomers living into their 80s and 90s (Wilkinson, 1998). The National Institute on Aging predicts that by 2040, the number of Americans over 85 could grow to over 30 million, up from 3.3 million (Wilkinson, 1998). This indicates that eldercare could become a growing concern for employees, and consequently for employers. It has also been suggested that this is intensified by employees delaying having children to their thirties and forties and then being responsible for young or teenage children and aging relatives at the same time (Smith, 1995). Thus, employees could be dealing with both childcare and eldercare responsibilities, and this might pressure organisations to provide some form of help towards fulfilling either or both of these caring responsibilities.

Kossek, Noe and DeMarr(1999) note that while little research has examined the eldercare and childcare and the links with employee outcomes, managing eldercare involves very different decisions than managing childcare, as elders and children have reverse caregiving life cycles (start of a life versus end of a life). An elder becomes more physically dependent as she or he ages, requiring increased assistance with the activities of daily living, such as assistance with eating, dressing, toileting, and bathing (Stone, Cafferata, & Sangl, 1987). Elders also face rising medical demands and crises until care ends with death (Scharlach, Sobel, & Roberts, 1991). Friedman and Galinsky (1992) warn that managing eldercare is also more complex than managing childcare because it involves the coordination of many social services. United States data on caregiving of the elderly, who live alone in their own homes and perform many tasks themselves, indicates that on average, the elderly still require 11 hours a week of care through providing transportation, finances, doctors, retirement decisions, and household duties (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998). Studies show that those who manage

eldercare are more likely to experience increased depression, anxiety, and poor health (George & Gwyther, 1986; Strawbridge, Wallhagen, Shema, & Kaplan, 1997). Other outcomes include family interference with work, stress, as well as personal and job costs (Gottlieb, Kelloway, & Fraboni, 1994). Shonsey (1994) observed “Eldercare is not about having babies and raising children - the positive aspects of life. Eldercare is about the end of life, about aging and dying” (p. 48). Consequently, while eldercare is currently seen as a growing factor of work-family policy adoption, the serious effects of eldercare, and the growing likelihood that such aspects will impact more and more employees, indicates that eldercare concerns may be a significant contributing factor to work-family adoption in the future.

2.2.4 Summary of Demographic Factors

Combined, the demographic changes that have been occurring mean that employers might be faced with employees dealing with childcare concerns, elderly parents, and either the pressure of their partner’s career, or without a partner to provide support and backup in time of crises. This differs from the traditional model, where employees were principally men whose wives would deal with all non work-related aspects. Today’s working environment, though, is more diverse and equally more challenging for employees, and their supervisors and managers. Rising workforce participation by women mean that both men and women will increasingly face dual-career challenges, and thus employers will find it difficult to avoid dealing with these new complexities. Combined, these factors have made the modern workplace more complex, and have thus led to the advent and proliferation of work-family policies. This is not to suggest that all employers recognise these additional employee concerns and seek to offer work-family policies as a mechanism for supporting work and family responsibilities. Some employers simply choose to ignore these changes and offer no work-family policies. However, the literature does suggest that these demographic changes have, overall, created an atmosphere where work-family policies have developed and will continue to grow.

In addition to these many changes, or perhaps because of the transformation of the modern workplace, it has been suggested that employee attitudes towards work and family have played a role in the proliferation of work-family programmes. The following section discusses the implications that attitude changes towards work and family responsibilities might play in work-family policy adoption.

2.3 Attitude Changes

While demographic changes might have forced organisations to reconsider the help they provide employees in balancing work and family commitments, it has also been suggested that employees themselves are openly driving the adoption of work-family programmes. Magid and Codkind (1995) believe that family and personal leisure time is more prized now than at any time in United States history. Rifkin (1995) suggests that continued job losses across all industry sectors and at all organisational levels, has forced a shift in thinking about the importance of paid work. Loscocco (2000) supports this, stating there is new evidence that employees are beginning to consider how much money, and therefore how much work, they need. For example, data from the National Study of Families and Households in the United States show that 34% of women and 44% of men would prefer to work fewer hours than they do (Loscocco, 2000). In addition, only 2% of dual career couples have some type of part-time schedule, but a much greater number (1 in 6) desire such a situation (Clarkenberg, 1998, as cited in Loscocco, 2000). This suggests that many dual-career couples want to spend less time at work.

An American organisation where employees highlight this changing attitude towards work is ELI, a computer company in Portland, Oregon. The organisation had hit hard financial times, and employees voted to “spread the pain” through reduced hours and pay, leading to no one being laid off (Hochschild, 1997). Significantly, when the organisation had financially recovered, the CEO found employees did not want to go back to the full time schedules they were originally on, preferring the reduced conditions of hours and pay. Schor (1991) supports this changing attitude, reporting that an American national poll found almost 60% of

respondents said they would like to reduce their work commitments, and two thirds said they want more balance in their lives. Wheatley (1997) states a United States study shows 66% of Americans would like to work shorter hours in exchange for less pay. Another United States study found that almost 33% of Americans had exchanged some working time for more leisure time in the last five years, despite years of recession (Wheatley, 1997).

Longer working hours have been noted as a contributing factor to this changing attitude. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2002) reports that in 2000, the average United States employee worked 1,877 hours per year, closely followed by Australia (1,860), New Zealand (1,817) and Canada (1,801). The figures are slightly lower for the United Kingdom (1,708), and much lower for German workers (1,480). Wheatley (1997) states that it is no accident that the United States is the birthplace of “downshifting”, which involves employees consciously taking on less work and reduced hours. Downshifting, due to huge work hours, is supported by Harvard University’s Economics Professor Juliet Schor, who reported that American employees in the mid 1990s were working 163 more hours a year, which equates to a whole month of full time work, than in 1970 (Hymowitz, 1997). A United States study found employees spent an average of 44 hours per week working, six hours more than they were scheduled for (WomenConnect, 1998). According to Ansley (2000), New Zealanders employees are suffering from burnout or chronic work stress at the same rate as American employees. A factor in similar burnout rates may be similarities in hours worked by American and New Zealand employees (only 60 hours work a year difference).

While downshifting is typically voluntary, forced downshifts can also have positive results. Schor (1991) found nearly 20% of American respondents had made a voluntary lifestyle change (with lowered income), and 85% of this group were happy about the change. Another 12% had made this change involuntarily, (e.g. through redundancies), but even 25% of them reported that the change was actually a ‘blessing in disguise’. In New Zealand, a 1994 study found 12% of

unemployed women and 3% of men had left their jobs because of family responsibilities (as cited in Henderson, 1997), suggesting family is a contributing factor towards work-related change. An Australian study (Crichton, 1998) reinforces this changing attitude towards work, with 20% of men having made a career decision on the basis of family and lifestyle responsibility, with this increasing to 60% of men aged less than 35 years old, with partners in the workforce and young children. Figures from the United States Bureau of Labour Statistics show of the 20.6 million Americans working part time (less than 35 hours per week), 23.1% say the reason is family/personal obligations, while child-care problems account for 3.6% (Young, 1997). This suggests that demographic factors of dual-career couples and working mothers may simultaneously lead to attitudes that put the family ahead of the workplace.

2.3.1 Attitude Change Critique

The suggestion that employers adopt work-family programmes in response to employee demands for help balancing family and work is not based solely on female employees and their concerns for their children. Men in some positions have also had to deal with changing their attitudes, which often requires a major shift in their work role. Schellhardt (1997) notes that in the 1980s it was rare for high-profile executives to resign to spend more time with family, but in the 1990s it has almost become routine. Schellhardt (1997) says that more men are leaving their positions or scaling back work, due to family-related issues, referred to as 'daddy stress'. Schellhardt (1997) makes the point that there is no focus on women nor any furore over their leaving positions for family, because mothers have been quitting good jobs for their children's sake for years. Therefore, regarding the changing attitudes towards work, while men have gained the greatest attention, these changes might be more evenly distributed between men and women than is reported.

Despite the notion that employees have changed their attitudes and desire less work, there are some critiques of this proposition. For example, Kaufman (1997) states that while fathers in traditional family arrangements feel torn between work

and family, some are compelled by uncertain economic and breadwinner pressure to spend more time at work. Therefore, economic uncertainties might drive employees to work longer hours while not requesting support via work-family policies, simply because they need to keep their jobs. This highlights a critique of the downshifting concept mentioned above. The ability for employees to reduce hours and pay could be limited to those employees earning higher incomes than the majority of workers. For example, an accountant making \$75,000 annually might be able to afford a reduction to a four-day week and the corresponding drop in income to \$60,000. However, a secretary earning the minimum New Zealand wage of \$8 hour for a 40-hour week (\$16,640 per annum) would not likely seek a reduction in their working week and pay, unless their partner (if applicable) is earning a sufficient income to compensate. As a result, downshifting may only be feasible for those on high income or in a combined (dual-career) high-income relationship.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the main factors that have influenced and encouraged the adoption of work-family policies. While no means exhaustive, the major factors influencing adoption of work-family policies in the literature are covered. It can be seen that there are factors that have influenced the advent of work-family policies within developed countries, and while the literature focuses heavily upon the United States, these changes are generally seen in other countries, including New Zealand. The changing demographics, whether the increase in working mothers in paid work, single parents in paid work, parents seeking more time with their families, or workers deciding on a better quality of life through less work and reduced pay, have all played some part in the establishment of work-family policies, at least in the current climate where these programmes continue to flourish. In conclusion, although New Zealand has similar demographic and attitudinal changes to those held in other countries, it is worthwhile to examine work-family policies within New Zealand because while our demographic characteristics are similar to the United States, we have lagged behind in the adoption of work-family policies (Callister, 1996).

In response to these factors, many organisations have adopted work-family policies, and the work-family literature suggests there are many positive outcomes from the adoption of such programmes. Chapter Three examines the various advantages reported by organisations and supporters of work-family policies, and provides a compilation of all the major benefits associated with work-family policies.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE ON WORK-FAMILY POLICIES

3.1 Introduction

The work-family literature is replete with references regarding the positive impacts of work-family policy adoption on employees and their organisations (Bhagat, McQuaid, Lindholm, & Segovis, 1985; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Hall, 1990; Osterman, 1995). Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) suggested that work family polices are now recognised as progressive and innovative. Goodstein (1994) noted that pressures on employers to assist their employees with balancing their work and family demands have increased. Because the work-family literature has not yet collated these reported benefits as one cohesive group, this chapter aims to draw together the benefits for a more integrated approach. While supporters propose such benefits as improved morale, increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover, there are critics who warn that these benefits are often unsubstantiated. For example, Lobel (1991) argued that the relationship between work-family policy adoption and its effects are inadequately understood, because most research has been descriptive rather than theoretical. Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh, and Reilly (1995) supported this, asserting there is a need for a stronger scientific and theoretical basis when examining the impact of work-family practices. A principal problem with the literature is that it is based on case studies, and typically features research that fails to follow scientific methodological issues. For example, much of the research focuses on manager perceptions of benefits rather than surveying employee attitudes. While one of the foci of the present study is to examine such claims analytically, this chapter focuses on compiling the literature into a lucid form.

This chapter will address the major advantages asserted in the literature of adopting work-family practices. It will discuss both employer and employee aspects from work-family programmes, and examine the relationship between

benefits and organisational performance. This forms a sound base to a framework for the purported benefits of work-family policies.

3.2 Support for Work-Family Policies

Hall (1990) stated, “Work/family balance is fast becoming *the* hot career issue of the new decade” (p. 5, emphasis in original). Since that time, work-family balance and the subsequent work-family policies, programmes, and practices that followed, have received much attention, particularly within the United States. Commentators have noted a significant rise throughout the 1990s in the adoption and acceptance of work-family policies (Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Hall, Parker, & Victoria, 1993; Shellenbarger, 1997). Tenbrunsel et al. (1995) state that “there has been a growing awareness among United States companies of the importance of work and family issues in human resource policy decisions” (p. 233). While Hall et al. (1993) asserted that work-family flexibility had become part of the fabric of American business, New Zealand has been seen as lagging behind the United States on work-family adoption (Callister, 1996). Osterman (1995) continued this theme by contending that work-family benefits were of growing interest and importance in the landscape of organisations’ personnel policies, and that there had been substantial expansion in this area in recent years. Overall, commentators suggest that as the attention and adoption rates of work-family policies has grown, so to has the apparent legitimacy of such practices (Bencivenga, 1995; Crispell, 1996; Leonard, 1998b; Lobel, Googins, & Bankert, 1999; McShulskis, 1997b).

As previously discussed in Chapter Two, one of the reasons for the growth in work-family programmes includes the changing businesses environment. Kossek and Ozeki (1998) asserted that managing the conflict between work and family was a critical challenge for organisations, and a topic of growing importance in the human resource and organisational behaviour fields. Edwards and Rothbard (2000) advised that in recent years the amount of research into work and family linkages has grown immensely. These authors maintained such linkages are important for many organisations, especially for those expanding operations globally, requiring key employees to work abroad. Findings by Shaffer and

Harrison (1998) indicate that such international assignments can lead to strained family relationships, compelling employees to resign.

Linking organisational flexibility to work and life issues has become popular among business leaders because it helps policy makers understand how to support organisational structures and processes (Lobel et al., 1999). Business leaders understand that success today can be reliant on efficient employees; employees that are distracted by work-family conflict can be less efficient and effective than required. For example, a Canadian study found employee difficulty in managing their work and personal responsibilities resulted in reduced performance through stress and absenteeism (Paris, 1990). Conversely, Collins and Magid (1989) found employer-sponsored childcare programmes in the United States resulted in improved recruitment, reduced turnover, reduced absenteeism, increased productivity, improved morale, and enhanced company image. The work-family literature suggests that such benefits can provide an organisation with the key to business survival, and Hall et al. (1993) reiterated this, stating:

The workforce of the future will include more people of colour, more women, more new immigrants, more special needs employees – in short, more diversity than the current norm. It follows, then, that the companies that can attract, retain, motivate, and engage the most talented within these groups will be most likely to succeed, while those that do not may not even survive (p. 4).

Work-family policies might provide organisations with the means for achieving future success, whether through increased performance or through attracting and retaining employees with scarce skills.

The next section looks at the specific benefits reported by supporters of work-family programmes. To enable a deeper understanding of these benefits, they are classified into three groups.

3.3 Benefits

The advantages of work-family programme adoption will be categorised under three domains: internal organisational benefits, external organisational benefits, and organisational employee benefits. The rationale for adopting these categories is that the supporting literature on work-family programmes is disjointed and fails to bring together common themes. This will allow a more logical understanding of these benefits and permit the later formulation of a streamlined framework that encapsulates all the supporting literature. A brief explanation of each domain follows:

Internal Organisational Benefits focus on those benefits that have been suggested by the work-family literature as occurring internally within an organisation, and where the major benefactor of the advantage is the organisation. For example, while improved employee morale (Shellenbarger, 1999) might be beneficial to both employer and employee, it is the organisation that will benefit most from such behaviour.

External Organisational Benefits focus on those benefits that, according to the work-family literature, occur outside an organisation and are of major benefit to the organisation. For example, work-family programmes can enhance society's view of a company, thereby improving the corporate image of the firm (Hall et al., 1993). As such, the benefit the organisation receives from work-family policies is substantial but external to the organisation.

Employee Benefits focus on those benefits that the work-family literature present as providing a major benefit to organisational members. While these do not exclude such gains to the organisation, they are predominantly of benefit to employees. For example, work-family programmes can reduce employee stress through addressing work-family conflict (Bhagat et al., 1985). While such a gain is beneficial for the organisation, for example through reduced absenteeism from stress-related illnesses, it is the employees who are seen as chief beneficiaries of such an advantage.

The reported benefits of work-family practices found in the literature will now be discussed according to the three domains. It is important to note that some benefits will overlap. Bhagat et al. (1985) asserted that by reducing employee stress, for example through work-family programmes, employees would also experience reduced tardiness and absenteeism. Consequently, the benefits from work-family programmes should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. The following sections expand the three domains by exploring reported work-family benefits for each category in further detail.

3.4 Internal Organisational Benefits

The literature on each specific work-family benefit is categorised here if it has been asserted in the literature that these benefits have a major internal consequence for an organisation. For example, the reduction of employee absenteeism through work-family programmes is categorised here because the major benefit is to the organisation, in that through reducing the cost of employee absenteeism, the organisation might make some productivity gains (or reduce losses). This category represents the largest portion of purported benefits within the work-family literature.

3.4.1 Reduced Employee Tardiness

Tardiness refers to employees being late for work. It normally refers to an employee arriving at their worksite at a time outside normal starting hours. Kraut (1990) noted that IBM recognised that household structure and dual-career couples make a sizeable impact on employee tardiness. Burud, Aschbacher, and McCroskey (1984) found that employers offering company-sponsored childcare recorded decreased tardiness from their employees. Bhagat et al. (1985) suggested that employees would evade job stress through physical actions such as tardiness. These authors argued that subsequently removing employee stress should result in more satisfied and effective employees. That is, employees would become less tardy. Work-family programmes can help reduce tardiness through allowing employees to balance their work and family lives better. Michaels and McCarthy

(1993) noted the benefits of work-family programmes can include reduced employee tardiness.

3.4.2 Reduced Employee Absenteeism

Studies of absenteeism have often found that less-satisfied employees are more likely to be absent from work (Waters & Roach, 1971). Cutcher-Gershenfeld, Kossek, and Sandling (1997) proposed work and family issues are among the root causes of critical workplace problems such as absenteeism. Kraut (1990) suggested that IBM have recognised that work-family issues have a substantial influence on employee absenteeism. Bhagat et al. (1985) warned that extreme job stress is so adverse to employees that they will try to evade it by withdrawing physically from the organisation through absenteeism. Landauer (1997) reinforced this, stating that by adopting work-family policies, firms can help ease family demands that, in turn, lead to reduced employee absenteeism. Confronted with problems like increased absenteeism, many employers have been looking for ways to help employees balance work and family (Phillips, 1993). Hall et al. (1993) advised that pressures on organisations to adopt work-family policies included internal pressures such as the cost of absenteeism.

In response to these pressures, many firms have adopted work-family programmes and it has been reported these have resulted in positive effects on absenteeism rates. Collins and Magid (1989) found employer-sponsored childcare programmes did reduce absenteeism amongst employees, as did Burud, Aschbacher, and McCroskey (1984). Shellenbarger (1999) noted that business units from companies such as Xerox had reduced absenteeism rates by 30% through planning based on employee work-family needs. Hall et al. (1993) reported a lesser effect in a study of United States corporations where respondents were asked their perceptions of work-family practices and 56% of respondents reported a minor impact on reducing absenteeism. A Canadian survey of 1700 Royal Bank employees found that respondents said that flexible work programmes reduced their need to be absent (Leonard, 1998b). Faught (1995) agreed, arguing that the

corporate benefits of providing work-family programmes to employees included reduced absenteeism rates.

3.4.3 Improved Employee Morale

Shellenbarger (1999) suggested Xerox, through adopting work-family programmes, has achieved improved morale amongst its employees. IBM reported greater employee morale when employees were given control over their working hours through flexibility (Martinez, 1993). McCampbell (1996) proposed alternative work schedules could result in improved morale for employees. Similarly, Hall et al. (1993) asserted that firms could achieve results such as higher morale through the introduction of more flexibility into the workplace. McNerney (1994) indicated employee morale could be improved through work-family practices like flexible scheduling, because it is a benefit that workers appreciate. In relation to this, a Canadian survey of Bank employees found that respondents said that flexible work practices also improved their morale (Leonard, 1998b). Similarly, with regard to childcare programmes, Collins and Magid (1989) found employers perceived improved morale amongst employees.

3.4.4 Improved Employee Retention

Landauer (1997) asserted that firms adopting family-friendly policies could help ease family demands that in turn led to reduced employee turnover. Lobel et al. (1999) stated “as competition for attracting and retaining valued employees heats up, the ability of a corporation to address personal and family needs becomes more critical” (p. 247). An Australian study into turnover of management women due to work and family conflict estimated the cost at A\$75,000 per employee (Abbott, De Cieri, & Iverson, 1998). It has been proposed that one way to combat this is through work-family policies, and Collins and Magid (1989) found that employer-sponsored childcare programmes did reduce employee turnover.

Through the adoption of work-family policies, organisations can retain highly talented staff, which in turn will reduce costs associated with training replacements (Gordon & Whelan, 1998). Grover and Crooker (1995) stated

“people are more attached to organisations that offer family-friendly policies, regardless of the extent to which the people might personally benefit from the policies” (p.283). Lobel et al. (1999) suggested that through work-family policies, firms could gain positive relationships with communities that in turn enhance a firm's reputation as being an employer of choice. If employees perceive their organisation as an ‘employer of choice’, they may be less likely to leave their current firm, fearing a lack of similar benefits in the market place. Chiu and Ng (1999) supported this, maintaining that because finding similar firms offering similar work-family programmes might not be easy, employees may choose to continue their membership simply because of the benefits provided. This is also known as continuance commitment (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993).

Organisations that offer generous work-family benefits will have an edge in recruiting and retaining desirable employees (Lobel et al., 1999). McCampbell (1996) asserted that organisations could use alternative work schedules as a useful retention tool. Bhagat et al. (1985) suggested extreme job stress can encourage employees to leave their job altogether, therefore highlighting opportunities for work-family programmes to alleviate employee stress and become a retention strategy. Pressures on organisations to adopt work-family policies also include internal pressures from the cost of employee turnover (Hall et al., 1993). Hall et al. (1993) argued that introducing more flexibility into the workplace has been found to result in reduced turnover. For example, in the early 1990s Corning Inc. was losing women professionals at twice the rate of males at an annual cost of US\$3.5 to US\$4 million. By adopting work-family programmes, Corning Inc. reduced their turnover rate and reduced costs of recruiting and training replacements. A survey by Catalyst (1998) found 78% of full-time professionals and 98% of part-time professionals agreed that offering flexible work arrangements encourages employee retention.

Specific work-family policies such as job-sharing have been found to reduce employee turnover rates (Flynn, 1997; Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Lawlor, 1996; Sailors & Sylvestre, 1994). Phillips (1993) implied that confronted with factors

such as higher turnover, many employers were looking for ways to help employees balance work and family issues. For example, Mason (1991) noted IBM used work-family programmes to keep employees going to work. Other companies such as Johnson & Johnson found work-family practices helped retain employees (Mason, 1993). According to Phillips (1993), retaining employees is vital, because even the downsizing organisation needs to retain talent. These provide strong incentives for organisations to examine work-family programmes as a means of retaining employees.

Work-family programmes can also promote an organisation to its own employees (Berns & Berns, 1992), which may help employee retention. Companies that provide work-family initiatives like childcare facilities can help employees choose to stay with their company (Herman, 1999). SAS Institute, with 1700 employees, is an American computer software development company and offers myriad work-family practices, to which the company attributes its low employee turnover rates (Martinez, 1993). For example, in the early 1990s the company's turnover rate was less than 6%, when the industry average was 20%. Cole (1999) also used SAS Institute as an example of work-family initiatives retaining talent, noting that the SAS Institute cited the loss of talented female employees as a reason for opening a childcare centre as early as 1981. This supported Hand and Zawacki's (1994) claim that work-family initiatives such as on-site or near-site day care facilities could become an attractive enticement for retaining employees. The SAS Institute maintain that while industry turnover rate was still upwards of 20% in the late 1990s, the company say they have stabilised at 4%, saving the company an estimated US\$50 million a year (Cole, 1999). Accounting giant Price Waterhouse also had a large employee turnover problem at 25% per annum, but client demand for more in-depth expertise meant the firm needed to attract and retain top-performing people. By providing work-family initiatives, Price Waterhouse found it could draw talented people with specialised skills as well as encouraging them to stay (Engoron, 1997).

It has been suggested that work-family practices like telecommuting can help employee retention, as employees who are trusted by management to work at home are less likely to leave their company (McNerney, 1994). McShulskis (1997a) has reiterated this by asserting programmes that help employees balance work and family responsibilities have a positive effect on employees' decisions to stay with a company, with almost 60% of employees surveyed saying their ability to balance work and personal responsibilities was of great importance in their decision to stay with their company. Attracting and retaining employees becomes more important during tight labour markets and Overman (1999) proposed that the tight labour market has made it easier for firms to adopt work-family initiatives. Overman suggested that companies previously adopted work-family programmes based on expected productivity gains, but more recently this had been extended to include company survival through employee retention.

Such gains for organisations can reinforce the perception of positive gains from work-family policies. However, in a study of American corporations cited by Hall et al. (1993), 54% of respondents noted only a minor impact on reducing turnover through the adoption of work-family practices. This study suggested that the retention benefits of work-family programmes might not be universal or might have a limited impact on employee retention, encouraging further examination. These findings could also highlight the promotion that work-family policies gained in the tight labour markets of the late 1990s, well before Hall et al.'s study. Loscocco (2000) offered some illumination on this, in stating that it is important for companies to extend flexibility options to lower level employees. For example, Steelcase manufacturing company achieved a turnover rate of just 3% by extending part-time schedules and job-sharing benefits to hourly employees (Dynerman & Hayes, 1991).

3.4.5 Competitive Advantage

According to Hall et al. (1993), work-family issues could be a key to corporate competitiveness and survival. Firms can be seen to be adopting work-family programmes to provide an edge in business, whether through retaining skilled

employees, or increasing employee loyalty and productivity. In a Canadian survey of the Royal Bank, employee respondents said that flexible work improved their efficiency, morale, commitment, and customer service, as well as reduced absenteeism (Leonard, 1998b). Leonard concluded that the company had turned flexible work arrangements into a real competitive advantage, indicating how the benefits of work-family programmes could collectively contribute to a competitive advantage. This might be through being able to recruit and retain the best quality employees in a tight labour market, or through greater productivity above industry competitors through use of flexible work practices.

3.4.6 Improved Employee Motivation

Stone (1998) stated “employee motivation is vital to the success of any organisation” (p. 11). Cutcher-Gershenfeld et al. (1997) stressed that work and family issues were among the root causes of critical workplace problems such as motivation. Overman (1999) maintained that employees could be more motivated when they had control over their working schedule, for example through flexitime. Vincola and Farren (1999) added that lifestyle issues have become increasingly prominent in defining what keeps employees motivated. Tenbrunsel et al. (1995) defined intrinsic motivation as a force that drives effort and persistence. Consequently, if work-family policies can improve employee motivation, then productivity can increase through increased effort. Likewise, Byars and Rue (1997) asserted that highly motivated employees tend to be more productive and have lower rates of absenteeism, turnover, and lateness. This highlights that these reported work-family benefits, if demonstrated, should not be viewed as being mutually exclusive. For example, if work-family programmes lead to increased employee motivation, this might also contribute to greater performance, lower turnover and the reduction in tardiness and absenteeism. These might all, in turn, contribute to increased organisational performance through such benefits as cost savings.

3.4.7 Improved Employee Commitment & Loyalty

From an organisational behaviour perspective, loyalty (Rusbult, Farrell, Rodgers & Mainous, 1988) and organisational commitment are viewed as distinct attitudes, with organisational commitment having been separated into three components (Meyer, Allen and Smith, 1991). However, the work-family literature does not typically make such distinctions, and hence the present study has covered these two purported benefits together. Employee loyalty to an organisation has been shown to be a construct that is distinct from that of job satisfaction and work involvement (Brooke, Russell, & Price, 1988). It has been demonstrated that organisations experience positive results from committed employees (Adler & Adler, 1988). Tenbrunsel et al. (1995) stated that one of these positive results is increased job performance, such that the more committed employees are, the better their job performance. However, a meta-analysis of organisational commitment and performance by Randall (1990) found only a modest link.

Tenbrunsel et al. (1995) contended that the loyalty employees feel for their organisation creates a feeling of obligation that is repaid by increased effort. It has also been suggested that through the adoption of work-family policies, organisations can retain highly talented women and in turn develop employee loyalty (Gordon & Whelan, 1998).

McShulskis (1997a) maintained that work-family programmes could help strengthen employee commitment, where they are more willing to work towards achieving business results. Vincola and Farren (1999) added that lifestyle issues were becoming increasingly prominent in keeping employees committed. Leonard (1998b) supported this with Canadian findings, which maintained employees noted improved commitment to their organisation through work-family practices. Angle and Perry (1981) suggested that individual employees could become more committed to their organisation in return for employer provided gains. Recently, Scandura and Lankau (1997) found that employees who perceived their organisation as family-friendly reported a higher level of commitment than those employees who did not. Chiu and Ng (1999) rationalised this by saying employees

who benefit from work-family practices would appreciate what their company did for them, and hence hold a favourable attitude towards the organisation.

Work-family programmes have been found to improve employee loyalty at IBM (Mason, 1991) and at Johnson & Johnson (Mason, 1993). McNerney (1994) argued that employee loyalty improves through the adoption of work-family programmes, as practices such as flexible scheduling are a benefit that workers value. Berns and Berns (1992) asserted that work-family policies could also provide a new foundation for the loyalty, dedication, and team spirit necessary to compete in quality-driven global competition.

3.4.8 Improved Customer Service

Some firms have stated they have improved customer service through the adoption of work-family programmes. This benefit might be a by-product of other benefits such as increased employee motivation and commitment, which might see employees providing extra customer attention. Just as it is suggested that work-family programmes might reduce work-family conflict and thus employees become increasingly motivated, so too they might also become increasingly responsive to customer needs, thereby improving customer service. Leonard (1998b) asserted that employees at a Canadian bank noted flexible work practices provided benefits including improved customer service. Vincola and Mobley (1998) concurred, suggesting firms that institute work-family programmes gain improved customer service, which is also good for the “bottom line”.

Martinez (1997b) asserted that Xerox improved customer satisfaction by adopting work-family programmes that altered the work process. Shellenbarger (1999) asserted that Xerox had improved efficiency through quicker customer-response times, because of their work-family programmes. Allied Signal, which spends more than US\$1.4 billion annually on salary and benefits, feel that employee satisfaction will drive customer satisfaction and hence growth (Scott, 1997). Mason (1993) suggested that firms could adopt work-family programmes because of the philosophy: “You take care of employees and they will take care of the

customers”, which is good for business. Chubb Corporation has stated that the benefits they receive from the adoption of work-family programmes also include increased customer satisfaction (Graham, 1996). Berry (1999b) showed that compressed workweeks and flexitime could mean extended customer service options for some businesses. Combined, these aspects of the work-family literature suggest that there is a link between work-family practices and improved customer service, although again, the causal link in the literature is not developed.

3.4.9 Trained Replacements For Job Cover

This particular work-family advantage is particularly evident among job-sharing employees, or those employees who have downshifted (permanently reduced their working hours). According to Wheatley (1997), there is greater likelihood of a trained worker readily available to cover for sickness or holidays through work-family programmes such as downshifting. This would also apply to part-time workers and employees who are job-sharing and might be able to step into full time work as cover.

3.4.10 Reducing Office Space

The work-family practice of telecommuting can solve office space problems, reducing the need for greater office space and therefore reducing company costs (Sheley, 1996). For example, the telecommuting benefits of reduced office space have annually saved Chubb Corporation thousands of dollars per employee (Graham, 1996). WomenConnect (1997d) supported this, asserting that telecommuting offers a number of economic advantages including reduced real estate costs. Similarly, Berry (1999b) pointed out that high commercial real estate costs are driving some telecommuting initiatives in the United States, in an endeavour to reduce office expenses.

3.4.11 Reduced Health Costs

Due to escalating stress-related health care costs, many employers are looking for ways to help employees balance work and family issues (Phillips, 1993). Thomas

and Ganster (1995) found nurse use of flexibility led to reduced work-family conflict and fewer mental and physical health problems. Woodward (1998) supported this, maintaining that in general family problems can contribute to increased health care costs. In one example, Walter (1996) maintained that a United States manufacturer with 87,000 employees lost US\$5.5 million in a single year through productivity losses and increased health care costs as a result of employees providing hands-on eldercare.

3.5 External Organisational Benefits

The literature on each specific work-family benefit is presented in this category if the advantage has been reported as having a major effect on an organisation externally. For example, enhancing a firm's corporate image through advertising work-family programmes is categorised here because the major benefit relates to the firm's external image.

3.5.1 Improved Employee Recruitment

Rodgers (1992) argued that firms wanting to recruit high-quality professional women and men should be adopting work-family programmes because of attitude changes regarding employee willingness to sacrifice family for work. Hence managers might view work-family programmes as recruitment tools (Osterman, 1995). McCampbell (1996) suggested that organisations could improve employee recruitment by using alternative work schedules. As competition for attracting valued employees increases, the ability of a corporation to address personal and family needs becomes more critical (Lobel et al., 1999). Faught (1995) maintained that the benefits of providing work-family programmes to employees included recruitment advantages. McShulskis (1997a) and Hall et al. (1993) agreed, maintaining that work-family programmes could help attract employees. Collins and Magid (1989) found organisations that adopted employer-sponsored childcare programmes perceived they had improved recruitment ability. Lobel et al. (1999) proposed that through work-family policies firms could gain positive relationships with communities, which in turn enhance a firm's reputation as an employer of

choice. This can be seen as a recruitment advantage that firms can use to entice valuable employees to their organisation. For example, Mason (1991) suggested that work-family programmes at IBM help attract new employees. A study of Johnson & Johnson found work-family practices have helped in recruiting the best people (Mason, 1993).

Osterman (1995) suggested that managers can regard work-family programmes as a recruitment tool, with firms wishing to recruit high-quality women and men being advised to offer work-family programmes as an indication the workplace supports a work-family balance. Rodgers (1992) stated that this is because of changing attitudes concerning employees' willingness to sacrifice family for work. In support, Vincola and Farren (1999) maintained that lifestyle issues are becoming increasingly prominent in defining what attracts employees. Phillips (1993) suggested that even downsizing organisations still needed to attract new talent, and could do so with work-family policies. However, whether such organisations will have the financial resources to adopt work-family policies was not examined. It has been suggested that organisations that offer generous work-family benefits will have an edge in recruiting desirable employees (Lobel et al., 1999). This has become particularly important in the United States, where Shellenbarger (1997) noted that job recruiters are increasingly hearing questions about work and life balance in first-round talks with potential recruits. This might indicate that employees are becoming increasingly aware of work-family programmes and applying pressure towards organisations to adopt them. Organisational failure to address work-family issues might lead potential recruits go elsewhere, because they could view the organisation as less interested in employee balance of work and family commitments.

Berns and Berns (1992) asserted that work-family programmes could promote an organisation to potential recruits, and Hand and Zawacki (1994) offered initiatives such as on-site or near-site daycare facilities as potentially attractive enticements for recruiting employees. Engoron (1997) asserted that Price Waterhouse needed to attract top-performing people, especially given its high turnover rate, and

suggested that by providing employees with work-family initiatives, Price Waterhouse has been able to recruit talented people with specialised skills. In contrast, a study of United States corporation perceptions of work-family practices found 53% of respondents reported only a minor impact on recruiting qualified employees (Hall et al., 1993). This provides a contrasting picture of the effectiveness of work-family programmes on employee recruitment, encouraging clarification in the New Zealand study.

3.5.2 Enhanced Corporate Image

Hall et al. (1993) observed that in a study of United States corporations, the greatest impact was enhanced corporate image; with 48% reporting their work-family programmes had a major impact on this. Faught (1995) concurred, asserting the corporate benefits of providing work-family programmes to employees include enhanced public image. Goodstein (1994) noted that public attention towards work and family issues had increased to a point where organisations must face heightened institutional pressures to respond by adopting work-family policies. As such, the image advantage that might be gained could be a direct result of organisations reacting to institutional pressures. Collins and Magid (1989) found employer-sponsored childcare programmes in the United States did enhance the image of companies with these programmes. Kossek, Noe, and DeMarr (1999) suggested “work-family programmes often have a greater impact on companies’ reputations than on employees’ stress” (p. 103). Berns and Berns (1992) proposed that the primary reason corporations first adopted work-family programmes was symbolic, relating to their identity. These authors added that this indicated to the world at large how these corporations go about their business, how they allocate resources and what they believe creates profits.

Hand and Zawacki (1994) suggested work-family initiatives like partially funding or subsidising a near-site daycare facility could enhance a company’s image in the community. In support, Lobel et al. (1999) asserted that through work-family policies firms could gain positive relationships with communities that, in turn, could enhance a firm’s reputation to become a supplier, investment, or employer

of choice. Hall et al. (1993) maintained that work-family practices such as flexible work practices can improve a company's image and drive share prices upwards. The authors also suggested that success on the 'Top 100 Employers' rankings, for which many are work-family champions, also has value. Conceivably work-family policies can create an improved profile for an organisation that adopts work-family programmes and promotes it. Moreover, this image building can be inexpensive. For example, Kahn and Kamerman (1987) noted that some firms provide childcare information as a inexpensive method of enhancing their corporate image, stating it's a "cheap form of 'image building' and of announcing a policy of 'family responsiveness'" (p. 197).

Another avenue for organisational image building associated with work-family policies is environmental advantages from telecommuting (McNerney, 1994; Tapsell, 1999; WomenConnect, 1997c). For example, telecommuting has been promoted as a method of meeting environmental legislation, such as the Federal Clean Air Act in the United States (Bronson, 1993; Sheley, 1996).

3.5.3 Improved CEO Image

In line with enhanced corporate image (above), and the accompanying institutional pressures, it has been suggested that a CEO's personal image can also be enhanced through work-family programme adoption. For example, if a CEO publicly espouses the virtues of their company's new work-family policies, and is a publicly listed company, investors may view the firm and its CEO as progressive and thus improve the CEO's image and the company's stock (Hall et al., 1993). While closely related to corporate image, this could provide an additional benefit worthy of further study. If improved CEO image is perceived as an important benefit for organisations (or their CEOs), this would provide additional depth to the literature reporting work-family policy benefits. For example, if CEOs perceive a benefit to their public image they might drive work-family policy adoption in their organisation.

3.5.4 Meeting Legal Obligations

This benefit is very much associated with environmental advantages, and specifically the United States Clean Air Act. As mentioned above, telecommuting can be viewed as a work-family practice that meets employer, employee, and government (legislation) needs. Telecommunication firm Nynex, with 62,000 employees, has recently revamped its telecommuting policy in consideration of the Clean Air Act (Sheley, 1996). While similar legislation does not exist within New Zealand, another example might include paid parental leave. While Australia has no requirements for paid parental leave, a fistful of pioneers in the private sector have taken the matter into their own hands in that country (Crichton, 1998). Similar pioneering behaviour might have occurred in New Zealand, although paid parental leave became legislated in July 2002.

3.5.5 Increased Customer Satisfaction

This benefit is related to the internal organisational benefit of improved customer service. Clearly, if a firm can improve on the customer service they provide, the results can lead to increased customer satisfaction. Scott (1997) maintained that the rationale behind Allied Signal's work-family programmes is that increased employee satisfaction will drive customer satisfaction and hence, growth of the firm. As noted above under Improved Customer Service (Section 3.4.8), Xerox asserted it had improved customer satisfaction through the adoption of work-family programmes (Martinez, 1997b). Shellenbarger (1999) has suggested that Xerox improved efficiency through quicker customer-response times, which in turn could have led to increased customer satisfaction.

This benefit is distinct from improved customer service because that benefit is internal, in that it deals with the way employees deal with customers. This benefit encompasses the attitudes of the customers themselves, and is therefore external to the organisation. While improved customer service might facilitate increased customer satisfaction, this would require separate testing to be proven. For example, do firms survey their customers for satisfaction, or is such a benefit perceived through increased repeat sales? Chubb Corporation believes the benefits

they receive from the adoption of work-family programmes include increased customer satisfaction (Graham, 1996). Companies might examine this aspect through customer surveys examining the link between service and repeat sales.

3.6 Employee Benefits

A work-family benefit is categorised here if it is reported as having a major consequence on an organisation's employees. For example, increasing employee job satisfaction specifically benefits the employee. While this may also benefit the organisation, the employee is the major recipient of the advantage. This section concludes the literature supporting work-family programmes.

3.6.1 Increased Job Satisfaction

Kossek and Ozeki (1998) have asserted that research on human resource policies which addresses work-family roles often examines the ramifications of work-family policies on work attitudes such as job satisfaction. Managers have long believed that the happy worker is a productive one, but decades of research into whether job satisfaction influences productivity have generally revealed a weak relationship, with only turnover and absenteeism having shown reliable linkages to satisfaction (Straw & Barsade, 1993). Work-family policies might link to improved job satisfaction, by allowing a better balance between work and family roles. For example, Judge, Boudreau, and Bretz Jr. (1994) found a positive correlation between job satisfaction and organisational work-family policies. Likewise, Ezra and Deckman (1996) found that for public sector employees, those using flexitime reported more work-family balance and higher job satisfaction. This might indicate that employees have the freedom and flexibility to better manage their work and family roles, which ultimately might leave them more satisfied with their jobs.

Studies examining the relationship between conflict emanating from the workplace and the home, suggest that job satisfaction can be negatively linked with both sources of conflict. For example Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian

(1996) found a negative relationship between job satisfaction and both forms of conflict for three distinct samples (teachers and administrators, small business owners, and real estate salespersons). It is suggested that workplace and home life strains and demands can impact negatively on job satisfaction. Therefore, work-family policies that allow employees greater freedom and flexibility, and that allow the reduction of these demands, might provide employees with greater job satisfaction. For example Saltzstein, Ting and Saltzstein (2001) have asserted that recent surveys show flexible work schedules can be effective tools in promoting job satisfaction.

In their study of work-family conflict and multiple job satisfaction measures, Boles, Howard, and Donofrio (2001) found support for work- and family-based conflict negatively correlated with satisfaction towards the job in general, supervision, promotion opportunities, the work itself, and co-workers. Overman (1999) has suggested that employees with managers who support work-family programmes are more likely to have high job satisfaction, offering managerial support as a factor in employee job satisfaction through work-family policies. A study of Johnson & Johnson employees found work-family practices helped to increase their job satisfaction (Mason, 1993). Thomas and Ganster (1995) maintained that work-family practices have direct positive effects on employee perceptions of control over work and family matters. These authors found this was associated with lowering job dissatisfaction.

3.6.2 Decreased Stress

Extreme job stress is so adverse to employees that it can elicit extreme behaviour, including lack of job involvement, tardiness, absenteeism, or leaving the job altogether. In contrast, the absence of extreme stress should result in more satisfied and effective employees (Bhagat et al., 1985). Phillips (1993) has warned that confronted with escalating stress-related health care costs, many employers are adopting work-family programmes. A study of Johnson & Johnson employees found work-family practices helped reduce stress (Mason, 1993), while Overman

(1999) has suggested employees with supportive managers are more likely to have lower levels of job stress, when a firm has adopted work-family policies.

Grzywacz, Almeida and McDonald (2002) found that while work-family stress gradually increased through young adulthood and midlife, and then declined during the later years (age 55+), there was no difference between genders. Berry and Rao (1997) have concurred, calling this “equal opportunity stress”. This stress typically increases as employees age and accept greater responsibility, for example children, mortgage etc. Walls, Capella and Greene (2001) have further suggested that the stress of modern life, with increased dual-career couples, and increased demands from the work and family fronts, can only exacerbate the stress felt by employees today. Phillips (1993) asserted that using work-family programmes to help employees to balance their work and personal lives makes for happier, more productive employees, because they have less personal stress to handle during work time. Hand and Zawacki (1994) have maintained that by removing stress associated with work-family conflicts, an organisation can positively influence employee productivity and ultimately the success of a company.

3.6.3 Improved Physical Health

The benefits associated with work-family practices have also been shown to impact upon the physical health of employees. Through work-family practices, employees perceive greater control over work-family issues, which in turn has been found to associate with increased health through reducing somatic complaints, depression and blood cholesterol levels (Thomas & Ganster, 1995).

As noted above, workplace stress is becoming more common, and has been negatively linked with employee physical well being (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992; Westman, 2001).

Brisson, Laflamme, Milot, Masse and Vezina (1999) highlighted the link between family roles, when they found large family responsibilities were associated with significant increases in blood pressure among white-collar women. In a four-year longitudinal study, Frone, Russell and Cooper (1997) found

a correlation between conflict that originates in the home and poor physical health. These studies suggest there are physical benefits also associated with work-family programmes, and this may be in line with reduced stress as discussed above.

3.7 Improved Organisational Performance

The majority of the literature supporting work-family programmes has suggested that the benefits reported regarding work-family policies can contribute to greater productivity or improved organisational performance (Faight, 1995; Hall et al., 1993; Mason, 1991; McCampbell, 1996; McShulskis, 1997b; Shellenbarger, 1999). Overman (1999) proposed that companies originally used to sell work-family programmes on productivity gains alone. This suggests that the drive for productivity gains might play a major part in the adoption of work-family practices. For example, Hall et al. (1993) has stated that the pressures on organisations to adopt work-family policies include internal pressures of the cost of lost productivity. This is because linkages between work and family have been shown to affect organisational performance (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Durst (1999) has suggested that organisations “offer family-friendly programmes based on the assumptions that such efforts will benefit the organisation, either directly through enhanced productivity, or indirectly through a greater ability to recruit high quality employees, improved retention, and/or greater job satisfaction among employees” (p. 19).

Such improvements might be attributed to cost savings from employee turnover, more productive employees through being more motivated and committed, and from health care cost savings, and repeat customers through improved service. For example Collins and Magid (1989) found employer-sponsored childcare programmes in the United States lead to increased productivity. However, it has been shown that childcare on-site is rare, with adoption rates of only 1%-2% in United States firms (Gonyea & Googins, 1992; Osterman, 1995). Gonyea and Googins (1992) noted that there has been an organisational reluctance to adopt childcare due to the lack of data demonstrating that this work-family initiative actually results in productivity gains. Also, others have tested and found use of on-

site childcare to be unrelated to performance (Kossek & Nichol, 1992; Milkovich & Gomez, 1976), suggesting that childcare policies are by no means a guarantee of improved productivity.

A specific productivity benefit promoted in the work-family literature is the perception these policies encourage employees to 'go the extra mile' for the company (McShulskis, 1997a). For example, a DuPont study found employees who took advantage of the firm's work-family programmes were the most committed and the least likely to feel burned out, and these employees were 45% more likely to 'go the extra mile' to meet organisational goals (Martinez, 1997c). Supporting this, WomenConnect (1998e) have suggested that the more support employees receive on the job (e.g. through flexible work arrangements), the higher their productivity and the more willing they are to 'go the extra mile'. Similarly, a United States study of Johnson & Johnson found those employees who had a supportive supervisor in a family-friendly culture, were more willing to 'go the extra mile' to help the company succeed (Smith, 1996a).

McShulskis (1997b) has asserted that generally employers are finding that work-family initiatives can help employees be more focused and productive at work. According to Phillips (1993), confronted with loss of productivity, many employers are looking for ways to help employees balance work and family. Corporate benefits of providing work-family programmes to employees have been found to include higher rates of profitability (Faught, 1995), which may offer a new foundation to compete in a quality-driven global market place (Berns & Berns, 1992). Specific work-family practices have been linked to enhanced performance. For example, Hall et al. (1993) have noted a study of United States corporations that found flexible work practices were widespread and made a positive impact on performance. The study found 75% of respondents perceived a positive or very positive impact on bottom-line profits from work-family programme adoption. This might denote that managers feel work-family programmes can enhance an organisation's performance, although it must be noted that there are few studies that have analytically demonstrated causality. Job-

sharing has also been linked to increased organisational performance (Flynn, 1997; Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Lawlor, 1996; Sailors & Sylvestre, 1994) Gordon and Whelan (1998) suggested that through decreasing costs and increasing benefits to organisations, work-family programmes can have positive bottom-line consequences. These authors also suggested that the retention of highly talented women employees would in turn reduce costs associated with recruiting and training replacements, leading to cost savings for the organisation.

Siegel (1998) proposed that changes in the nature of work and advances in communication technologies could be used to move back toward a more home-based work center. More recently Loscocco (2000) implied that organisations are becoming more comfortable with such arrangements, with almost one third of United States companies encouraging their employees to telecommute. This is supported by the Staffing Industry Report (1995), which found that among companies with telecommuting options, 86% experienced increased productivity (reported in Celente, 1997). Loscocco (2000) has asserted that scheduling flexibility, such as flexitime, is the most widely adopted work-family policy in place today. Despite its popularity, Glass and Estes (1997) warned of mixed reports on the benefits of flexitime, which Loscocco (2000) indicated could be explained through variations in supervisor support, programme specifics, and individual needs.

Business units in Xerox, through planning based on employees work-family needs, have reported improved efficiency through quicker customer-response times and for the first time, an on-deadline completion of a new product (Shellenbarger, 1999). IBM has attributed enhanced employee productivity to work-family programmes (Mason, 1991), with Martinez (1993) noting that IBM found when employees had control over how they deliver their work hours, they were more productive. A Canadian study found that respondents said that flexible work improves efficiency (Leonard, 1998b). Hand and Zawacki (1994) asserted that by removing stress associated with work-family conflicts, employers could positively affect employee productivity and ultimately the success of a company.

In another Xerox example, Martinez (1997b) showed that through altering the work process, the company exceeded sales goals. The SAS Institute has maintained that their sick-care programme helps productivity, and has confirmed this by performing a cost benefit analysis for the programme (Cole, 1999; Martinez, 1993). However, this might be an exception, because it appears that few firms undertake cost benefit analysis to verify their anecdotal evidence of work-family policies leading to productivity gains. An example of this is a self-reporting study on the impact of flexibility on performance, where 51% of part-time professionals and 46% of their full time colleagues reported increased productivity due to flexible work arrangements (Catalyst, 1998).

It has been claimed that the business case for a work-family programme is that it is a bottom-line issue (Phillips, 1993). Gordon and Whelan (1998) have suggested that work-family practices such as sabbaticals also can lead to increased productivity through re-energising employees. McNerney (1994) has argued that worker productivity increases when employees are given freedom to work in different ways, at varying paces, and in different environments, through work-family practices such as telecommuting. Hence, it can be seen that the productivity/performance link from work-family practices might not always be direct, but rather gained through recruitment savings, rejuvenated employees, and giving greater freedom.

This section seeks to build towards a collective influence from all the work-family benefits as reported by the work-family literature. That is, the literature overall asserts the benefits named in the three domains collated above can influence firm performance. At this stage the effect of work-family programmes on organisation performance requires a more theoretical basis to provide a solid foundation for future empirical testing (Tenbrunsel et al., 1995). To this end, the literature that links strategic human resource management with organisational performance will be addressed briefly.

Delery and Doty (1996) have stated that the basic premise underlying strategic human resource management is the desire to demonstrate the importance of human resource practices for organisational performance. Becker and Gerhart (1996) suggested that human resource management could help create and sustain organisational performance and competitive advantage. Fundamentally, strategic human resource management has been linked to improve organisational performance (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Davidson, Worrell, & Fox, 1996; Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Delery & Doty, 1996; Youdt, Dean Jr., & Lepak, 1996). However, this literature has focused on internal career, formal training, appraisal measures, profit sharing, employment security, voice mechanisms, job definition (Delery & Doty, 1996), job redesign, employee training, and incentive compensation (Delaney & Huselid, 1996), as policies linked to organisational performance.

The performance-enhancing ability of work-family policies has received less attention in the past decade within this literature. For example, Durst (1999) has noted the productivity reasons for firms adopting work-family practices, but adds, “however, it has been difficult to link gains in any of these areas to particular benefit programmes” (p. 19). While there is increased focus on work-family policy relationships in certain management literature (such as work-family conflict, see Judge, Boudreau & Bretz, 1994), little empirical research has linked increased organisational performance with the implementation of these policies. That is, the majority of research into the work-family and organisational performance link has been descriptive (Lobel, 1991), or focused upon a few specific company case studies such as Xerox (Martinez, 1997b; Shellenbarger, 1999), SAS Institute (Cole, 1999; Martinez, 1993) IBM (Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Mason, 1991) and Johnson & Johnson (Mason, 1993). There are some exceptions to this criticism, and they typically are those advantages that have been developed with regard to other policies, and therefore have an established analytical base to start from. For example, in the work-family literature there are solid, analytical examinations of such employee attitudes as turnover, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and employee stress. This is because these areas within organisational behaviour

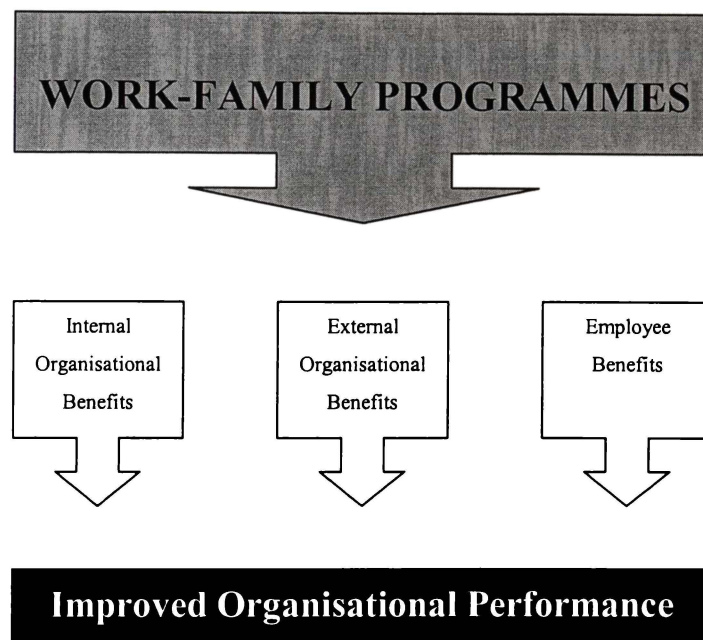
and human resource management have been extensively researched within other areas, and therefore provide a strong, solid base for future research that moves into the work-family area. Other benefits are harder to quantify. For example, customer service benefits have perhaps less theoretical underpinnings, which ultimately encourages descriptive, rather than theoretical and analytical, approaches.

The literature discussed in the majority of this chapter suggests that organisations that adopt work-family practices gain benefits internally, externally, and for their employees. From these benefits, the firm operations improve through greater efficiency and effectiveness, thus increasing performance. It could be hypothesized from the literature, if such reported benefit relationships are true, that those firms that adopt work-family programmes and register benefits to their organisation internally, externally, and for their employees (e.g. increased loyalty, enhanced public image and decreased employee stress), would improve organisational performance. This interpretation of the supporting work-family literature will now be incorporated within a framework designed to facilitate empirical testing.

3.7.1 Theoretical Framework For Work-Family Policy Support

The literature supporting firm adoption of work-family policies appears to be extensive, disjointed, and somewhat unproven. A review of the literature reveals related themes within the work-family material that could be linked to provide a tight, stable framework for investigating the advocacy of work-family programmes. The three divisions detailed above - internal organisational benefits, external organisational benefits, and organisational employee benefits, aimed to classify the major themes within coherent categories. Combined, these divisions lead into the performance enhancement findings. From this, a framework has been developed, which can be graphically illustrated as follows:

Figure 3.7.1.1 Framework For Work-Family Programme Support



The framework for work-family programme support seeks to encapsulate the various benefits that firms report they receive through the adoption of work-family policies, and provide the overriding direction that such advantages lead to - improved organisational performance. In some examples within the work-family literature, such links to improving organisational performance might have been neglected or downplayed. For example, Vincola and Farren (1999) have suggested that lifestyle issues are becoming increasingly prominent in defining what attracts employees and keeps them motivated and committed. Equally, according to Hand and Zawacki (1994), work-family initiatives such as on-site daycare can help attract and retain employees. Therefore, firms that can attract top employees and keep them motivated and committed create for themselves the opportunity to perform at a higher level than previously; that is, become more productive. Such links to performance are not always made, even when obvious financial advantages such as employee turnover are noted, such as the US\$50 million annual savings through reduced turnover at SAS Institute (Cole, 1999). As

detailed above, the benefits mentioned in the supporting work-family literature can be categorised into three domains, and the present study suggests that, theoretically at least, all three can contribute to improved organisational performance. The links suggested by this theoretical framework need to be tested by empirical research, as do the three categories proposed. Overall, the literature supporting work-family programmes does acknowledge the economic impact of work-family policies on organisational performance. As such, it appears the driving focus of work-family programmes is to improve organisational performance both through employee and organisational benefits, and this framework seeks to illustrate this point.

3.8 Conclusion

The framework unifies the supporting literature on work-family policies and attempts to provide a single base for empirical testing. While the work-family literature states that work-family programmes have contributed to organisational performance we must be circumspect when interpreting these conclusions. Of concern is the work-family literatures focus on descriptive rather than quantitative analysis (Lobel, 1991; Tenbrunsel et al., 1995). Thus, empirical research might address the imbalance in the literature, which focuses predominantly on descriptive, as opposed to theoretical, research. This restriction severely limits the generalisability of findings. As discussed above, these studies also tend to focus on a few flagship firms only, severely limiting their generalisability. Delaney and Huselid (1996) have warned that while links have been found between human resource management and performance, there are concerns these findings might include biased methodological approaches, as well as problems regarding acceptable definition and measure of terms such as 'progressive' and 'high performance'. Nevertheless, while concern must be taken into consideration when testing such performance links, it does not detract from firms attributing improved organisational performance to their work-family programmes. Results from testing the framework will indicate whether such results are aberrations or a more common occurrence. While the work-family literature claims such a performance link as evidently generalisable, there appears to be little evidence in the literature

that this crucial link has been tested under strict scientific and methodological constructs. Whether or not the framework is supported, it provides us with a starting point from which to organise the work-family literature, and might provide an indication of whether such assumptions can be supported within the New Zealand context.

OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL MODELS

3.9 Theoretical Models Introduction

The following overview outlines the rationale behind the theoretical approaches used in this study, and provides an understanding of how the approaches used in this study can be combined to afford a greater understanding of the work-family phenomenon.

The first choice when seeking to understand work-family policies in New Zealand was to determine whether a macro or micro view was to be undertaken. The work-family literature has examined work-family programme adoption through a macro lens, for example institutional theory and resource dependence theory (Goodstein, 1994; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Oliver, 1991). Such an approach has not been explored in the New Zealand context. Within New Zealand, organisational adoption of work-family policies has been examined with a focus on women-managed organisations (Pringle & Collins, 1996).

From a micro perspective, the particular interest is with the work-family practices themselves and their interaction with employee attitudes. Work and family balance issues are a major interest in the study of careers (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000; Hall, 1990), and in New Zealand employee attitudes have been elicited in an investigation of the barriers to effective implementation of work-family policies (Pringle & Tudhope, 1997). A New Zealand contextual aspect that drove this research was not just the lack of research on work-family programmes in New Zealand, but the limited number of firms that actually use work-family

programmes. For example, while 81% of employees in the core government sector are provided with some form of paid parental leave, this drops to only 21% in the private sector (Harbridge, Crawford, & Kiely, 2000). These authors also found separate domestic leave provisions, over and above sick leave entitlements, in 5% of contracts. Because of the limited similarities amongst New Zealand organisations for work-family practice adoption, with paid parental leave and domestic leave available in a minority of private sector firms, it was thought that a study of multiple work-family organisations would be difficult to accomplish, where there were similarities in work-family practices offered. For example if only a quarter of private organisations offer paid parental leave, and only 5% offer domestic leave, the chances of finding multiple worksites with the same match of work-family practices would be low.

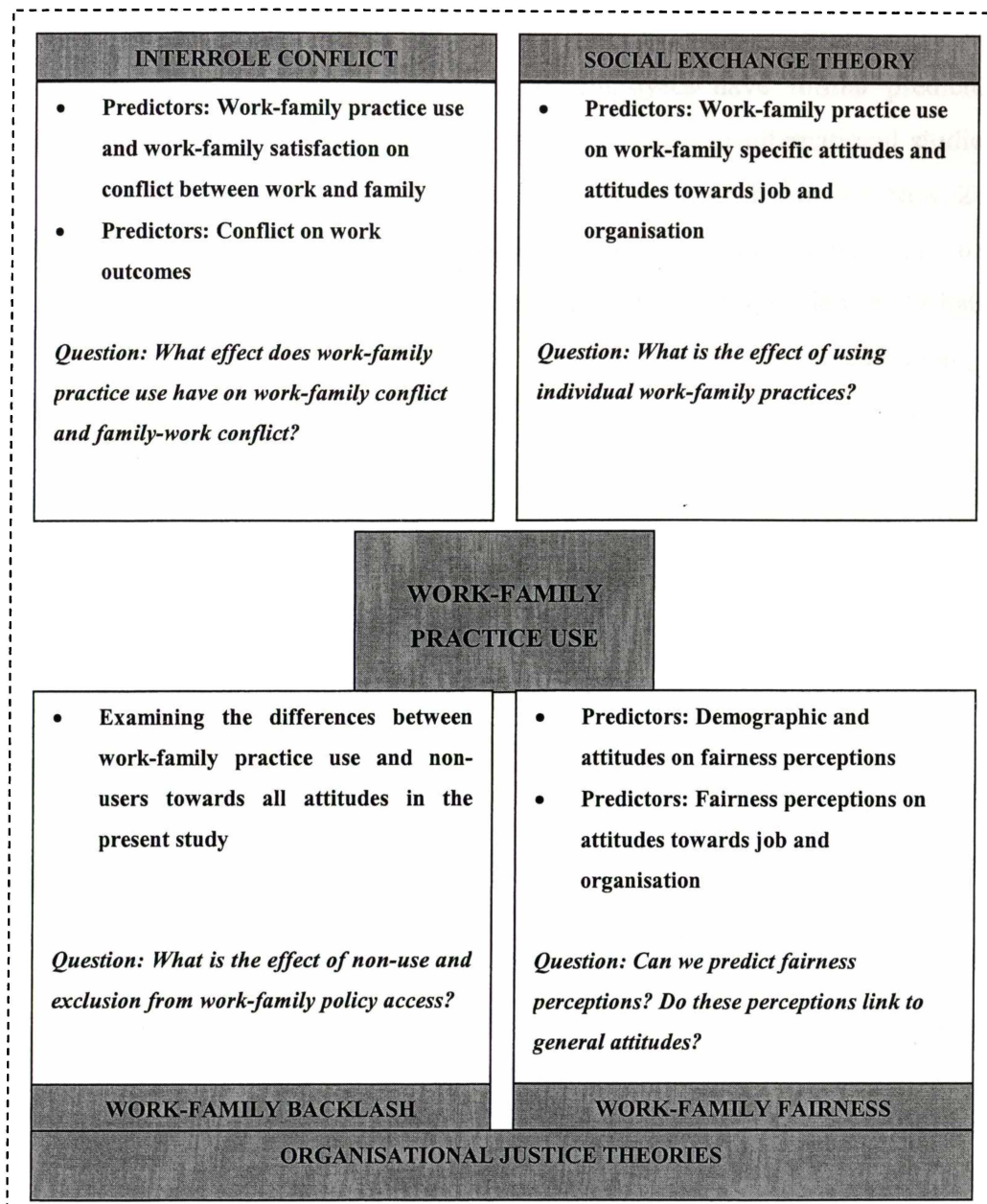
Therefore it was decided to focus upon a single firm that offered multiple work-family practices and examine the interaction between employees and the multiple work-family policies. In addition to a single organisation, the examination of employee use through multiple theoretical lenses would provide an insight that has not been seen in the work-family literature before, because studies typically employ a single or dual-theoretical approach only. Therefore applying multiple theoretical approaches examining work-family practices within a single organisation would provide findings on the interaction between work-family practice use and attitudes, which have not been possible before.

The theories used in this study are identified below, and the rationale supporting their use will be briefly described. The theories and their focus in this study are:

1. Interrole conflict focusing upon work-family conflict: to examine the impact of work-family policies on both work-family and family-work conflict.
2. Social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity: to examine the relationship between use of practices and improved employee attitudes.
3. A set of organisational justice theories: to examine the fairness perceptions of work-family policies and users, and the relationship of these attitudes

towards employee attitudes about their job and organisation. Additionally, these theories will also examine work-family backlash, which suggests non-users harbour negative attitudes about their jobs and organisation.

Organisational justice theories are used twice, because both the fairness and backlash perspectives are found within this theory. These are shown below.

Figure 3.9.1 Theoretical Model Interaction

3.10 Theory Outlines

3.10.1 Work-Family Conflict

A large part of the work-family literature has focused on work-family conflict. Kossek and Ozeki (1998) noted that the vast body of literature on work-family conflict has failed to address the utilisation of work-family practices. There is a pressing need to address this problem, given that work-family programmes are

often suggested as allowing for a better balance between work and family roles, which is the fundamental basis of work-family conflict. Work-family conflict is also under-researched in the New Zealand context, and such research may provide an indication of whether New Zealand employees have similar predictor and outcome relationships to those employees examined in international studies. For example, we might examine whether longer working hours for New Zealand employees predict work-family conflict as has been found in many international studies. From the previous diagram, the central research question is: "What effect does work-family practice use have on work-family conflict and family-work conflict?" In addition, this study aims to examine the relationship of conflict with job-related predictors such as work strain, and the outcome of conflict on aspects such as job satisfaction.

3.10.2 Work-Family Benefits

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the work-family literature provides many references regarding the positive influence work-family policies have on employee attitudes. However, critics have argued that these multiple advantages are often poorly understood, and often lack a theoretical basis (Lobel, 1991; Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh & Reilly, 1995). Social exchange theory, and in particular the norm of reciprocity, was chosen as a useful model for examining this relationship. These theories have been successfully used to examine the work-family practice use and attitude link. For example, Lambert (2000), found work-family benefit use is significantly linked to both organisational citizenship behaviour and perceived organisational support. However, the overall work-family benefit literature suggests that relationships exist between many employee attitudes including turnover and commitment, which were not analysed in the Lambert study. Additionally, the multiple work-family practices were not examined individually to determine which practices held the strongest influence. Also of interest, is how we examine work-family practice use – used as individual work-family practices or on a global scale? This study will examine work-family practice use individually for each practice. The literature also distinguishes between examinations of specific work-family attitudes (e.g. satisfaction with work-family

practices), and attitudes about the job and workplace (e.g. job satisfaction). This study will adopt this distinction.

3.10.3 Work-Family Fairness

Organisational justice theories have been used in the work-family literature to examine the fairness perceptions of work-family policies and the users of these policies. While fairness approaches have been well explored within the management literature, they have not been so well addressed in the work-family context. By seeking to expand this approach and link fairness perceptions of work-family policies and users to global attitudes, this research will expand our understanding and provide unique findings. One of the main research questions is “Can we predict fairness perceptions of work-family policies and attitudes towards users?” If so, then what influence does these fairness perceptions have on attitudes about the organisation and job? Being able to predict fairness attitudes towards work-family policies and users of these policies would be especially useful if such attitudes influence attitudes about the workplace and job in general.

3.10.4 Work-Family Backlash

The examination of work-family backlash has recently received some attention (Rothausen, Gonzalez, Clarke, & O'Dell, 1998). The notion of work-family backlash, using an organisational justice perspective, suggests that non-users of benefits harbor negative attitudes towards their organisation. However, the work-family backlash studies have been limited, in their typical focus upon a single work-family practice, such as a childcare centre (Rothausen et al., 1998). Examining such a phenomenon in the New Zealand context will provide not only findings of national interest, but also have international implications because such research is still developing. The diagram above shows another critical question of this research concerns the influence non-use and exclusion from work-family policy access has. Are there any differences when examining the influence on specific work-family attitudes as opposed to attitudes about the job and organisation? For example, non-use might have a strong influence on the benefits associated with work-family programmes.

3.10.5 Conclusion

This study seeks to use the three theoretical approaches to examine the four aspects of this study. Social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity will be used to explain the relationship between employee use of work-family practices and the associated benefits (if any), such as improved organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The interrole conflict theory, and in particular the work-family conflict aspects, will be used to predict the relationship between aspects, such as hours worked and job satisfaction, with both work-family and family-work conflict, as well as predicting the influence of work-family policy use on conflict. The last two aspects of this study both use organisational justice theories, with the work-family fairness study exploring the fairness of the policies and attitudes towards male users and female users to determine any gender differences towards users. The work-family backlash aspect examines whether non-users of work-family practices hold stronger, negative relationships towards the organisation because they are 'excluded' from using the practices.

In combination, these approaches provide an in-depth theoretical base that enables this research to examine the interaction between employees and work-family policies in multiple ways, including the interaction between work-family policies and work-family conflict and family-work conflict, the benefits and backlashes of users, as well as predicting the perceived fairness of work-family practices, and their influence on attitudes. One common limitation that all these theoretical perspectives have is that when applied to the work-family context, typically they have been related to single work-family practices only. For example, work-family backlash has focused on childcare centre (Rothausen et al., 1998), fairness perceptions have centred on paid parental leave (Grover, 1991), and where multiple work-family policies have existed, actual use of individual practices has not been examined (Lambert, 2000). Work-family conflict studies typically have not examined work-family policy use at all (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Consequently, the opportunity to examine these aspects in an organisation with multiple work-family practices provides the opportunity to make unique contributions to the literature.

Overall, these theories focus upon employee use of work-family policies, which is the central component of the illustration above. This study seeks to examine this use through multiple theories to allow a greater depth of understanding regarding users and non-users. Chapters 4, 5, and 6, all offer a more in-depth analysis of these theories, and each concludes with hypotheses that expand and specify upon the general themes noted above.

CHAPTER FOUR

WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

4.1 Introduction

Work-family conflict is among the most commonly studied outcomes in the work-family literature (Kossek, Colquitt, & Noe, 2001; Zedeck, 1992). While there can be both a positive and negative spillover between work and family domains (Westman, 2001), the work-family conflict research focuses on the difficulties employees have in balancing their work and family commitments. This is despite calls to pay more attention to the benefits and burdens of multiple role involvement (Kirchmeyer, 1992). Work-family conflict is of particular interest to the present study because work-family practices are often depicted as allowing greater balance between work and family responsibilities, which suggests that there should be some interaction between work-family practices and work-family conflict.

4.2 Demographic Changes Driving Work-Family Conflict Research

While demographic changes driving work-family aspects have been fully explored in Chapter Two, the following discussion considers the links between demographic changes and work-family conflict.

Frone and Yardley (1996) have indicated that several demographic trends are reshaping the composition of the workforce in most industrialised nations. Increased workforce participation rates of married women in professional and managerial occupations, women pursuing higher education, increases in equal employment opportunities, and the tendency of professional women to marry professional men, have all factored in the increased prevalence of dual-career couples in the United States (Burley, 1995; Rapoport, 1980; Rice, 1979). Other demographic changes include increasing numbers of married women with children joining the workforce and the increasing frequency of employed adults who are

part of dual-earner or single-parent families (Bjorklund, 1992; Boles, Johnston, & Hair Jr., 1997; Etzion, Smokoviti, & Bailyn, 1993; Lewis, 1992; Paris, 1990; Piotrkowski, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1987). The United Kingdom, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand all display similar changes in workforce composition (Henderson, 1997; Michaels, 1995; Moore, 1997; Pringle & Tudhope, 1997). These changes have led Elloy (2001) to state, “the phenomenal increase in the number of married women in paid employment and the consequent emergence of the dual-career couple have raised the potential for stress and strain arising from the work and family spheres” (p. 122).

The “traditional family”, where the father works and the wife is at home with dependents, now represents less than 10% of the US population (Boles et al., 1997). Specifically, more than 60% of married women with a child under the age of 16 are in the workforce (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991). Because of these factors, research suggests there is significant conflict occurring between work and family responsibilities, with roles at work spilling over into the family role, and vice versa (Williams & Alliger, 1994). Additionally, the increasing number of married women and mothers entering the work force (Matthews & Rodin, 1989; Piotrkowski, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1987), has led some researchers to state there is “heightened interest among both work and family researchers in exploring the interdependence of work and family roles” (Frone, Barnes & Farrell, 1994, p. 1019). Burley (1995) has suggested that this has stimulated research into the identification of potential stressors and conflicts, and how these affect couples’ marital well being (Houseknecht, Vaughan, & Macke, 1984; Rice, 1979). It has been suggested that the risk of conflict between work and family roles increases as individuals in dual-career situations have to balance the simultaneous, and conflicting, demands and pressures of two careers with those of the family (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997; Gupta & Jenkins, 1985; Lewis & Cooper, 1988). The increased financial benefits of two incomes can make this balancing act easier, through having greater financial resources to spend on alleviating pressures. In addition, caregiving demands have been seen as a major factor impacting upon work-family conflict.

It has been suggested that the majority of employees face caregiving demands. According to Kossek, Colquitt, and Noe (2001), “during their careers, most employees will make caregiving decisions” (p. 29). Importantly, Kossek et al. (2001) have asserted that these caregiving decisions can focus upon different types of dependents, which can include both children and the elderly. Barnett (1998) has suggested that the role of caregiver is part of most employees’ range of roles, and managing dependent caregiving has been called the “unexpected career” (Aneshensel, Pearlin, Mullan, Zarit, & Whitlatch, 1995). As outlined in Chapter Two, the predicted growth in the elderly population can only exacerbate the caregiving demands upon employees.

In addition to these dependent care issues, changes in the nature of work can also impact on conflict. In many modern work environments, boundary-spanning employees continually face role conflict and role ambiguity (Goolsby, 1992; Sager, 1994). Research has found role conflict and role ambiguity (work-related role stress) are interrelated with conflict between work and family responsibilities (Bedeian, Burke, & Moffett, 1988; Good, Page, & Young, 1996). In addition, a body of research suggests that role conflict and role ambiguity, and work-family conflict can affect the attitudes of employees toward their job (Babin & Boles, 1996; Good, Sisler, & Gentry, 1988; Sager, 1994). According to Boles et al. (1997), the inter-relationship of these work-family related constructs has become a major issue for US employers, and although empirical research into work-family conflict has been conducted in the United States and England, little has been done in Australia and New Zealand. In Australia, Elloy (2001) found family to work conflict was significantly related to stress in a sample of lawyers and accountants, who were in dual-career relationships. However, other measures in Elloy's study such as role conflict and role ambiguity were not found to relate to work-family conflict among dual career couples, and he suggests that Australian partners might recognise that dual-career status requires considerable concessions, calling for understanding and compromise on both sides (Smith, 1994). Additionally, Elloy (2001) has postulated that the informal lifestyle in Australia might also allow couples to experience more control over their work and family stress, perhaps

through taking advantage of relaxing physical environments, given that Australia's largest cities still have easy access to wilderness and beaches for relaxation. Additionally, in Elloy's study the respondents were lawyers and accountants, who might have the financial resources to take breaks from the physical constraints of the workplace (the office and the city itself), and therefore spend relaxing time with family away from the workplace. This finding is an important point as it may suggest that work-family conflict is not a universal aspect in Western countries. This study seeks to examine work-family conflict within the New Zealand context to provide a greater understanding of work and family conflict on New Zealand employees, and improve the international generalisability of work-family conflict research. Furthermore, it will also address Elloy's (2001) assertion that relaxed informal lifestyles, which would be comparable between Australia and New Zealand, might also impact upon work-family conflict felt by New Zealand employees.

4.3 Conflict Between Work and Non-Work Roles

The relationship between employee work lives and nonwork pursuits has been previously scrutinised (Kanter, 1977; Voydanoff, 1980), with Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) suggesting that the conflict an employee may experience between work roles and other life roles deserves particular attention from researchers.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) supported the analytical separation of work and family domains, and suggested role conflict and interrole conflict. Other conflict types have been offered as separate constructs, such as role overload (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991). Research examining the relationships of role conflict, role ambiguity, and work-family conflict has consistently found these constructs to be inter-related (Boles et al., 1997). However, there is still a lack of consistency between these constructs and work-related role stress, with some studies conjecturing that role stress is a precursor to work-family conflict (Bedeian et al., 1988; Boles & Babin, 1996), and other studies suggesting role stress is related to, but not necessarily an antecedent of, work-family conflict (Good et al., 1996; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996).

The following section details the components that work-family conflict typically is built upon, principally role conflict and interrole conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

4.3.1 Role Conflict

Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964) defined role conflict as the “simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other” (p. 19). Role conflict was originally conceptualised as an incompatibility between competing demands within a role, for example work (Kahn et al., 1964). Boles et al. (1997) added that employees experience role conflict when they receive incompatible sets of expectations that need to be satisfied simultaneously. Role ambiguity is caused when an employee is unsure what type of job behaviour to execute in a given work situation (Boles et al., 1997). Research has indicated that role conflict and role ambiguity affect a wide range of attitudes and behaviours across a variety of work settings (Boles et al., 1997; Brown & Peterson, 1993; Goolsby, 1992; Jackson & Schuler, 1985). However, it has been asserted that the relationship of role conflict and role ambiguity to job-related attitudes and behaviours, such as emotional exhaustion and turnover, are complex and difficult to define (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Conely, 1991; Netemeyer, Johnston, & Burton, 1990; Sager, 1994).

4.3.2 Interrole Conflict

Interrole conflict between work and nonwork has been identified as a significant source of strain for men and women (Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have stated that “interrole conflict is a form of role conflict in which the sets of opposing pressures arise from participation in different roles” (p. 77). Burley (1995) defined interrole conflict as conflict between pairs of major life roles, for example work colleagues, family, spouse/partner and the self. Interrole conflict focuses upon the between role conflict (e.g. work and family), whereas role ambiguity focuses upon behavioural uncertainty. Kahn et al. (1964) stated that, “in such cases of interrole conflict, the role pressures associated with membership in

one organisation are in conflict with pressures stemming from membership in other groups” (p. 20). For example, an employee with manager expectations of taking work home to complete can conflict with the employee’s family expectations of spending time together. Kahn et al. (1964) clarified this conflict by stating “the conflict arises between the role of the focal person as worker and his role as husband and father” (p. 20). Since its development, the concept of interrole conflict has become popular, and the interrole description of work-family conflict has become a widely accepted perspective (Stephens & Sommer, 1996).

4.3.3 Work-Family Conflict

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) offered the concept of role conflict and interrole conflict as useful means to examine the work and family domains. Burley (1995) has suggested that an explicit type of conflict with implications for understanding the new workplace demographics, including dual-career couples, is work-family conflict, which is predicated on role strain and role conflict theory (Goode, 1960; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Burley (1995) suggested that work-family conflict could be represented as one specific aspect within the general role-conflict framework.

Work-family conflict is defined as “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77).

Simplified, conflict between an individual’s work and home responsibilities has been labelled work-family conflict (Boles et al., 1997; Burke, 1988). According to Frone et al. (1994), work-family conflict reflects the overall goodness-of-fit between work and family life, and has been conceptualised as an important source of stress that can influence an individual’s well being. Work-family conflict results from trying to meet an overabundance of conflicting demands from work and family commitments (Boles et al., 1997). Responsibilities in both areas are

significant independently, yet when taken in combination, they place unreasonable demands on an individual. Therefore family and work roles may be seen as important roles for most employees, but when these two roles overlap and sources of conflict occur within either or both roles, employees will experience work-family conflict (Boles et al., 1997).

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have also suggested that work-family conflict is intensified when the work and family roles are salient or central to the individual's self-concept, and when powerful negative sanctions for noncompliance with role demands are inevitable. For example, a male employee who has become a new parent might want to focus his time and energy upon his new father role (salient family role), while his manager stresses work deadlines (salient work role) and threatens termination if the project fails (strong negative sanction). The result would see the employee suffering intensified work-family conflict.

The many demographic changes in the nature of work detailed above and in Chapter Two, suggest that work-family conflict might have intensified. This indicates a need to examine work-family conflict as experienced by New Zealand employees and its impact on attitudes and behaviours. This is particularly true in the New Zealand context where the adoption of work-family practices is noted as developing (Callister, 1996), but has done so without any extensive examination of work-family conflict experiences of New Zealand employees. The present study will examine the conflict between the work and family roles as these are often cited as part of the rationale within the work-family literature for organisational adoption of work-family programmes (Hand & Zawacki, 1994; Pringle & Tudhope, 1997).

4.4 Sources of Conflict

There are a variety of pressures that can produce work-family conflict. These pressures are be categorised according to three major sources: (1) time-based, (2) strain-based, and (3) behaviour based (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000).

4.4.1 Time-Based Conflict

Greenhaus et al. (2000) stated, "time-based conflict is a common type of work-family conflict" (p. 290), which is consistent with excessive work time and schedule conflict dimensions (Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980) and role overload (Khan et al., 1964). This type of conflict is sometimes referred to as structural interference. Jackson, Zedeck and Summers (1985) stated:

Structural interference theories argue that the quality of off-the-job activities and experiences – for example, family life – derives from the extent to which job requirements restrict employees' opportunities to engage in such activities. The emphasis is on the structural relationship between job and nonjob demands (p. 575).

According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), "Multiple roles may compete for a person's time. Time spent on activities within one role generally cannot be devoted to activities within another role" (p. 77). Consequently, an employee whose work role interferes with their family role cannot generally satisfy both roles in the same timeframe.

Time-based conflict can take two forms:

- (1) Time demands associated with one role's membership may make it physically impossible to comply with expectations arising from another (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), for example an employee may stay late at work to finish a project, thus making it physically impossible to spend time with his/her family; and
- (2) Time demands may also produce a preoccupation with one role even if an individual is physically attempting to meet another role's demands (Bartolome & Evans, 1979). For example, an employee comes home to spend time with his/her family, all the while thinking about the project that needs to be completed at work.

From a bi-directional perspective of work-family conflict, time-based strain can be seen to originate and impact upon both work and family spheres. For example, meetings that are out-of-town can conflict with family events such as dinner, birthday parties etc, and can lead to WFC. Conversely, time caring for children and the elderly, a spouse, or multiple family members, can all take up time otherwise focused on the workplace, and therefore leads to FWC. Greenhaus et al. (2000) have suggested that long working hours, extensive travel, frequent overtime, and inflexible work schedules can all lead to WFC, while marital status, age of children, family size, and spouses/partners in responsible employment can lead to FWC.

4.4.2 Strain-Based Conflict

Greenhaus et al. (2000) have stated, “strain-based conflict exists when the strain produced within one role affects experiences in another” (p. 291). This is also known as spillover, where “stress experienced in one domain of life results in stress in another domain for the same individual” (Westman, 2001, p. 717). Indicators of strain-based conflict include the following symptoms: depression, apathy, tension, irritability, fatigue, and anxiety (Brief, Schuler, & Van Sell, 1981; Greenhaus et al., 2000; Ivancevich & Mattleson, 1980). According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) the “roles are incompatible in the sense that the strain created by one makes it difficult to comply with the demands of another” (p. 80). For example, employees who suffer from depression or tension will find it difficult to be an attentive partner or loving parent (Greenhaus et al., 2000).

Employees who experience work role conflict or ambiguity, and who are exposed to extensive emotional demands, whose workplace is constantly changing or the work is boring and repetitive, are likely to experience WFC (Greenhaus et al., 2000). It has been suggested that these stressful conditions can produce a “negative emotional spillover” from work to non-work (Evans & Bartolome, 1980). Greenhaus et al. (2000) have suggested that many sources of strain can occur within the family role too, and employees who experience problems with partners and dependents might find these stressors impacting upon their

workplace. For example an employee with a seriously sick child is likely to have reduced focus upon their work, thus leading to FWC.

4.4.3 Behaviour-Based Conflict

Behaviour-based conflict is when behaviour that is effective and accepted in one role, becomes unacceptable and inappropriate in another role (Greenhaus et al., 2000). For example, individuals who are managers or supervisors might adopt a behavioural style that is inappropriate at home. For example, Schein (1973) has noted that managers are expected to be objective, self-reliant, detached and aggressive. Greenhaus et al. (2000) have suggested that this may cause behaviour-based conflict because family members might expect these same managers and supervisors to be warm, nurturing and emotional at home. According to Greenhaus et al. (2000), “if people cannot shift gears when they enter different roles, they are likely to experience *behavior-based conflict* between the roles” (p. 292).

These role pressures can come from many sources, including people we interact with in work and family roles such as bosses, colleagues, partners and children, as well as ourselves. Work-family conflict is intensified when the penalties for failing to comply with work or family roles are high (Greenhaus et al., 2000). For example, a boss who calls a meeting on Saturday might impose heavy penalties if the employee does not attend, for example, a warning towards employment termination. Alternatively, a partner who demands a weekend away may also provide a strong penalty if the request is not adhered too, such as terminating the relationship. If these two role pressure examples above occur simultaneously, for example, on the same weekend, then the individual may inevitably suffer intensified WFC and FWC.

4.4.4 Concluding Comments

Greenhaus et al. (2000) have noted that a certain amount of work-family conflict is “inevitable in a society in which women and men are required to juggle work and family responsibilities” (p. 294). Therefore, experiencing work-family conflict

will not always lead to reductions in job satisfaction, life satisfaction, or marital/family satisfaction. The following section examines the work-family conflict literature to highlight the major associations found between work-family conflict, and employee attitudes and behaviours. From this, hypotheses will be developed for testing within the present study.

4.5 The Directional Nature of Work-Family Conflict

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) suggested the field of work-family conflict needed to examine the presence of role pressures from both work and family domains, maintaining this was a fundamentally under-researched area that could lead to recognition of the interactive effects of work and family role pressures. This is because earlier work-family conflict studies typically focused on the workplace and not the home. Despite this advance, some studies are limited because they fail to address the issue of work-family conflict bi-directionally. That is, they fail to use separate measures for work to family conflict and family to work conflict; for example, using a single measure of work-family conflict and failing to examine conflict separately for both work and family domains. Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) have supported this division, stating “previous research has mainly relied on assessing interference from work to family only” (p.158). Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1997) concurred, suggesting there is a serious methodological limitation in studies that measure work-family conflict with a single-direction focus. Recent studies have responded to this issue, examining work-family conflict as a bi-directional construct representing two distinct types of conflict (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Bernas & Major, 2000; Chow & Berheide, 1988; Crouter, 1984; Sekaran, 1986; Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994; Eagle, Miles, & Icenogel, 1997; Gutek, Repetti, & Silver, 1988; Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991; MacEwan & Barling, 1994; Netemeyer, et al., 1996; O'Driscoll, Ilgen, & Hildreth, 1992; Stephens & Sommer, 1996; Wallace, 1999; Williams & Alliger, 1994).

Results of Frone et al. (1994) provided a direct and independent replication of the findings of Frone et al. (1992a) in terms of the relationships among work-family conflict, domain-specific affect, and general psychological distress. Both these

studies, in conjunction with the study by O'Driscoll et al. (1992), provide converging evidence of the importance of examining separately work-family conflict and family-work conflict, especially when examining relationships between work-family conflict and domain-specific outcomes such as job and family dissatisfaction (Frone et al., 1994). It is important to note that while conceptually conflict has been separated into work to family and family to work, these two measures are typically significantly correlated, for example .30 (sig. $p < .01$, Adams, King & King, 1996), .20 (sig. $p < .05$, Bernas & Major, 2000), .28 and .26 (both sig. $p < .05$, Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1997), .34 (sig. $p < .01$, Greenhaus, Parasuraman & Collins, 2001), .27 (sig. $p < .05$, Judge, Boudreau & Bretz, 1994). Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1997) have asserted that the limitation in examining work-family conflict in a single direction has been proven, with recent research finding work-family conflict is a bi-directional construct representing two distinct types of conflict: (1) work interfering with family life, and (2) family life interfering with work (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992a; 1992b; Frone et al., 1994; Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991; MacEwan & Barling, 1994; O'Driscoll et al., 1992; Williams & Alliger, 1994). According to Frone et al. (1997), it is important to examine both types of work-family conflict, because a relation between one type of conflict does not allow one to infer that the other type of conflict is also related to it. For example, poor health can link to work-related conflict, but this does not imply that family-related conflict will also link. Frone and Yardley (1996) assert that the two types of work-family conflict are differentially related to domain-specific antecedents and outcomes (Frone et al., 1992a; Frone et al., 1994; MacEwan & Barling, 1994; O'Driscoll et al., 1992). Frone et al. (1997) have also suggested that attempts to reduce or manage the two types of work-family conflict will undoubtedly require different organisational and individual responses. Therefore, the examination of work-family conflict in both directions will have useful implications for organisational responses to conflict.

This dual approach to conflict is particularly relevant with regard to work-family policies. These policies typically focus upon the family source of conflict rather than the workplace. For example, policies such as paid parental leave, flexitime,

and childcare can all enable greater balance of family-related sources of conflict, but not workplace sources. Studies have suggested that work-family conflict is positively related to the perceived importance of work-family practices (Frone & Yardley, 1996; Wiersma, 1990). Frone and Yardley (1996) extended the Wiersma (1990) study by examining work-family conflict bi-directionally, and found family-work conflict positively related to the importance of work-family practices while work-family conflict was unrelated. Frone and Yardley (1996) maintained that this highlights the importance of distinguishing between the two types of work-family conflict, and have suggested this indicates that the dominant motivation underlying parents' desire for work-family practices is the ability of these practices to reduce family-work conflict and its adverse impact on job-related outcomes. However, this does not mean that organisations offer work-family policies only to address family-work conflict. For example, some work-family policies such as Time Off In Lieu allow employees to store or "bank" extra time at work, which is then taken as time off later. This could be very important given that time working is often highly related to work-family conflict (Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Netemeyer et al., 1996). In addition, some practices like flexitime and telecommuting might be useful practices for addressing both sources of conflict. However, the majority of work-family policies do tend to focus upon the home rather than the workplace, and this suggests that addressing family-work conflict might be an easier option for organisations.

From this, we can assert that organisations might offer work-family practices that are related to family-work conflict, such as parental leave and childcare, because this is most important to employees, and easiest for employers. From this finding, Frone and Yardley (1996) have asserted that employed parents rate work-family practices as being important for the same reason employers are willing to offer them – that work-family practices help employees manage family-related demands, thereby reducing the prevalence of family-work conflict and its adverse impact on organisational outcomes (Friedman, 1990; Friedman & Galinsky, 1992; Gonyea & Googins, 1992; Kraut, 1990; Thompson, Thomas & Maier, 1992). This

may also highlight the organisation's focus on family-work conflict. If employees can reduce their conflict and better manage their work and family commitments, the advantages will most likely also benefit the organisation (e.g. through reduced absenteeism), and thus addressing family-work conflict might be easiest for the organisation while still being beneficial for both the organisation and its employees.

While work-family conflict is the term used to describe work and family conflicting with each other under the current bi-directional approach to work-family conflict, it is important to state this does not suggest the directional nature of conflict. Therefore, the present study uses the following terms and abbreviations, which have been used elsewhere in the work-family conflict literature (Netemeyer, et al., 1996). Work interfering with family life is termed work to family conflict (WFC, and work → family conflict), and family life interfering with work is termed family to work conflict (FWC, and family → work conflict). This directional distinction was highlighted by Frone and Yardley (1996) when they found FWC was associated with the amount of time devoted to family activities and the experience of family-related demands and stressors, while WFC was associated with the amount of time devoted to work and the experience of work-related demands and stressors. For outcomes, FWC was associated with negative work outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, poor work performance, and work-related withdrawal, whereas WFC was associated with negative family outcomes, such as family dissatisfaction, poor family performance, and family-related withdrawal (Frone & Yardley, 1996). Combined, these approaches suggest that family demands affect job outcomes indirectly via FWC, whereas work demands affect family outcomes indirectly via WFC (Frone et al., 1992a), and provide strong support for the bi-directional separation of work-family conflict.

4.6 Work-Family Conflict Findings

According to Frone, Barnes, and Farrell (1994) the proposition that work-family conflict is positively associated with unfavourable outcomes is well supported.

Work-family conflict has been linked to a multitude of negative aspects. These include:

- Heightened psychological distress (Bromet, Dew, & Parkinson, 1990; Burke, 1993; Frone, Russell, & Barnes, 1996; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1991; 1992a; Hughes & Galinsky, 1994; Klitzman, House, Israel, & Mero, 1990; MacEwan & Barling, 1994; O'Driscoll, Ilgen, & Hildreth, 1992; Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granrose, 1992).
- Lowered life satisfaction (Aryee, 1992; Bedeian, Burke, & Moffett, 1988; Rice, Frone, & McFarlin, 1992).
- Poor physical health (Frone et al., 1991; Frone et al., 1996; Guelzow, Bird, & Koball, 1991; Klitzman et al., 1990; Thomas & Ganster, 1995).
- Increased alcohol and cigarette use (Bromet et al., 1990; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1993; Frone et al., 1994; Frone et al., 1996).

Boles et al. (1997) have noted that conflict between work and family concerns can be found across all work environments. Examining work-family conflict bi-directionally, Frone et al. (1997) found family → work conflict was longitudinally related to elevated levels of depression, poor physical health, and hypertension, while work → family conflict was longitudinally related to elevated levels of heavy alcohol consumption. It has been argued that the way in which individuals combine roles, such as caregiving and work, is a critical factor on work and family outcomes, as are the number of roles held (Thoits, 1992) and the level of demands from these roles (Smerglia & Deimling, 1997).

Some of the principal demographic relationships that impact on WFC and FWC are detailed below. These three areas were used as control variables in the present study.

4.6.1 Parenting and Dependent Care

The importance of work-family policies among parents might be a function of the amount of parenting demand exposure (Frone & Yardley, 1996). Increased numbers of children in the home can lead to an increase in the number of hours

devoted to such tasks as transportation, supervision, school-related activities, cooking and shopping, with young children especially demanding on resources (Frone & Yardley, 1996). Research has shown that the number of children is positively related to the amount of time devoted to childcare, domestic work and errands (Brett & Yogeve, 1989; Izraeli, 1993). Additionally, these parental demands can obstruct everyday job activities (Brett & Yogeve, 1989; Crouter, 1984; Izraeli, 1993; Marshall, 1992; Vandenheuvel, 1993) and occupational achievement (Glover, 1994). Frone and Yardley (1996) have suggested that this in turn will elicit a need and desire among employed parents for organisations offering work-family programmes that can reduce the demands of parents. This highlights the need to connect research on work-family conflict with work-family practices.

According to Pleck, Staines, and Lang (1980) working parents experience work-family conflict more often than non-parent employees, and Keith and Schafer (1980) found having more children at home is a source of work-family conflict. Erdwins et al. (2001) support this, finding role overload significantly related to the number of children, such that as the number of children increased, women's sense of role overload also increased. Fernandez (1986) found the age of dependents was related to work-family conflict, with parents of younger children having higher work-family conflict than those parents with older children. Skinner (1980) has suggested that for dual-career couples, the demands of childrearing, particularly the arrangement of adequate childcare, is another source of strain.

Work-family conflict research suggests that employed adults with family responsibilities report that their work and family roles interfere with one another (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992b; Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980). Frone and Yardley (1996) suggested that frequent work-family conflict can adversely affect job and family-related outcomes, such as role-related dissatisfaction, low levels of role performance, and role-related withdrawal (Bedeian, Burke, & Moffett, 1988; Burke, 1989; Frone, Barnes, & Farrell, 1994; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992a; Goff, Mount, & Jamison, 1990; MacEwan & Barling, 1994; O'Driscoll, Ilgen, &

Hildreth, 1992; Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granrose, 1992; Rice, Frone, & McFarlin, 1992). Given that employed parents are motivated to reduce work-family conflict and its negative impact on work and family outcomes, we might expect to find a positive relationship between work-family conflict and a composite measure of the perceived importance of work-family policies (Wiersma, 1990). Thomas and Ganster (1995) have suggested that supportive organisational policies might also play a role in alleviating conflict between work and family roles. Again, these comments highlight the importance of addressing the connection between work-family conflict and work-family practices.

It has been shown that the more employees participate in caregiving, the less they are able to commit to an organisation, which can negatively influence performance (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). Importantly, Kossek, Colquitt, and Noe (2001) found employees caring for elderly dependents were found to have significantly lower work performance than employees with child dependents. These findings suggest that researching the consequences of dependent caregiving decisions should treat eldercare and childcare decisions as separate phenomena. Kossek et al. (2001) asserts that future studies must acknowledge that managing eldercare interacts negatively with employee outcomes more strongly than does childcare, especially when caregiving is at home or by a family member. Kossek et al. (2001) maintain that participating in caregiving will also reduce the ability to perform other home roles, such as housekeeping or spouse relations, and therefore employees using home or family care could have a longer “second shift” (Hochschild & Machung, 1989). These studies suggest that dependent care can impact upon both WFC and FWC.

4.6.2 Marital Status

In addition to caregiver status, marital status has been a popular aspect associated with work-family conflict. For example, in early work-family conflict research, Herman and Gyllstrom (1977) found married couples experienced greater work-family conflict than unmarried persons. While numerous studies have found a

negative relationship between work-family conflict and marital well being (Barling, 1986; 1990; Bartolome & Evans, 1980; Belsky, Perry-Jenkins, & Crouter, 1985; MacEwen & Barling, 1988; Small & Riley, 1990; Suchet & Barling, 1986), the link between marital status and conflict is not as transparent. According to Boles et al. (1997), while the changing nature of the workforce (e.g. increased numbers of dual-career couples) increases the potential for conflict to occur between work and family responsibilities, this conflict is not limited to married individuals. For example, single parents and other single people might also experience the challenges of balancing work with children, friends, and parents outside the workplace (Boles et al., 1997). This might also include caring for one's parents (eldercare). Therefore, it might be that work-family conflict is seen as being applicable to both married couples and single individuals, given the demands of modern work and family aspects, such as single parenting and eldercare.

4.6.3 Gender

In testing the stress process for dual-career couples, Guelzow, Bird, and Koball (1991) found gender differences with respect to role strain: "For women, working longer hours is associated with higher role strain; for men, larger family size and having work schedules that cannot accommodate family needs are associated with higher role strain" (p. 161). Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1992b) also found gender differences, with employed women having a high prevalence of both work-family conflict and family-work conflict, and these related to adverse health outcomes. Frone and Yardley (1996) have maintained that research on both sex-role socialisation and time use suggests that gender could be a significant predictor of the importance of work-family programmes to employed parents. The work and family roles literature reports that men are socialised to give priority to the breadwinner role, while women are socialised to give priority to homemaker and motherhood roles (Lewis, 1992; Major, 1993; Thompson & Walker, 1989). Major (1993) stated that "deeply ingrained norms about the priority of women's motherhood and homemaker roles and men's breadwinner roles may produce

internal feelings of discomfort when women and men deviate too far from their internalised norms. They may also produce external sanctions in the form of disapproval by important others when individuals deviate from social norms” (p. 150). The bulk of the evidence continues to suggest that working women still carry the primary responsibility for family work (Berardo, Shehan, & Leslie, 1987; Grant, 1990). However, in examining various types of stressors encountered by dual-career couples, Gilbert (1985) found division of labour and parenting to be high sources of tension for both partners, reporting no gender distinction.

The development of gender-based models in the study of work-family relationships has resulted in the growth of various male models (Burley, 1995), which have been found to be an inadequate match to the work-family experiences of women (Baruch, Beiner, & Barnett, 1987; Kline & Cowan, 1988). Today, men and women continue to occupy different roles in both work and family contexts (Lambert, 1990; Pleck, 1977), and this has been noted as an area of importance for understanding the links between work and home (Kline & Cowan, 1988; Lambert, 1990). The impact of gender in sex-role socialisation has been evident in studies examining the allocation of time towards work and family domains among men and women (Frone & Yardley, 1996). These studies have found that men devote more time than women to paid employment and women devote more time than men to childcare and domestic responsibilities (Dean, 1992; Pleck, 1985; Rodgers, 1992), and these results are similar in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2001). Importantly, the impact upon women is greater, with gender difference in time devoted to childcare and domestic duties greater than the gender difference in time devoted to paid employment (Pleck, 1985; Rodgers, 1992). Similarly in New Zealand, the amount of time spent on unpaid domestic duties by gender is 4.8 hours a day for women and 2.8 hours a day for men (Statistics New Zealand, 2001).

Gender differences in work and family have also been found in the relationship between inequity in domestic work between spouses and depressive symptoms (Golding, 1990), the importance of equity regarding balancing professional and

family roles between partners (Gilbert, 1988), and the effects of parenthood on the working hours of male and female employees (Grant, 1990). Other findings include the degree of perceived interrole conflict between work and family roles (Barling, 1986; Suchet & Barling, 1986) and the reactions of superiors to perceived family-career conflict between men and women (Wiley & Eskilson, 1988). While not all studies have found a gender difference (Frone, 2000), the literature suggests gender might play a large role in work-family conflict, particularly with regard to the role of women.

4.7 HYPOTHESES

4.7.1 Relative Magnitude of WFC and FWC

Many studies have consistently found WFC to be greater in magnitude than FWC, for both males and females (Gutek, Repetti, & Silver, 1988; Gutek et al., 1991; Judge et al., 1994). Netemeyer et al. (1996) suggests that because most workers report family is more important than work, they would expect work-family conflict to be greater than family-work conflict. Netemeyer et al. (1996) examined relative magnitude with three separate samples (teachers and administrators, small business owners, and real estate salespersons), and found that WFC was greater than FWC in all three groups. Similarly, the present study expects WFC to be greater than FWC. Some studies have also compared conflict scores between genders. According to Frone (2000) prior conceptual discussions within the work-family realm suggest that gender represents a potentially important moderator variable (for example, see Kline & Cowan, 1989). Moreover, the implicit expectation is that work-family conflict will be considerably greater for employed men and family-work conflict significantly greater for employed women (Frone, 2000). However, the findings in this area have been mixed. For example, Gutek et al. (1991) found women reported significantly more WFC than men, but found no difference with regard to FWC, while Frone (2000) found no differences by gender at all. In an attempt to deepen our understanding on these relationships, especially in the New Zealand context where it has seldom been explored, the

present study hypothesises that women will report significantly higher WFC than men, and men will report significantly higher FWC than women.

Hypothesis 1: The reported level of WFC will be greater than FWC.

Hypothesis 2a: Women will report higher levels of WFC than men.

Hypothesis 2b: Men will report higher levels of FWC than women.

4.7.2. Satisfaction With Work-Family Policies

The relationship between job satisfaction and work-family conflict has been well examined (Bacharach, Bamberger & Conely, 1991; Boles & Babin, 1996; Boles, Johnston & Hair, 1997; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001; Frone et al., 1992; Good, Page & Young, 1996; Good, Sisler, & Gentry, 1988; Kopelman, Greenhhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Netemeyer et al., 1996). However, less attention has been paid to satisfaction with work-family policies. In the present study, satisfaction with work-family policies encapsulates satisfaction towards work-family practices, satisfaction of organisational support for work and family roles, and satisfaction with benefits. Studies have suggested that work-family conflict is related to the perceived importance of work-family practices (Frone & Yardley, 1996; Wiersma, 1990). Frone and Yardley extended Wiersma's study by examining work-family conflict bi-directionally, and found FWC positively related to the importance of work-family practices while WFC was unrelated. Frone and Yardley (1996) maintained that this highlights the importance of distinguishing between the two types of work-family conflict, and have suggested this indicates that the major motivation underlying parents' desire for work-family practices is the ability of these practices to reduce FWC and its adverse impact on job-related outcomes. From this finding, Frone and Yardley (1996) asserted that employed parents rate work-family practices as being important for the same reason employers are willing to offer them: that work-family practices help employees manage family-related demands. This in turn reduces the prevalence of FWC and its adverse impact on organisational outcomes (Friedman, 1990; Friedman & Galinsky, 1992; Gonyea & Googins, 1992; Kraut, 1990; Thompson, Thomas, & Maier, 1992). The notion of importance of work-

family practices has also been connected to satisfaction towards these programmes. For example, Kossek, Colquitt and Noe (2001) suggested future studies should measure work-family satisfaction and work-family conflict. Kossek and Ozeki (1998) have suggested that job satisfaction is often negatively related to work-family conflict, and this has been highly supported (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Frone et al., 1992; Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Netemeyer et al., 1996). Similarly, this study suggests satisfaction with work-family policies will negatively predict both WFC and FWC.

***Hypothesis 3a:** Satisfaction with work-family policies is negatively related to WFC.*

***Hypothesis 3b:** Satisfaction with work-family policies is negatively related to FWC.*

4.7.3 Work-Family Practice Use

Frone and Yardley (1996) concluded that the literature generally fails to provide strong, consistent support for the effectiveness of work-family programmes (Gonyea & Googins, 1992; Kingston, 1990). Therefore, studies must aim to document the efficiency of work-family programmes, because in the absence of such data the general lack of enthusiasm shown by organisations towards work-family policies will continue unabated (Kingston, 1990). Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationship between work-family practice use and conflict. According to Kossek and Ozeki (1998), “research on organisational work-family policy is often disconnected from studies on individuals’ experiences with work-family conflict” (p.146). The former authors cited Judge et al. (1994) as one of the few studies that examined the relationship between both work-family conflict and policies with job satisfaction. However, that study involved attitudinal measures of policies and support networks. The present study sets out to test the relationship between WFC and FWC and actual use of work-family practices, including past, present and future users. This approach for categorising employee use of work-family policies has been used recently in work-family studies (Rothausen et al., 1998).

A similar relationship to that being examined here has been previously explored. Frone and Yardley's (1996) findings support using a dual approach to examine work-family conflict, and suggest that previous studies that did not link work-family conflict reduction with work-family practices might have failed to do so because they used a global measure of work-family conflict, and not a bi-directional approach. Thus, the failure of the research by Goff, Mount, and Jamison (1990), for example, to associate childcare centre use with reduced work-family conflict was possibly due to measuring work-family conflict globally, rather than separate for both WFC and FWC. In their study, Goff et al. (1990) used a single conflict measure that did not differentiate between work and family spheres. Had Goff et al. (1990) used separate measures, they might have found childcare utilisation reduced FWC but not WFC (Frone & Yardley, 1996). This focus upon FWC and not WFC might be because work-family practices tend to target the family rather than the workplace. For example, work-family policies such as parental leave, childcare, and domestic leave all focus upon helping employees balance their family role, as opposed to their work role. However, given the lack of evidence for only FWC linking with practice use, and given that this aspect has been under examined, this study hypothesises in both directions (WFC and FWC), in order to improve understanding of these relationships. In addition, the influence that work-family practice use might have on conflict is unknown because it has not been explored before. However, given that work-family practices are promoted as facilitating greater balance of employees' work and family responsibilities, and thus reducing work-family conflict, this study suggests a negative direction to the relationship.

Hypothesis 4a: *Work-family practice use is negatively related to WFC.*

Hypothesis 4b: *Work-family practice use is negatively related to FWC.*

4.7.4 Outcomes of Work-Family Conflict

The present study also seeks to examine outcomes of work-family conflict. This involves predicting WFC and FWC towards work strain and job satisfaction. The hypotheses are outlined below.

4.7.4.1 Work Strain

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have maintained that one form of work-family conflict involves role-produced strain, where strain in one role affects one's wellbeing in another role. For example, job stress and burnout can leave an employee less attentive and alert at home. Potential sources of strain-based conflict include the emotional demands of the workplace (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000; Pleck et al., 1980), stress associated with workplace communication (Jackson & Maslach, 1982) and job burnout (Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Netemeyer et al., 1996). The variable used in the present study is a combination of these strain-based items, encompassing job burnout, emotional demands, and communication problems. Strain indicators include depression, apathy, tension, irritability, fatigue, and anxiety (Brief, Schuler, & Van Sell, 1981; Greenhaus et al., 2000; Ivancevich & Mattleson, 1980).

According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) strain created by one role can make it difficult to comply with other role demands. For example, someone suffering burnout from their job might go home and be a less than productive parent or partner. Thus, strain-based conflict can contribute to work-family conflict in both directions. In addition, individuals facing relatively high levels of strain at work are more likely to feel conflict when family responsibilities interfere with work roles, since they may already feel taxed by the demands of the work itself. Thus, it is expected that WFC and FWC will predict work strain. Therefore, while strain-based variables originating in the workplace can link to work-family conflict, they can spill over into the home and therefore also link to family-work conflict. This study hypothesises work strain will be predicted by both WFC and FWC.

Hypothesis 5a: WFC will predict work strain.

Hypothesis 5b: *FWC will predict work strain.*

4.7.4.2 Job Satisfaction

It has been well established that job satisfaction has a negative relationship with work-family conflict (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Conely, 1991; Boles & Babin, 1996; Boles, Johnston, & Hair, 1997; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001; Frone et al., 1992; Good, Page, & Young, 1996; Good, Sisler & Gentry, 1988; Kopelman, Greenhhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Netemeyer et al., 1996). It is likely that employees who view their work as making it difficult for them to satisfy their family roles will be less satisfied with their job because it is seen as the source of the conflict. In addition, the more that family roles interfere with work obligations, the more employees might feel less overall satisfaction with the job itself. Prior research has suggested that the strength of the relationship between job satisfaction and WFC and FWC can vary markedly (Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granrose, 1992; Thompson & Blau, 1993). According to Kossek and Ozeki (1998), "the nature and strength of this relationship is widely variable" (p.139). Additionally, Adams, King and King (1996) used separate measures of work-family conflict and family-work conflict, and found job satisfaction correlated inversely with WFC but not FWC. However, Kossek and Ozeki's (1998) meta-analysis based on 32 sample sets, reported significant negative relationships between job satisfaction and general or bi-directional measures of work-family conflict. Kossek and Ozeki (1998) concluded that "the relationship between job satisfaction and various w-f conflict measures is strong and negative across all samples: People with high levels of conflict tend to be less satisfied with their jobs" (pp. 141-144). The present study hypothesises that WFC and FWC will predict negatively towards job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6a: *WFC is negatively related to job satisfaction.*

Hypothesis 6b: *FWC is negatively related to job satisfaction.*

CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY and THE NORM OF RECIPROCITY

5.1 Introduction

While Chapter Four explored the basis of employee interactions between work and family roles, this chapter focuses on the reported positive benefits of work-family policies. This chapter outlines social exchange theory and focuses upon the norm of reciprocity as a theory for examining the many perceived benefits associated with work-family policy adoption. Particular models built upon these theories are discussed to help elucidate the positive relationships between work-family policies and employee attitudes and behaviours.

As noted in Chapter Three, the increasing popularity of programmes designed to help employees balance demands of work and family is well documented (Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Hall & Parker, 1993; Shellenbarger, 1997). Organisational adoption of work-family practices is often associated with benefits for the organisation, such as increased productivity (Berns & Berns, 1992; Mason, 1991), and for employees, such as increased morale (Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Hall & Parker, 1993; McNeerney, 1994). While many firms promote various gains from the adoption of work-family practices (Bhagat, McQuaid, Lindholm, & Segovis, 1985; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Hall, 1990; Osterman, 1995), critics argue that these results are often unsubstantiated or limited in their generalisability. According to Lobel (1991), “the process of investment in work and family roles is poorly understood; most research has been descriptive, rather than theoretical” (p.507). Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh, and Reilly (1995) noted the need for a more theoretical basis to understand the impact of work-family practices on employees. In fact, much of the literature on work-family programmes has focused on case studies or is limited in scope (for examples see Cole, 1999; Gordon, 1998; Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Leonard, 1998b; Martinez, 1993, 1997; Mason, 1991,

1993; Shellenbarger, 1999). Despite this overall lack of a clear theoretical link in the work-family literature, there are some exceptions. Lambert (2000) drew upon social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity to better understand links between work-family policies and employee attitudes, and found benefit use was significantly related to interpersonal helping and perceived organisational support.

5.2 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory is appropriate for examining work-family policies because organisations might adopt work-family policies in response to multiple factors, including non-economic ones (e.g. a desire to meet a social need, such as improving the lives of employees). For example, adopting flexible work practices might improve employees' ability to better balance work and family commitments, consequently making them happier, more satisfied people. While such an improvement might make them more productive for the organisation, thus providing an economic benefit to the organisation, the meeting of a social need can provide additional stimulus on employees that might be explained through social exchange theory.

Regarding non-economic factors, Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, and Werner (1998) stated, "although the formal or contractual relationship in employment is economically driven, a social element to such relationships typically evolves" (p. 515). The role of exchange processes within organisations has received increased interest (Rousseau, 1990; Rousseau & Parks, 1993). According to Wayne, Shore, and Linden (1997), "a framework underlying much of the research in this area is social exchange theory" (p. 82). Social exchange is a relationship of mutually contingent tangible and intangible exchanges (Dyne & Ang, 1998) in which "the precise services the employee or professional will be obligated to perform are not specified in detail in advance" (Blau, 1964, p. 93). Social exchange theory recognises conditions under which individuals feel obligated to reciprocate when they personally benefit from another's actions (Lambert, 2000). In a social exchange, one party (individual, leader or organisation) provides a benefit or reward to another, and "this exchange invokes an obligation of the other party to

reciprocate by providing some benefit in return” (Whitener et al., 1998, p. 515). The norm of reciprocity entails a sense of investment, with the expectation of a return on that investment owing to a sense of trust or obligation (McNeal, 1999). Doney, Cannon, and Mullen (1998) suggest the norm of reciprocity generates shared expectations between parties, and provides evidence that the organisation’s intentions are benevolent.

According to Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, and Taylor (2000), “social exchange relationships are different from those based on purely economic exchange, in that the obligations of the parties in a social exchange to one another are often unspecified and the standards for measuring contributions are often unclear” (p. 739). Whitener et al. (1998) have offered the following description of the fundamental differences between social and economic exchanges, and have suggested three fundamental distinctions.

1. Social exchanges can involve either extrinsic benefits with an economic value, (e.g. information on childcare), or intrinsic benefits without any economic value (e.g. a support network for employees on pregnancy leave). Additionally, because extrinsic benefits can often include support and friendship they can also have an intrinsic value. Consequently, social exchanges that have limited or ambiguous economic benefit are capable of impacting strongly on the social dimension of a relationship between parties.

2. Social exchanges are typically informal and not explicitly negotiated unlike economic exchanges that are formal and often contracted explicitly. Consequently, the giving of benefits or rewards is a voluntary action. For example, an organisation might decide to adopt work-family practices without entering formal negotiations with employees. While employees might offer suggestions regarding policies they feel will be most advantageous, such exchanges would be informal and wouldn’t form part of industrial negotiations.

3. Because the nature of social exchanges is voluntary, there is no guarantee that benefits or rewards will be reciprocated or that reciprocation will result in receipt of future benefits. Therefore, while work-family practices might be offered by an organisation, there is no guarantee that the organisation will receive anything in return, for example, greater employee commitment or reduced turnover. That is, because the exchange is voluntary, the organisation risks gaining nothing in return.

This lack of guarantee indicates a degree of uncertainty, particularly in early stages of the relationship, when the risk of non-reciprocation is relatively high (Whitener et al., 1998). Because social exchanges are voluntary, and there is no assurance of reciprocation, Blau (1964) has asserted that relationships evolve slowly, initially with low value exchanges and only escalating to high reward exchanges as parties demonstrate their dependability. Within an organisational context, low value work-family practices that focus upon information or advice, for example, childcare or eldercare information, might be a starting point. As employees reciprocate, for example, through enhanced attitudes, the organisation will be encouraged to add extra, more expensive services, for example, childcare subsidies or an on-site childcare facility. According to Whitener et al. (1998), social exchange theory “emphasises the exchange process, including its development over time, and indicates that successful social exchanges should influence perceptions of risk of nonreciprocation (i.e., opportunism) and trust” (p. 515). For example, an organisation might offer employees telecommuting because through past successful social exchanges, the organisation perceives less risk of opportunism such as employee abuse. This is because the parties have developed a relationship of trust and reciprocation.

Importantly, when an organisation offers a benefit to an employee, for example, through implementing work-family programmes, while there is an expectation of some return, the exact time and form that this reciprocation will take is often unclear (Gouldner, 1960). Therefore organisations offering work-family policies might find it difficult to use work-family policies to target specific returns such as reducing turnover. While some specific work-family practices might inherently

target turnover (e.g. part-time work for new mothers that enables them to gradually return to the workplace after pregnancy), and thus enact a specific return, even in the previous example there is no guarantee of desired behaviour (employee retention). The employee could simply decline the offer and not return, or leave the organisation after using this practice for a period of time. Returns that are nebulous and ill-defined also encourages the informal development of such programmes, as there are no strict economic outcomes for the organisation to negotiate. It should also be noted that organisations might adopt work-family programmes in response to a societal moral obligation, and thus might not expect any return from employees.

Significantly, employees have a tendency to take a long-term approach towards these social exchange relationships within the workplace, with the pattern of reciprocity developing over time, determining the perceived balance in exchanges between the two parties (Blau, 1964; Rousseau, 1989). According to Lambert (2000), social exchange theory is entering a renaissance as researchers seek answers for employer-employee relations that have been enhanced, and are “not well explained by models of motivation based on the mechanism of economic exchange” (p. 802). The benefits associated with work-family policies similarly are poorly elucidated; as the work-family literature generally fails to use any theoretical frameworks to explain the many reported benefits (see Chapter Three for a complete review of these benefits).

Social exchange relationships progress between two parties through a series of shared, although not necessarily simultaneous, exchanges (Masterson et al., 2000). These in turn, generate a pattern of reciprocal obligation between each party and the other (Blau, 1964). One of the parties provides a service or makes a contribution to the other; for example, an organisation offering paid parental leave, and in doing so, develops an expectation of a return at a future time (Masterson et al., 2000). The organisation will expect some form of return in the future, for example, they might expect employees using paid parental leave to come back to work instead of stopping work altogether, or for employees to view

the organisation as compassionate, and therefore be more committed to the organisation. The receiving party (in the above example, the organisation's employees), having acquired something of value, develops a sense of obligation towards the organisation which they feel must be reciprocated. Such employees might, for example, consider their organisation as a good employer and reciprocate the service of paid parental leave with greater commitment and reduced turnover. Masterson et al. (2000) have stated, "prior research has convincingly established that an employee is involved in at least two social exchange relationships at work: one with his or her immediate supervisor, and one with his or her organisation" (pg. 740). Wayne et al. (1997) have endorsed these two types of social exchanges in recent studies. These two relationships are highlighted below.

1. The first relationship, between employee and supervisor is called leader-member exchange (Graen & Scandura, 1987), and is defined "as the quality of the relationship between a supervisor and an employee" (Masterson et al., 2000, p. 740). While this exchange can operate between managers and subordinates with regard to specific work-family practice such as flexitime, this study will focus upon employee-organisational relationships, and therefore this aspect will only be covered to help clarify the employee-organisational relationship.

2. The second relationship between an employee and their organisation is referred to as perceived organisational support. Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) have suggested that perceived organisational support reflects the quality of the employee-organisation relationship by measuring the extent to which "employees develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (p. 501).

According to Wayne et al. (1997), at the work group level, similar social exchange processes are evident. For example, Liden and Graen (1980) found employees

reporting high quality leader-member exchange relationships made contributions beyond their formal job duties, and those employees reporting lower-quality leader-member exchange performed more routine tasks of a work group.

Perceived organisational support is influenced by the frequency, margin and sincerity of statements of praise and approval, as well as the organisation's positive evaluation of employees through pay, rank, job enrichment, and influence over organisational policies (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Masterson et al., (2000) suggested perceived organisational support "develops through employees' assessment of their treatment by their organisations" (p. 740), and that employees then use their judgments of perceived organisational support to estimate their effort-outcome expectancy. The effort-outcome expectancy relates to an employee's expectancy that their organisation will reward greater effort towards meeting organisational goals, and perceived organisational support will increase this expectancy (Eisenberger et al., 1986). If employees perceive their organisation is treating them positively, perhaps through adopting work-family policies suggested by employees, this can lead employees to devote greater effort toward helping the organisation achieve its goals (Settoon, Bennett, & Linden, 1996). Wayne et al. (1997) have summarised this effect:

High levels of POS [perceived organisational support] create feelings of obligation, whereby employees not only feel that they ought to be committed to their employers, but also feel an obligation to return the employers' commitment by engaging in behaviours that support organisational goals. That is, employees seek a balance in their exchange relationships with organisations by having attitudes and behaviors commensurate with the degree of employer commitment to them as individuals (p. 83).

Examples of this relationship effect have been found between perceived organisational support and job responsibility, innovation, and commitment (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990), and offer support for

organisational claims of the multiple benefits associated with work-family practices, such as improved job satisfaction, commitment, and reduced turnover.

According to Simmel (1967), the common axiom of all exchange theories is that “all contacts among men rest on the scheme of giving and returning the equivalent” (p. 387). Also important are the mechanisms and motives that ensure the equivalence of exchange (Blau, 1964; Cook, 1987; Emerson, 1981; Homans, 1974). Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996) have indicated that social exchange theory holds in the workplace, stating “positive, beneficial actions directed at employees by the organisation...contribute to the establishment of high quality exchange relationships that create obligations for employees to reciprocate in positive, beneficial ways” (p. 219). Therefore, organisations providing work-family policies that are desired and valued by employees, will likely lead to positive employee obligations towards the organisation, for example, greater commitment. However, it is unlikely that organisation adoption of benefits or practices that have little employee interest or perceived value would lead to this reciprocation. One aspect of social exchange theory that is particularly applicable at this point to this point is the norm of reciprocity.

5.3 The Norm Of Reciprocity

Gouldner (1960) contended that the norm of reciprocity is based on two assumptions: “(1) people should help those who have helped them, and (2) people should not injure those who have helped them” (1960, p. 171). Westphal and Zajac (1997) stated that, “the principle of reciprocity refers to a rule of behaviour in social exchange situations, and the more commonly used phrase ‘norm of reciprocity’ highlights the social obligation underlying the principle” (p.282). The norm of reciprocity is a cultural universal based on the principle of give and take, governing the mutual reinforcement by two parties of each other's actions (Gouldner, 1960). Under the norm of reciprocity, the recipient of benefits becomes morally obligated to recompense the donor (Gouldner, 1960). That is, after employees receive some benefit they should return some benefit. Taylor (1982) has defined reciprocity as a combination of short-term altruism and long-term self-

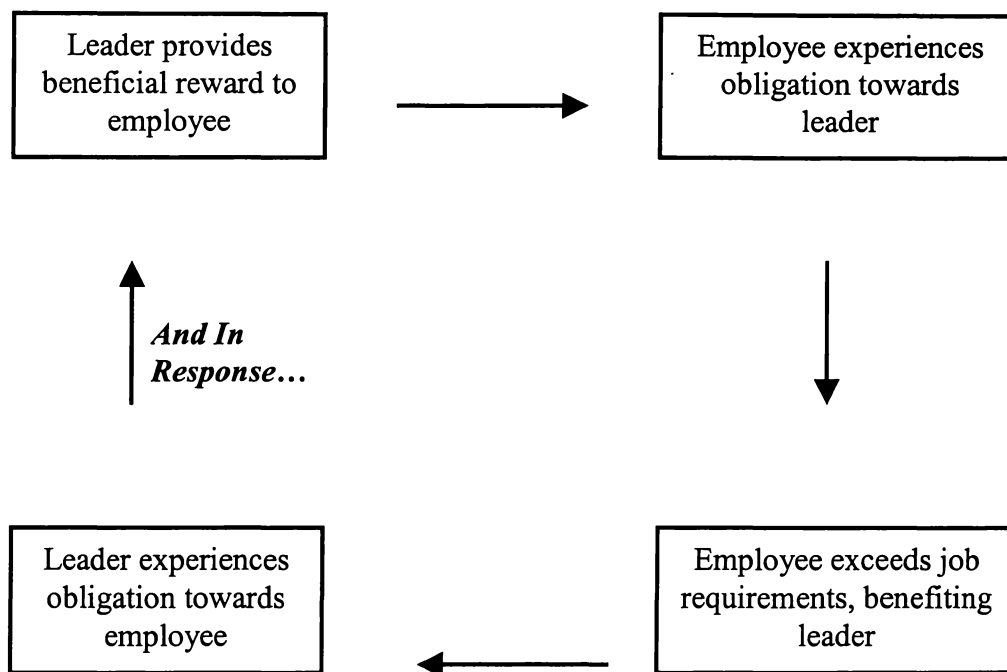
interest. Dyne and Ang (1998) affirmed the norm of reciprocity as a central concept in social exchange theory, and stated that the norm “imposes obligations only contingently, that is, in response to the benefits conferred by others” (Gouldner, 1960, p. 171). Solow (1994) noted that pioneers of the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960; Levi-Strauss, 1965) “have given reciprocity the status of a social norm” (p. 379). Yang (1996) suggests reciprocity provides the all-purpose moral cement underpinning the stability of a social system. Therefore organisations that offer work-family policies to employees, will receive, according to the norm of reciprocity, positive employee obligations, whether through enhanced employee attitudes or behaviours, or both.

The norm of reciprocity applies differently depending on whether there is an employee-leader or an employee-organisational relationship. For the employees-to-leaders relationship, Gouldner (1960) has suggested that the generalised norm of reciprocity creates an obligation towards the other (either employee or leader) when that member has engaged in previous behaviour that was beneficial to the recipient. For example, a leader encouraging and authorising the use of a firm’s telecommuting policy should create a reciprocity obligation in the subordinate. As noted above, the recipient becomes indebted to the donor until the obligation is repaid and may not harm the donor while under such an obligation (Wayne et al., 1997), such as bringing that party into disrepute. Wayne et al. (1997) has stated, “in a high-quality exchange relationship, the employee would feel obligated not only to perform the job adequately, but also to engage in behaviors that directly benefit the leader and are beyond the scope of usual job expectations” (p. 85). Therefore, in the above example, the telecommuting employee might be expected to be additionally productive and conscientious as a way to meet the obligation of trust shown by their superior. However, if the recipient thought they deserved such benefits, perhaps through a stressful work environment, then this reciprocity might be non-existent. Nevertheless, if such reciprocation were evident, then in response to the employee’s exemplary behaviour, the leader would experience an obligation to reciprocate towards the employee actions by providing the employee with greater rewards and privileges; for example, providing additional work-family

practices. This could theoretically create a 'reciprocity loop' where employee and leader are continually experiencing obligations, meeting and exceeding these duties, which leads to increased obligations and rewards, and so on. Logically however, it would appear that such reciprocation would not continue indefinitely, and must at some point reach a level of balance or equilibrium.

The following seeks to abstractly illustrate this reciprocity loop.

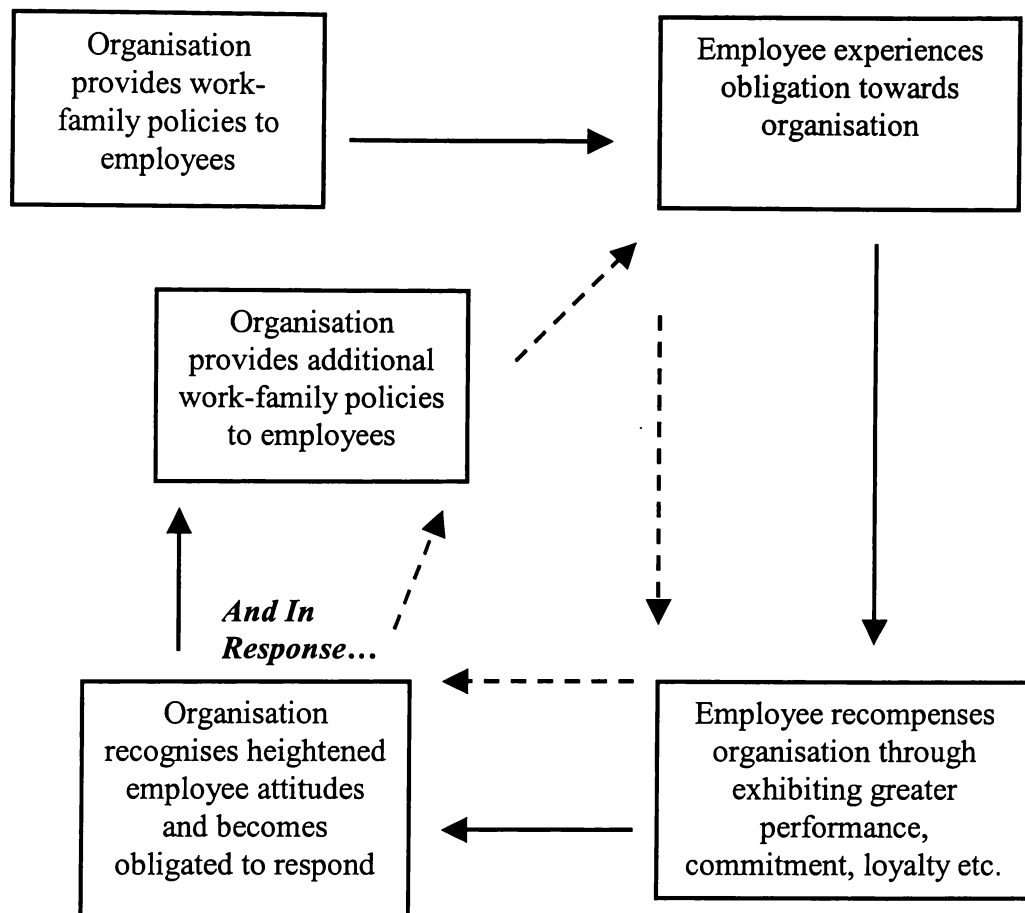
Figure 5.3.1 Reciprocity Loop: Leader-Member Exchange



The nature of reciprocity is somewhat different in the employee-organisation exchange (Wayne et al., 1997). This is because the relationship is with the organisation as a whole, and there are no specific one-on-one relationships as with the leader-member exchange. Despite this, it has been found that employees do consider their organisation to be an entity with which they have exchange relationships (Rousseau, 1990; Shore & Tetrick, 1994). Wayne et al. (1997) have argued that the feelings of obligation underlying perceived organisational support are based on a history of organisational decisions, representing a history of

rewards that generate feelings of obligation toward the organisation as a whole. This reward history may stem from immediate supervisors and divisional managers, to the organisation's CEO, since multiple and varied organisational representatives can contribute to the distribution of rewards. This approach appears applicable for work-family practices. While the implementation of work-family policies (rewards) might begin at a human resource department level, the adoption of specific practices within a department can be determined by departmental managers (e.g. allowing telecommuting), and thus represents multiple individuals at multiple levels within the organisation. With relation to work-family policies, Lambert (2000) has stated, "developments in social exchange theory, however, support the possibility that work-family benefits may promote employee participation and initiative; workers may feel obligated to exert 'extra' effort in return for 'extra' benefits" (p. 801). The perceived organisational help to employees will incur employee obligations and the repayment of this obligation will reinforce the organisation giving and thus strengthen the mutually beneficial exchange of benefits (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger, Cotterell, & Marvel, 1987; Eisenberger et al., 1990). This nature of this reciprocity can be illustrated by adapting the 'reciprocity-loop' developed earlier, to demonstrate the employee-organisational exchange under work-family policies. However, as in the leader-employee exchange, this would likely reach a level of equilibrium, in that it would be inconceivable to suggest that organisations would adopt new work-family programmes indefinitely. As such, this diagram should be seen as providing a conceptual overview only.

Figure 5.3.2 Work-family Reciprocity Loop: Employee-Organisation Exchange



Key: - - - - - ➔ represents continuous loop

With employee-organisational exchange, the organisation provides work-family policies and employees recognise their organisation is providing them with human resource tools to better operate in today's workplace, which creates a sense of employee obligation to the organisation. In using these work-family policies employees develop positive reactions to their workplace, and the work-family literature cites advantages such as increased morale, loyalty, commitment etc. (see Chapter Three). Organisations that recognise these reactions, for example,

noticing a decrease in employee turnover, might acknowledge the benefits associated with work-family policies and seek to repay this by adding extra work-family policies. However, the work-family literature has not yet investigated organisational adoption relationships regarding work-family policies, and this provides an avenue for future research.

Another explanation for the reciprocity response between organisation and employees could be gratitude. Wagner (1998) has suggested that in situations where there is no guarantee of reciprocity, organisations might have to rely upon the concept of gratitude. According to Simmel (1967), although gratitude “is a purely personal affect . . . its thousandfold ramifications throughout society make it one of the most powerful means of social cohesion” (p. 389). Blau (1964) noted that “only social exchange tends to engender feelings of personal obligation, gratitude, and trust; purely economic exchange as such does not” (p. 94). Therefore employees might register gratitude towards the organisation because of the work-family policies it provides. Blau’s assertion suggests that gratitude co-exist in social exchange relationships, along with the norm of reciprocity.

Extrarole behaviour may be another way to view the reciprocating relationship. According to Lambert (2000), the notion of employees giving something extra back to an organisation fits with nontraditional aspects of performance generally referred to as extrarole behaviour, but more specifically can also incorporate organisational citizenship behaviour (Organ & Konovsky, 1989), prosocial behaviour (George, 1991; Puffer, 1987), and spontaneous organisational behaviour (George & Brief, 1992). Organ (1990) defined organisational citizenship behaviour as “organisationally beneficial behaviours and gestures that can neither be enforced on the basis of formal role obligations nor elicited by contractual guarantee of recompense” (p. 46). Organisational spontaneity implies organisationally functional, extrarole, active behaviours (Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996).

These types of extrarole behaviour relate to the additional things people do at work, such as helping co-workers and sharing insights, that are beneficial to the organisation but that employees are not mandated to do (George & Brief, 1992). According to Dyne and Ang (1998), “organisational citizenship can be viewed as a behavioural indicator of workers’ responses to their employment relationships” (p. 694). When employees sense they are well treated by their organisations, they will reciprocate and exceed the minimum requirements of their jobs by helping others and the organisations (Dyne & Ang, 1998). Studies have found social exchange relationships have a positive influence on organisational citizenship behaviour (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994). Dyne and Ang (1998) have also argued that when employees feel their organisations regard them as temporary or dispensable, they reciprocate by performing only required duties and minimising citizenship behaviours. Therefore, organisations offering work-family policies that view the employer-employee relationship as long-term rather than transient in nature, are more likely to elicit increased citizenship behaviours in their employees and therefore facilitate the norm of reciprocity relationship between the organisation and its members.

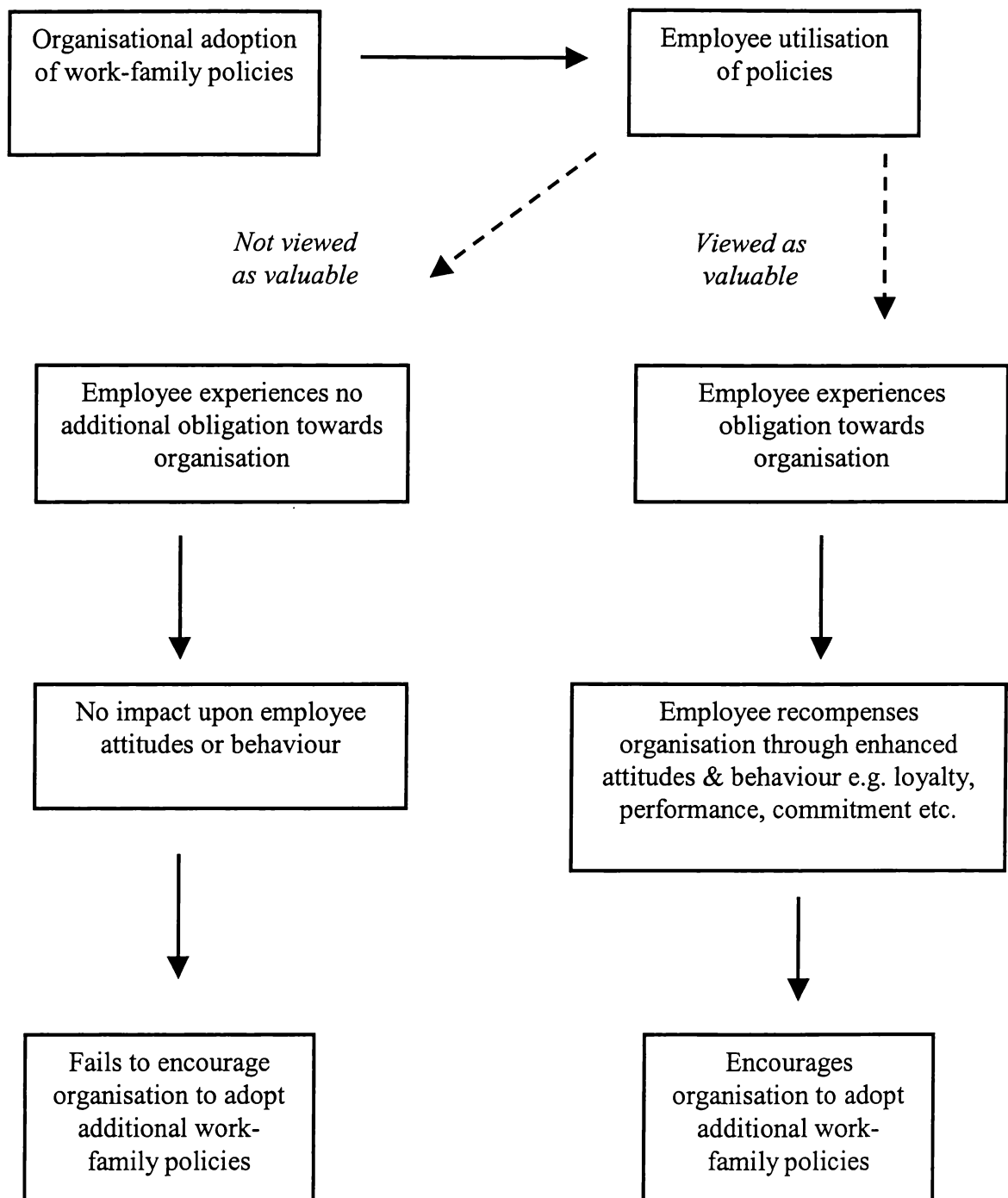
According to Eisenberger et al. (1990), “positive discretionary actions by the organisation that benefited the employee would be taken as evidence that the organisation cared about one’s well-being and therefore could be counted on for subsequent rewards” (p. 51). As an organisation seeks to help employees balance their work and family roles through work-family practices, so employees can respond with more favorable attitudes, such as increased organisational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990). Provided these attitudes translate into desired behaviours (e.g. increased productivity and reduced turnover), this should lead organisations to reinforce the supporting behaviour by offering more work-family practices. The question becomes, is employee use of work-family practices related to enhanced employee attitudes and behaviour, compared to those employees who don’t use such practices? It has been suggested that employees not using work-family practices will have a negative attitude towards their organisation, resulting in a ‘work-family backlash’, where employee non-use or

exclusion from work-family policies leads to negative attitudes and behaviours (Rothausen, Gonzalez, Clarke, & O'Dell, 1998; Young, 1999). However, findings indicate the 'backlash' is most evident in attitudes specifically about the advantages of work-family policies and satisfaction of work-family policies, and not in attitudes towards the job and organisation, like job satisfaction and turnover (Rothausen et al., 1998). This differs from negative reciprocity, which is defined as "the attempt to get something for nothing with impunity" (Sahlins, 1972, p. 195). Therefore, negative reciprocity proposes that an employee could use work-family practices but feel no obligation towards the organisation.

5.4 The Value Caveat

A limitation highlighted by Lambert (2000) that must be considered regarding the norm of reciprocity, is its universal but conditional nature. The perceived value of work-family policies will differ among individuals and therefore we can expect some differing obligations from respondents. Lambert (2000) has explained that "the same action can engender different obligations depending on the extent to which the individual targeted by the action values it" (p. 802). Some work-family policies are likely to be identified as highly useful for only certain groups, for example paid parental leave for expectant parents. Consequently, it would be expected that these employees would feel a greater sense of moral obligation towards the organisation than non-parental employees, or those not wishing to have more children. Another consideration under this caveat would be that using work-family practices might not be significant enough to encourage moral obligation. Individual use of work-family practices might have limited impact if the practice is not valued. For example, a working mother balancing her career and children through flexible work practices might register greater feelings of obligation towards the organisation. An examination of the overall effects of work-family policies applying the norm of reciprocity theory and including the caveat of perceived value, can be illustrated abstractly as follows:

Figure 5.4.1 Model for Work-Family Practice-Attitude Relationship, Including the Value Caveat



5.5 HYPOTHESES

Using the norm of reciprocity, the present research compared the attitudes of users of work-family practices with those employees who have never used the practices. The examination of work-family practice users has developed over the past decade. Initially, only users and non-users were examined (Goff, Mount, & Jamison, 1990), and then anticipated users were added, such as those on the waiting list of an on-site childcare center (Kossek & Nichol, 1992). Finally, Rothausen et al. (1998) has suggested that past users might also have a self-interest in policies, and therefore examined employee use of work-family practices focusing upon past, present, and anticipated (future) users. Unlike the above studies that examined employee use of a single work-family practice, the present study will examine employee utilisation of a fuller regimen of work-family benefits. This is appropriate given there have been calls for the study of employee attitudes related to use of multiple work-family practices, since typically employees face a menu of such programmes (Rothausen et al., 1998). The norm of reciprocity has been used to explain the relationship of perceived organisational support with attitudes such as organisational commitment (Settoon, Bennett & Lindenberg, 1996).

The present study focuses upon the employee-organisational relationship and not specific leader-member relationships. As work-family policies tend to originate from an organisation's human resource department and not a single leader, this is a more logical approach. Also, the work-family benefits literature often tests attitudes according to two distinct groups: attitudes towards work-family practices, and attitudes towards the job and organisation. This study will follow this approach, with attitudes towards work-family practices examining advantages and satisfaction with the programmes. Attitudes towards the job and organisation are those that focus upon the job and organisation, such as turnover, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and organisational support. Kossek and Nichol (1992) examined recruitment and retention attitudes specific to a childcare center. Rothausen et al. (1998) examined specific attitudes about work-family policies, for example, recruitment and retention, satisfaction with care support, and

satisfaction with benefits. In addition, they examined other attitudes including job satisfaction, turnover intention and actual turnover. As such, the present study separates the hypotheses into those relating to work-family specific attitudes and those attitudes directed towards the job and organisation. It is hoped this distinction will enable us to determine whether employee obligations towards the organisation are limited to attitudes specific to the work-family practices, or are applicable throughout a wider range of more general attitudes.

One of the challenges in examining multiple work-family practices is how to account for utilisation. For example, employee use of practices could be examined individually, or combined as a scale. While almost all the work-family literature examining the relationship between use and employee attitudes employs a single work-family practice, there could be some practices that singly have a greater impact, than when incorporated into a global scale. We might expect to find different results through these two methods, for example, a global scale might (or might not) produce synergistic effects, while some individual practices might elicit stronger obligations than others, such as paid parental leave over unpaid parental leave. However, the necessity for uniformity in work-family practice measures for the entire study means that, for the present study, a combined scale incorporating use of all work-family practices was used, because this has been used in current reciprocity studies examining work-family practice use and employee attitudes where multiple work-family practices are available (Lambert, 2000).

The work-family policies examined in this research are: unpaid parental leave, paid parental leave, domestic leave, flexible work practices, a before-and-after-school room, study leave, and an employee assistance programme.

5.5.1 Hypotheses on Work-Family Specific Attitudes

The work-family literature often examines the perceived benefits associated with work-family practice use. One of the frequently cited benefits of on-site childcare centers is the advantageous effect on employee retention (Friedman, 1989; Kossek

& Nichol, 1992; Miller, 1984). Rothausen et al. (1998) found a significant relationship between employee use of on-site childcare and attitudes towards recruitment and retention effects. Kossek and Nichol (1992) also supported this. A norm-of-reciprocity perspective would suggest that employees who have used or expect to use work-family practices would have more positive reactions towards those practices than employees not using any of the practices. Employees using several work-family practices (e.g. child-care, flex-time, and parental leave) might have more inclination to see the practices as attracting and retaining employees, since the organisation has assisted the employee to balance work and family roles in multiple ways. Perceived recruiting and retention effect would thus be expected to correlate with use of one or more practices related to work-family balance.

An aspect that has not featured in work-family studies to date is employee perception towards the wider benefits often associated with work-family policies. While recruitment and retention have been investigated, additional aspects such as employee perceptions of morale and performance have been neglected. Recently, Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) found that bundles of work-family practices were related to organisational-level performance. The work-family literature often cites improved organisational performance and enhanced individual performance as advantages (Cole, 1999; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Hall & Parker, 1993; Mason, 1991; Martinez, 1993; Shellenbarger, 1999). Therefore, employees who use work-family practices might perceive organisational and employee performance advantages from using the policies. Other benefits in the work-family literature include heightened employee morale and loyalty (Berns & Berns, 1992; Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Hall & Parker, 1993; Leonard, 1998b; McNerney, 1994; Mason, 1991, 1993; Shellenbarger, 1999).

The present study hypothesises that work-family policy use will predict employee perception of these separate benefits of work-family policies.

Hypothesis 7: Work-family practice use predicts recruitment and retention advantages.

Hypothesis 8: *Work-family practice use predicts individual and organisational performance advantages.*

Hypothesis 9: *Work-family practice use predicts morale and loyalty advantages.*

In addition to attitudes related to feelings of obligation towards the organisation under a reciprocity perspective, organisational justice concepts suggest that using or being interested in using work-family practices will be related to higher levels of satisfaction with the work-family practices themselves. Satisfaction with work-family support and benefits has been associated with work-family practice use (Rothausen et al., 1998). However, if employees use multiple practices that help them balance work and family roles, then they will feel more positively about the organisation's offerings with respect to those work-family practices. Further, since those using more practices would view them as a significant part of the organisation's benefits package, use of practices might be related to increased satisfaction with overall benefits. This approach fits well under the norm of reciprocity. Therefore, use of work-family policies will predict satisfaction with work-family policies, which includes the work-family practices, the support of work and family roles, and organisational benefits.

Hypothesis 10: *Work-family practice use predicts satisfaction with work-family policies.*

5.5.2 Hypotheses on Attitudes Towards the Job and Organisation

Under the norm of reciprocity, past, present, or future use of work-family practices will be related to higher levels of satisfaction towards the job itself. Research on work-family roles often focuses on the ramifications for attitudes such as job satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Judge, Boudreau and Bretz Jr. (1994) argue an organisation's work-family policy can significantly influence job satisfaction, and this has been supported by others (Mason, 1993; Overman, 1999; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). However, it has been noted that many facets of work can impact on job satisfaction (Locke, 1976; Rothausen, 1994), and job satisfaction has not

always been associated with work-family practice use (Rothausen et al., 1998). In order to clarify the relationship, the present study hypothesises that work-family practice use will predict a positive relationship to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 11: Work-family practice use predicts job satisfaction.

McShulskis (1997) has maintained that work-family programmes can help strengthen employee commitment, where they are more willing to work towards achieving business results. Vincola and Farren (1999) argue lifestyle issues are becoming increasingly prominent in keeping employees committed. Recent studies have linked work-family practices to employee commitment (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Using a norm of reciprocity argument, Settoon et al. (1996) found that perceived organisational support was related to commitment. According to Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986), organisational support focuses upon employee's treatment by the organisation and employee's interpretation of organisational motives. Since employees who use multiple work-family practices experience multiple instances of organisational support, we might expect that greater use of these practices will lead to increased organisational support, and also increased organisational commitment, under the norm of reciprocity. Shore and Tetrick (1991) found perceived organisational support to be distinct from organisational commitment, and hence, these attitudes will be tested separately.

Hypothesis 12: Work-family practice use predicts perceived organisational support.

Hypothesis 13: Work-family practice use predicts organisational commitment.

From a norm-of-reciprocity perspective, employees using work-family practices would feel some obligation to stay with the organisation as recompense for the help in balancing work and family needs. Monitoring changes in employee turnover would be one simple way for the organisation to check the effects of

work-family practices. Turnover intention, for example, would be negatively related to the extent that employees have use or intend to use such practices. This is supported by the suggestion that improved retention of employees is an often-cited benefit of firm adoption of work-family practices (Berns & Berns, 1992; Engoron, 1997; Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Herman, 1999; Landauer, 1997; Lobel, Googins, & Bankert, 1999; McNerney, 1994). Landauer (1997) has suggested that by adopting work-family policies, firms can help ease family demands. This, in turn, leads to reduced employee turnover. According to Lobel et al. (1999), “as competition for attracting and retaining valued employees heats up, the ability of a corporation to address personal and family needs becomes more critical” (p. 247). Hall and Parker (1993) presented Corning as a case where millions of dollars were lost yearly because of high turnover of professional women alone, and which the company was able to reduce by adopting work-family practices. Specific work-family policies such as job-sharing have also been associated with reduced employee turnover rates (Flynn, 1997; Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Lawlor, 1996; Sailors & Sylvestre, 1994).

Hypothesis 14: Work-family practice use predicts turnover intention.

CHAPTER SIX

ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE THEORIES

6.1 Introduction

Chapter Four examined work-family conflict and work-family practice use, while Chapter Five used the norm of reciprocity to examine the many benefits associated with work-family policies. This chapter details a specific set of organisational justice theories, their key principles, and highlights the importance of using these theories in human resource management research. It then focuses upon one in particular of the justice theories (distributive justice) that will be used within the present study. In the present study, organisational justice theories are used to examine two work-family organisational phenomena:

1. Fairness perceptions towards work-family policies and towards users of work-family policies.
2. Work-family backlash.

These phenomena can both be understood from a distributive justice base. This conceptual base will be discussed in the final sections of this chapter.

Organisational justice refers to employee perceptions of fairness in organisations (Greenberg, 1987). According to Chan (2000), “the justice concept was first developed in philosophy and then introduced into the social psychological literature” (p. 70). Early research on organisational justice (Adams, 1965; Deutsch, 1985) focused on distributive justice, which centres on the fairness of outcomes. However, recent developments on organisational justice (Greenberg, 1990; Kim & Mauborgne, 1997; Lind & Tyler, 1988) have integrated procedural justice as an important component of organisational justice. Folger and Cropanzano (1998) have defined procedural justice as the “fairness issues concerning methods, mechanisms, and processes used to determine outcomes” (p. 26). Chan (2000) has suggested that since procedural justice has been applied to organisational settings, research into this particular justice theory has proliferated.

Although these two dimensions (distributive and procedural) are correlated, they are considered as separate aspects of the justice construct.

While the distinction most often used to describe organisational justice is between distributive and procedural justice (Cropanzano & Folger, 1991), a third type of justice, interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986) has been theorised. While the justice theory literature is divided on whether interactional justice should be considered to be an independent justice variable (Bies, 1987; Bies & Moag, 1986) or a component of procedural justice (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997; Greenberg, 1990b), Chan (2000) has suggested that it is currently viewed as a component of procedural justice rather than a distinct justice variable. However, it has recently been categorised again as an independent justice variable, with Tepper (2000) stating:

“According to justice theory, individual's evaluative assessments of fairness draw on perceptions of distributive justice (fairness of outcome allocation), procedural justice (fairness of the procedures used to make allocation decisions), and interactional justice (fairness of the interpersonal treatment individuals receive during the enactment of procedures)” (p. 179).

While there is a lack of consensus on the nature of interactional justice (distinct versus component), the present study focuses upon distributive justice only, and thus, this division is not imperative. Therefore, discussion on interactional justice will be integrated within the procedural justice section. While all three categories might apply within the work-family context, the present study focuses solely upon distributive justice.

6.2 Distributive Justice

Distributive justice is based on equity theory of motivation (Adams, 1965). Equity theory conjectures that people perceive fairness in terms of an outcome over input

ratio (Adams, 1963). Equity theory has been very popular and has dominated justice research in the organisational sciences (Grover, 1991). Folger and Cropanzano (1998) defined distributive justice as the “perceived fairness of the outcomes or allocations that an individual receives” (p. xxi). Adams and Freeman (1976) have suggested that distributive justice means individuals make fairness judgments when they compare their inputs and outputs with those of a referent. For example, an employee might compare the pay and benefits received by their fellow employee and make a comparison of their effort at work with their rewards. As a result of this comparison, individuals decide to exert more or less effort, or change their perceptions of inputs or outcomes. Equity is perceived when the input/outcome ratio of the individual is equal to those of others compared with. Inequality in distribution suggests there will be a perceived distributive injustice. For example, an employee with no family or dependents might compare himself with another employee who is a parent, who takes parental leave, uses crèche facilities, and enjoys a more flexible timetable. Under distributive justice, employees would be expected to compare themselves with this other, register an injustice, and reduce their inputs or seek greater outputs accordingly. As work-family policies often target specific groups such as working parents or working mothers, it is possible that some form of distributive injustice may be perceived within organisations offering work-family policies.

6.3 Procedural Justice & Interactional Justice

According to Tepper (2000) employees who feel the organisation has neglected or ignored them may sense “their organisation has not done an adequate job of developing or enforcing procedures” (p. 180). Procedural justice refers to the fairness of procedures underlying the distribution of outcomes (Lind & Tyler, 1988). For example, work-family policies that are specifically tailored to parents, such as paid parental leave and childcare subsidies, might create an environment where employees who are not parents feel ostracised and deserted. In effect, this is an injustice based upon the procedures taken for developing work-family policies, such as designing programmes specifically tailored for parents. In addition to the fairness of outcomes (distribution), the fairness of the procedures used to reach the

final decision might also be viewed as important. The fairness of the procedure by which a human resource programme is evaluated is procedural justice. Therefore, even though the outcome of the appraisal might be considered fair (distributive justice), procedures used to arrive at those outcomes might be unfair and thus employees might register procedural injustice. Additionally, people are likely to see unfair procedures as producing unfair outcomes, what Greenberg (1990) called the “fair process effect”. Tepper (2000) has suggested that employees who perceive a procedural injustice, for example, single employees perceiving work-family policies that target parents as biased, might also perceive a distributive injustice; in registering the procedural injustice they will realise their outcomes are not the same, for example, a lack of access to organisational policies. Therefore individuals can register both a distributive and a procedural injustice.

The existence of formal procedures in an organisation might have a positive impact on how employees perceive the effectiveness of policies, and therefore reduce the chances of procedural injustice. Leventhal (1980) identified six procedural rules, and proposed that the extent to which procedures within the organisation follow these six rules, will determine how fair they are perceived to be. These rules are:

1. Rules should be consistent across people over time.
2. Not be influenced by self-interest.
3. Be based on accurate information.
4. Include provisions for appeal - to be correctable in case of mistake.
5. Be representative of the interests of all concerned parties.
6. Be in accordance with personal standards of ethics and morality.

Folger and Cropanzano (1998) have maintained that research on different practical situations affirms the importance of these six attributes of fair procedures. For example, work-family policies that are driven by a human resource executive should be seen to be free of bias. If such an individual as a parent with young children pushes for an on-site childcare centre, this could be conceived as

violating the procedural rules outlined above and procedural injustice would be expected. In addition, organisations that adopt work-family policies that focus solely upon childcare or parental leave might exclude a large proportion of employees that would use and enjoy such policies as flexitime. Such a failure to reflect the concerns of all interested parties, could also lead to procedural injustice.

Bies and Moag (1986) stated that interactional justice is about individuals concerned with the “quality of the interpersonal treatment they receive during the enactment of organisational procedures” (p. 44). Individuals experience interactional justice when organisational representatives fail to treat them with respect, honesty, propriety, and sensitivity to their personal needs (Bies & Moag, 1986). For example, while employees with dependents may feel their needs as working parents are met by work-family policies, parents without dependents or single employees might feel there is a lack of organisational sensitivity to their own needs, such as caring for their elderly parents, and thus lead to a perceived injustice.

6.4 Importance of Organisational Justice in Research

It has been suggested that organisational justice research has an important societal value, as perceptions of injustices can have important consequences for society and the workplace (Sabbagh, Yechezkel, & Nura, 1994; Sashkin, 1990). Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, and Taylor (2000) stated “there is substantial evidence that fairness is an important dimension affecting employees’ actions and reactions within organisations” (p. 738). For example, justice research can be useful for highlighting aspects that could improve the performance of human resource policies. In one example, a survey of Fortune 100 companies identified perceived fairness of the performance appraisal system as the most important criterion of effectiveness among practitioners (Thomas & Bretz, 1994), while Kidwell and Bennett (1994) found when a computer monitoring performance

system was viewed as collecting information in an unbiased manner, employees not only felt fairly treated but perceived the system as efficient. Other studies have indicated that fairness perceptions of human resource practices are related to outcomes such as organisational commitment (Koys, 1991; Ogilvie, 1986), job dissatisfaction and turnover (Aquino, Griffeth, Allen, & Hom, 1997), the likelihood of an applicant accepting a job (Bretz & Judge, 1994), and the likelihood of managers to use the system (Blancero & Dyer, 1996).

Since work-family policies are important and increasingly popular as a human resource practice that impact upon employees' work and personal lives, we can expect important organisational consequences as a result of fairness perceptions. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the determinants of justice perceptions within the context of work-family policies. Organisational justice dimensions have been found to be important predictors of a wide variety of psychological constructs (Welbourne et al., 1995), for example satisfaction with leaders (Tyler & Caine, 1981), adaptation to layoff (Brockner, Grover, Reed, DeWitt, & O'Malley, 1987), and reactions to performance appraisals (Greenberg, 1986). Evidence also shows that unjust procedures have been linked with lower performance, higher turnover intentions, decreased organisational commitment, theft, and decreased citizenship behaviours (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997; Folger & Cropanzano, 1998).

According to Welbourne, Balkin and Gomez-Mejia (1995) a "body of literature in organisational behaviour suggests that the perceived fairness of outcomes and procedures exerts a strong influence on how employees react to a variety of aspects of organisational life, in particular an organisation's reward system" (p. 885). While justice findings have been linked to positive outcomes, injustices can also bring about negative consequences (Chan, 2000). For example, studies into perceived injustices have found reduced job performance (Greenberg, 1988; Pfeffer & Langton, 1993), increased stress (Zohar, 1995), reduced cooperation from coworkers (Pfeffer & Langton, 1993), reduced quality of work (Cowherd & Levine, 1992), theft (Greenberg, 1990c), and frustration, reduced self-image, and

moral outrage (Greenberg, 1990). Additionally, perceived injustices have been linked to other human resource practices such as drug-testing programmes (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991), selection systems (Gilliland, 1994), and pay rise decisions (Folger & Konovsky, 1989).

Combined, these all indicate the powerful influence justice theories can have upon our understanding of human resource management practices and emphasise the benefit of examining work-family policies from an organisational justice perspective.

6.5 Distributive Justice in Work-Family Research

This section highlights how distributive justice theory was used to examine employee attitudes towards work-family policies and users of these policies.

Justice theories predict that employees will have more positive attitudes towards organisations that they perceive as treating employees fairly (Greenberg, 1990). As highlighted above, justice theories have become a popular topic for examining various organisational phenomena. For example, downsizing has been frequently discussed in justice theory research, with findings suggesting that if employees believe layoff victims were treated fairly, they will have greater organisational commitment (Brockner, DeWitt, Grover, & Reed, 1990; Brockner, Grover, & Blonder, 1988).

Justice theories are also popular amongst work-family researchers, particularly when examining the attitudes of policy users and non-users. For example, research has included fairness of parental leave (Grover, 1991), family-friendly backlash (Rothausen, Gonzalez, Clarke, & O'Dell, 1998) and organisational attachment to family-responsive benefits (Grover & Cooker, 1995). Justice theories suggest that the consequences of employees being excluded from work-family policies include feelings of being treated unfairly by their organisation. For example, employees excluded from work-family policies by being childless or because their children

have left home might believe they are being neglected by their organisation, and therefore register negative attitudes towards the organisation.

In his seminal work, Grover (1991) focused upon the distributive aspect of organisational justice theories by examining attitudes towards policies and users of policies. While it is also possible to examine procedural justice and interactional justice towards work-family policies, the present study sets out to build on Grover's work, therefore maintaining a distributive justice focus. Inconsistency might exist in the administration of work-family policies, and because the appearance of fairness should be important to managers (Greenberg, 1990), this endorses the focus on distributive justice.

Grover (1991) suggested that while equity theory is often the focus of justice research, one of its central limitations concerns its reliance on proportional equity as the standard by which fairness is evaluated under all conditions (Lerner, 1977; Leventhal, 1976; Schwinger, 1980). As such, two additional theories have been found to be useful as they identify additional distribution principles that may be regarded as fair under certain circumstances (Grover, 1991). Rothausen et al. (1998) suggested "that individuals have certain values or norms regarding how employee rewards should be allocated" (p. 686). These three principles are:

1. **Equity-based allocation.** The allocation of reward is based on employee inputs, for example, effort or performance (Adams, 1963; Leventhal, 1976). It is best used when the goal is focused upon productivity (Lerner, 1977; Leventhal, 1976). Under this principle, individuals regard reward allocation as being linked to their outputs, and those employees with the greatest outputs will expect to receive the greatest rewards. Grover (1991) suggested that there is a considerable body of empirical evidence supporting equity theory. Under this principle, top-performing organisations might adopt work-family policies as a way of rewarding employee performance. However, if some of the work-family policies are

unavailable to top performers, for example if they are non-parents or single, this might produce an equity-based injustice.

2. **Equality-based allocation.** Equality-based allocation maintains all employees should receive rewards of equal value (Deutsch, 1975; Lerner, 1977). Leventhal (1976) and Lerner (1977) suggest that when the goal is team-building and good social relationships, equality-based allocation principles are used. The equality principle involves equal distribution of resources, regardless of the individual efforts (Grover, 1991). In an organisation with work-family policies using equality-based allocation, employees would expect to receive access and utility of these policies irrespective of output; otherwise they may perceive some distributive injustice. Therefore work-family policies that are targeted at specific groups (e.g. parents) might elicit perceptions of injustice by those employees who are excluded (e.g. non parents).

3. **Need-based allocation.** Need-based allocation maintains that rewards are allocated according to need (Deutsch, 1975; Greenberg, 1987; Schwinger, 1986). Leventhal (1976) and Lerner (1977) have suggested that when there is a sense of social responsibility, need-based allocation is perceived as being fair. Under this principle, rewards are targeted towards those employees that need them the most (Deutsch, 1975; Greenberg, 1987; Grover, 1991; Schwinger, 1986). For example, we would expect mothers to be eligible for work-family policies such as paid parental leave, flexible work practices, and childcare support. If employees feel they are not receiving the support they deserve (because their need is great), there will be a perceived injustice. An example of this could be an organisation that offers work-family policies targeting children only. It would be expected that employees with eldercare concerns would therefore register an injustice because they may perceive their needs are as great as those with young dependents but are neglected by the organisation.

Perceived violations of justice by those employees who are ineligible for rewards, such as work-family policies, can lead to dissatisfaction, reduced commitment and worker withdrawal from the organisation (Lerner, 1977; Leventhal, 1976; Grover & Crooker, 1995). For example, if top performing employees believe in equity-based allocation for work-family policies, they will feel a violation if work-family policies are readily available to all employees, irrespective of output. The rationale is that these employees have contributed the greatest to the organisation and therefore deserve the greatest rewards. For employees believing in equality-based allocation for work-family policies, work-family policies that are not available to all employees will be perceived as violating justice because they expect access for all. Similarly, needs-based allocation that targets parents might elicit a justice violation because, while the needs of a particular employee group is met (in this case working parents), it fails to offer wider work-family policies for all; leading to an equality-based violation. Therefore we would expect organisations that do not offer work-family policies that are capable of being used by all employees to elicit some form of perceived justice violation from their employees. However, it must be noted that negative reactions from non-users might not be expected if they believe in the needs-based principle for resource allocation. In fact, the failure to find significant differences between users and non-users of work-family practices might be due to needs-based allocation, because non-users would feel no violation of justice if their non-use is simply because they do not have the need.

Grover (1991) contends a primary consideration in evaluating the fairness of different justice principles is a person's relation to the object of distribution, which have been categorised by Lerner (1977) as identity, unit, and non-unit.

Identity. The identity relation is defined as "one in which the other is virtually indistinguishable from the self" (Grover, 1991, p. 248). The effect of the identity relationship has been captured by the concept of egocentric bias that "leads the beneficiaries of actions to judge those actions or procedures as more fair as compared to people who do not benefit" (Grover & Crooker, 1995, p.275). Grover (1991) noted that egocentric bias

leads people to “evaluate resource distribution schemes that benefit themselves as fair regardless of the objective fairness of the procedure or mechanism used” (p. 248). For example, Grover (1991) found employees who stood to benefit from a parental leave policy rated that policy as fairer than did excluded employees who were not parents. Egocentric bias has been supported with studies examining gasoline rationing (Greenberg, 1981) and rates of pay (Greenberg, 1987). Therefore, respondents who are more likely to benefit from work-family policies, such as users, would be expected to perceive work-family policies more favorably.

Unit. The unit relation signifies that those within a situation will align themselves favorably with those in a similar situation. Lerner and Whitehead (1980) have suggested that individuals will “positively regard others who are expected to share similar perspectives and values, and to engage in cooperative, helpful behaviors” (p. 230). Studies have found that individuals sharing a unit relation will prefer the equality and needs distribution principles (Bagarozzi, 1982; Lamm & Swinger, 1983). As such, individuals who hold a unit relation with others, such as parents and married couples, would be expected to view work-family policies and users more fairly and positively than those who do not hold unit relationships. Grover (1991) suggested that parents hold a unit relationship with other parents, because they have experienced the challenge of balancing childcare and work within their family. As such, even though parents might not use the work-family practices, they may still recognise the benefits for others, and thus perceive the policies and users positively.

Non-unit. Those individuals who hold low identification with the object of distribution (work-family policies) are categorised as having a non-unit relation. Such individuals would be expected to view work-family policies as unjust and unfair. Therefore individuals who categorize work-family policies as negative, non-important, or who never intend to use them, would be expected to view work-family policies as unfair and

consequently users of these policies as inequitable. The non-unit relation to the object of distribution has been used for examining the potential for work-family backlash (Rothausen et al., 1998), where individuals who do not use work-family policies register negative attitudes due to perceptions of unfairness and injustice.

6.6 Linking Organisational Justice Theories with Work-Family Research

This section discusses the emergence of research into work-family policies using a justice theory perspective and highlights the approach undertaken of the present study.

The adoption of work-family policies within organisations has increased rapidly during the past decade, principally within United States (US) organisations. The majority of larger sized organisations embrace numerous policies, particularly within the US. New Zealand data are so scarce and incongruent that similar claims in New Zealand cannot be made. The expansion in the US is unsurprising, given numerous comments in both academic and popular management journals that characterise work-family policies as progressive and important (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Osterman, 1995; Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh, & Reilly, 1995).

Increasingly though, both organisations and researchers are showing an interest in the impact of work-family policies upon attitudes of both users and non-users. This interest has been driven both by employee feedback and changing demographic trends, and has led to examinations of the perceived fairness of work-family policies (Grover, 1991) and family-friendly backlash (Rothausen et al., 1998). Rothausen et al. (1998) have stated that “dissenting views questioning the value of family-friendly policies and benefits have emerged in the business presses” (p. 686), while Young (1999), maintained that “recent demographic shifts...make employees without children under age 18 the predominant group in

the workforce” (p. 32). This suggests that work-family policies might now fail to target the majority of employees. While justice theories have been used to examine the adoption of work-family policies, such studies are limited because they typically focus upon a single work-family policy, such as parental leave (Grover, 1991), or on-site childcare centres (Rothausen et al., 1998).

Since organisations typically offer multiple work-family policies, research should examine the impact of a wider number of policies because studies may fail to gain a true indication of the effects of work-family policies by focusing upon singular policies. Examining multiple work-family policies is more relevant given the factors influencing adoption. The demographic increases in participation rates of women in paid employment (Ingram & Simons, 1995; Milliken, Martins, & Morgan, 1998; Osterman, 1995), dual-career couples (Goodstein, 1994; Magid & Codkind, 1995; Morgan & Milliken, 1992), single parent families (Cooper, 1998; Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2000; Morgan & Milliken, 1992), and the elderly population (Goodstein, 1995; Hendrickson, 2000) have all been suggested as influencing the occurrence of work-family policies (see Chapter Two for more detail). Despite this, research using justice theories has typically focused upon single work-family policies. Such research fails to encapsulate the myriad factors noted above, which influence work-family policy adoption and attitudes towards these policies. In addition, the work-family examination of backlash might exclude those facing, not work-family conflict, but work-life conflict. For example, a single person with no family, children or eldercare concerns might conceivably have sporting and community issues that lead to excessive personal levels of conflict. Work-family policies, by definition, target employees work and family roles, therefore they might exclude individuals with work-life issues. As such, these individuals might harbour negative attitudes towards users, and the work-family policies themselves, because they are excluded from using these practices. However, it is worth noting that the flexible work options available within the study’s organisation would be available for work-family and work-life balance concerns, so this might become less of an issue.

Another problem with work-family research using justice theories has been the focus on work-family policies that are rare and not commonly available within the majority of even large organisations. For example, Rothausen et al., (1998) examined an on-site childcare centre, yet even in the US, with a population base 80 times the size of New Zealand, this policy is rare, with between 4% and 10% of large firms having an on-site childcare center (Hall & Parker, 1993; Morgan & Milliken, 1992; Wood, 1999). Similarly, paid parental leave, which Grover (1991) examined, has a low rate of organisational adoption, estimated at 23% (Wood, 1999). Despite these low adoption rates, they have been the main policies used when examining work-family policies using a justice theory approach. Examining multiple work-family policies concurrently might avoid the narrow focus on uncommon policies. The following statistics indicate that flexible work practices are among the most common work-family policies on offer in US organisations, and include flexitime, telecommuting, and job sharing.

- Flexitime appears to be the most popular with adoption rates between 40% and 80% (Doucet & Hooks, 1999; Durst, 1999; Hall & Parker, 1993; Morgan & Milliken, 1992; Wood, 1999).
- Telecommuting occurs within 20% and 40% of organisations (Doucet & Hooks, 1999; Durst, 1999; Hall & Parker, 1993; Morgan & Milliken, 1992).
- Job sharing adoption rates ranging from 37% to almost 50% (Hall & Parker, 1993; Morgan & Milliken, 1992).

These adoption rates far surpass those of on-site childcare centres and parental leave, and indicate flexible work practices are among the most popular of all work-family policies. Despite the greater popularity of flexible work practices, focusing upon this single work-family policy will repeat a methodological limitation of past studies.

The hypotheses section of this chapter is divided into two distinct categories. The first section focuses upon employee attitudes towards the fairness of work-family policies and attitudes towards male and female users, and the relationship of these attitudes towards job and organisational attitudes. The second section examines

work-family backlash, which focuses predominantly on the allocation of resources (work-family practices).

6.7 FAIRNESS HYPOTHESES

According to Grover (1991), “a major reason for studying justice in organisations is to determine the consequences of perceived fairness” (p. 248). Existing research indicates that perceived fairness is related to aspects of motivation, satisfaction, and commitment (Folger & Greenberg, 1985; Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Greenberg, 1982). Grover’s (1991) study examined the predictors of perceived fairness of a paid parental leave policy, and suggests the “importance of identifying the antecedents of parental-leave-fairness lies in the consequences of the perceptions, such as the impact of justice perceptions on attitude formation” (p. 248). The present study extends the Grover study by examining the impact of these fairness perceptions upon employee attitudes towards the organisation and their work. Grover (1991) examined three separate dependent variables: parental-leave-policy fairness, and attitudes towards both male and female leave-takers, and suggested demographic and attitudinal predictors.

Despite widening the number of work-family policies examined, the predictors offered by Grover (1991) should be generally applicable to multiple work-family policies. This is because over the extensive array of work-family policies, these policies typically focus upon the family more than the workplace. For example, work-family policies relating to pregnancy, childcare and flexibility are typically focused on employees and their personal lives, rather than on the workplace. However, it is unknown whether the identity, unit, and non-unit relationships will remain the same over a range of work-family policies. Grover (1991) suggested these dependent variables could all be predicted by demographic and attitudinal variables including gender, parental status, childbearing age, and the likelihood of having children. A shortcoming of his study was the grouping of all independent variables together. Because such relationships might not hold universally, particularly given the examination of multiple work-family policies, the present study does not group hypotheses together.

While it is difficult to determine causality, Grover (1991) did suggest that “independent variables [that] are demographic lends support to the theoretical direction of causation” (p. 253). Similarly, the present study sought to use demographic variables as predictors of work-family policy fairness and attitudes towards users. While causality is not a certainty, this will provide additional testing of Grover’s theorised causal direction.

Grover (1991) examined employee attitudes towards women as a measure of conservatism, regarding “traditional beliefs that women should bear the child-raising responsibility (at home) and that men should hold posts in the work place” (p. 248). The present study suggests that age might also be an indicator of the traditional attitudes regarding use of work-family policies. Older employees are often viewed as having more traditional attitudes, such as defining male and female roles as being in the workplace and the home respectively. Therefore, older employees could have less support for work-family policy users, as these programmes would not have been available for them, especially within New Zealand where work-family policies have only begun to grow in the past decade (Callister, 1996). This study also suggests that older employees will have a negative perception of work-family policies, as they might perceive them as unfair, given the typical lack of work-family support they would have experienced.

***Hypothesis 15a:** Age negatively predicts perceived fairness of work-family policies.*

***Hypothesis 15b:** Age negatively predicts attitudes towards male users.*

***Hypothesis 15c:** Age negatively predicts attitudes towards female users.*

A unique demographic predictor in the present study is organisational position, specifically addressing the position of managers and professionals. An organisation that purports to support work-family policies should have a high level of support among managers and professionals within the organisation. The unit relation suggests that work-family policy use is positively regarded, and users

would be expected to share similar values and engage in cooperative behaviours (Lerner & Whitehead, 1980). As such, managers within an organisation philosophically aligned with work-family policies should be expected to encourage and support utilisation; therefore managers are expected to support users and the policies themselves. Conversely, a negative relationship might indicate a direct lack of philosophical alignment with the focus of work-family policies, which are typically seen as helping employees balance their work and personal roles, and thus indicate management's failure to support users and the policies. Given that the organisation has documented work-family policies, which in effect is an expression of commitment towards work-family policies, organisational managers and professionals (typically those holding important organisational positions) would be expected to have strong support towards work-family policy fairness and attitudes towards users.

***Hypothesis 16a:** Managerial position predicts perceived fairness of work-family policies.*

***Hypothesis 16b:** Managerial position predicts attitudes towards male users.*

***Hypothesis 16c:** Managerial position predicts attitudes towards female users.*

The likelihood of having children or starting a family can also be related to fairness perceptions. The potential for having children might impact upon future use of work-family policies, and therefore influence current perceptions of fairness and attitudes towards users. Grover (1991) found an identity relationship between parental leave policy fairness and employees planning to be parents, and this study suggests that this relationship will hold towards multiple work-family policies, as the organisation studied offers work-family practices to ease the burden of having children (paid parental leave, domestic leave, before and after school room).

***Hypothesis 17a:** Starting a family predicts perceived fairness of work-family policies.*

***Hypothesis 17b:** Starting a family predicts attitudes towards male users.*

***Hypothesis 17c:** Starting a family predicts attitudes towards female users.*

The benefits associated with work-family policies might also predict fairness towards policies and users. Work-family policies have been associated with numerous benefits and advantages, and these may link with fairness perceptions of work-family policies. Employee attitudes towards the advantages of work-family policies might impact upon the perceived fairness of these policies and attitudes towards users. For example, the belief that work-family policies are generally positive and advantageous for both employees and the organisation, might positively impact upon attitudes towards the policies themselves. The work-family literature suggests numerous advantages including improved morale and loyalty (Gordon & Whelan, 1998; Hall & Parker, 1993; Leonard, 1998b; McNerney, 1994; Tenbrunsel et al., 1995), improved recruitment and retention (Bhagat, McQuaid, Lindholm, & Segovis, 1985; Landauer, 1997; Lawlor, 1996; Lobel, Googins, & Bankert, 1999; McShulskis, 1997; Osterman, 1995; Sailors & Sylvestre, 1994), and enhanced employee and organisational performance (Cole, 1999; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Faught, 1995; Martinez, 1997; Mason, 1991; Overman, 1999). The present study hypothesises that employees who see work-family policies as advantageous will also perceived work-family policies as fair and have more positive attitudes towards users.

***Hypothesis 18a:** Work-family benefits predict perceived fairness of work-family policies.*

***Hypothesis 18b:** Work-family benefits predict attitudes towards male users.*

***Hypothesis 18c:** Work-family benefits predict attitudes towards female users.*

Grover also suggested an identity relationship would be found between the likelihood of taking parental leave and fairness perceptions. The present study will expand Grover's study in the New Zealand setting in two ways. Firstly, a wider array of work-family policies will be used to provide a greater understanding of fairness perceptions towards multiple work-family policies. Secondly, the research will test past and present use and future intentions to use work-family policies as a predictor of perceived fairness. Rothausen et al. (1998) used this type of approach when examining justice theory through family-friendly backlash. This suggests

that past, present, and future (anticipated) users of work-family policies will be more likely to see the policies as fair, and have more positive (fairer) perceptions of users, because they have gained personally from using the work-family practices (identity relationship). This extends Grover's study because that focused upon attitudes towards using a work-family policy that was not currently offered. This study examines work-family policies that have been offered for some time.

Hypothesis 19a: *Work-family practice use predicts perceived fairness of work-family policies.*

Hypothesis 19b: *Work-family practice use predicts attitudes towards male users.*

Hypothesis 19c: *Work-family practice use predicts attitudes towards female users.*

As noted previously, studies have linked fairness perceptions of human resource policies with outcomes such as organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The rationale is that employees who perceive human resource policies as fair will register higher commitment and greater job satisfaction than individuals who view them as unfair and unjust. Because justice theories predict that employees will have more positive attitudes towards organisations that they perceive as treating employees fairly (Greenberg, 1990a), the present study hypothesised that employees who view work-family policies as fair and perceive male and female users of such policies as just, might register greater organisational commitment and increased job satisfaction. This study also anticipates that perceived organisational support will be positively correlated with fairness perceptions given the inherent supportive aspect associated with work-family policies of helping employees balance their work and family/personal lives (Goodstein, 1994; Hand & Zawacki, 1994; Judge, Boudreau, & Bretz Jr., 1994; Moore, 1997; Osterman, 1995). Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) have suggested that perceived organisational support is influenced by various aspects of an employee's treatment by the organisation and this, in turn, influences the employee's interpretation of organisational motives. Therefore, fairness perceptions and attitudes towards male and female users are predicted as having positive associations with attitudes towards the job and organisation.

***Hypothesis 20a:** Favourable attitudes towards work-family policies will be positively related to job satisfaction.*

***Hypothesis 20b:** Favourable attitudes towards male users will be positively related to job satisfaction.*

***Hypothesis 20c:** Favourable attitudes towards female users will be positively related to job satisfaction.*

***Hypothesis 21a:** Favourable attitudes towards work-family policies will be positively related to perceived organisational support.*

***Hypothesis 21b:** Favourable attitudes towards male users will be positively related to perceived organisational support.*

***Hypothesis 21c:** Favourable attitudes towards female users will be positively related to perceived organisational support.*

***Hypothesis 22a:** Favourable attitudes towards work-family policies will be positively related to organisational commitment.*

***Hypothesis 22b:** Favourable attitudes towards male users will be positively related to organisational commitment.*

***Hypothesis 22c:** Favourable attitudes towards female users will be positively related to organisational commitment.*

6.8 BACKLASH HYPOTHESES

The present study aims to examine whether employees who are non-users of work-family benefits have: (1) less favourable work-family specific attitudes, (2) less favourable attitudes towards the job and organisation, and (3) less favourable attitudes towards the fairness of policies, and towards male users and female users of work-family practices.

Rothausen et al. (1998) suggested that employees who do not receive work-family benefits (equity-based), or do not receive benefits of equal value (equality-based), might experience resentment, manifested in less positive attitudes about the work-

family benefits and the organisation. In testing employee attitudes towards work-family practices, it is important to examine reactions of users/non-users in order to understand the effect of such practices on an organisation (Rothausen et al., 1998). This component of the present study seeks to examine the backlash potential for the criterion variables already used in this study. However, non-use “backlash” against work-family conflict is not addressed in the present study because this relationship is theoretically unfounded. For example, this would suggest non-users having a backlash or hostile response to non-use of work-family practices, would be expected to have greater WFC and FWC, and this approach is not supported by the literature. Consequently, there are no hypotheses between work-family practice non-use and conflict.

However, all the remaining criterion variables examined in the previous sections of the present study do offer relationships that can be tested regarding non-use, as these criterion variables suggest work-family practice use will have a positive influence on attitudes. This backlash aspect suggests that non-users will hold hostile reactions towards attitudes specifically relating to work-family practices, or have attitudes that are significantly different from work-family practice users regarding attitudes about the job and organisation. These are outlined below.

6.8.1 Backlash Against Work-Family Specific Attitudes

The rationale for these hypotheses is that if work-family practice users hold strong positive attitudes towards advantages of work-family policies and satisfaction with work-family policies, then non-users might be expected to hold strong negative attitudes. Rothausen et al. (1998) suggested employees using work-family practices should have higher levels of work-family satisfaction. Perceived violations of justice by those employees who are ineligible for rewards, such as those excluded from work-family policies, can lead to dissatisfaction (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Lerner, 1977; Leventhal, 1976). The literature on the four attitudes examined here is detailed in Chapter Five (Section 5.5.1). These hypotheses relate to comparing the mean scores of attitudes between non-users and users.

Hypothesis 23: Non-users will report significantly lower recruitment and retention benefits than users.

Hypothesis 24: Non-users will report significantly lower performance benefits than users.

Hypothesis 25: Non-users will report significantly lower morale and loyalty benefits than users.

Hypothesis 26: Non-users will report significantly lower satisfaction with work-family policies than users.

6.8.2 Backlash Against Attitudes towards the Job and Organisation

Rothausen et al. (1998) asserted that “justice theories explicitly state that violations of justice will result in more negative attitudes for those who do not benefit” (p. 688). Therefore, non-users would be expected to be associated with resentment and discontent, and thus have less favorable attitudes from those using the work-family practices, such as reduced job satisfaction. However, it has been cautioned that other factors contribute to general attitudes, and many facets of the work itself can impact on job satisfaction (Locke, 1976; Rothausen, 1994). While there is support for a positive relationship between job satisfaction and work-family practice use (Judge, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1994; Mason, 1993; Overman, 1999), there has been less support for a backlash against job satisfaction. For example, Rothausen et al. (1998) found no support. However, given this study examines multiple work-family practices, unlike Rothausen et al. study of a single childcare centre, a negative relationship between non-use and satisfaction is hypothesised.

Hypothesis 27: Non-users will report significantly lower job satisfaction than users.

Perceived justice violations, for example, employees ineligible for work-family programmes by not having children can lead to reduced commitment (Lerner, 1977; Leventhal, 1976). A full description of the work-family practice-

organisational commitment link is provided in Chapter Five (Section 5.5.2). From a justice theory perspective, employees who are non-users of work-family practices could feel their organisation does not cater for their needs, therefore producing a reduction in their commitment to the organisation. Therefore, this study hypothesises that non-users of work-family practices will have significantly lower organisational commitment than users. Similarly, perceived organisational support would be expected to be significantly different between non-users and users, because from an organisational justice perspective, non-users would see themselves receiving less support than work-family practice users.

***Hypothesis 28:** Non-users will report significantly lower perceived organisational support than users.*

***Hypothesis 29:** Non-users will report significantly lower organisational commitment than users.*

Lastly, Adams (1963) has suggested that a response to violations of justice might be withdrawal from the situation. In the extreme, withdrawal might entail leaving the organisation if an alternative, seen as more just, is available. Worker withdrawal from the organisation has been associated with injustice perceptions (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Lerner, 1977; Leventhal, 1976). The literature suggesting work-family practice use reduces turnover is detailed in Chapter Five (Section 5.5.2). Given that the presence of work-family policy might be seen by non-users as a violation of justice, it is expected that turnover intention will be higher among employees who are non-users of work-family practices.

***Hypothesis 30:** Non-users will report significantly higher turnover intention than users.*

6.8.3 Backlash Against Attitudes Towards the Fairness of Work-Family Policies and Policy Users

An aspect of the work-family backlash literature that has not been previously examined is the relationship between non-use and fairness perceptions. These

attitudes relate to the perceived fairness of work-family policies, and whether male users and female users of work-family policies are perceived positively. An earlier section in this chapter (Section 6.8.1), described how the unit relationship suggests users of work-family policies will see the policies, and other users, favourably. Conversely, non-users might be expected to view work-family policies significantly less favourably than users, and view users of work-family policies negatively. Therefore, the present study hypothesises that non-users will report significantly lower perceived fairness about the work-family policies, because by being excluded, they perceive an injustice. Similarly, non-users' attitudes towards male and female users will be significantly lower than work-family policy users.

***Hypothesis 31:** Non-users will report significantly lower perceived fairness of work-family policies than users.*

***Hypothesis 32:** Non-users will report significantly lower attitudes towards male users than users.*

***Hypothesis 33:** Non-users will report significantly lower attitudes towards female users than users.*

CHAPTER SEVEN

METHOD

7.1 Introduction

This chapter details the various methodological aspects of this research. This study used surveys to collect data on employee attitudes as well as use of work-family practices. This chapter details the organisation, the participants in the study, the instruments used in the study, and finally the procedures used.

7.2 Context

The organisation used in this research was in the local government sector, and was a major employer in its rural region. The organisation primarily dealt with services to the local region. Although the organisation employs more than 400 employees, they are not all located within the same geographical locale. One city was chosen that housed the largest proportion of employees, which included the organisation's headquarters and six other satellite departments. Approximately 210 employees work at this city location. The seven separate organisation locations provide the full complement of services offered by the organisation. The organisation has had work-family policies in operation for a number of years. Brief details on these follow:

- Unpaid parental leave. A maximum of 52 weeks unpaid leave.
- Paid parental leave. Six weeks paid leave at full pay.
- Domestic leave. This policy allows up to five days of personal sick leave per year for the care of spouse, child or parent. This is over and above the regular five days sick leave entitlement to employees.
- Flexible work hours. This policy allows variability of working hours (such as early start and early finish), variability in workplace location (work-at-home) and the ability to negotiate leave without pay to fulfil family commitments.
- A before-and-after-school room. Specifically for children over 10 years, usable before and after school for a maximum of 2 hours/session.

- Study leave. This policy encourages study and provides flexible work hours (around study times and exam times), and the payment of study fees.
- Employee assistance programme. This provides a private counselling service for employees, free for the first four visits. Additional counselling may be paid by the organisation, through consultation between employee and their manager.

Of the seven work-family policies, two are strongly linked with New Zealand legislation. In New Zealand, the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987 legislates for up to 52 weeks unpaid leave, and the Holiday Act 1981 allows for five days special leave for use as sick leave, or for the care for a sick parent, spouse or child, or attend the funeral of a close family member. Therefore, the organisation's unpaid parental leave policy is a fully government-mandated policy, while the domestic leave policy is an extension of legislation. This is because the organisation's domestic leave policy allows five days for the care of family etc., which is in *addition* to five days personal sick days. The legislation allows five days total (personal and family use). Because the unpaid parental leave is a government legislated policy, and all New Zealand employees are entitled to it, this practice will be excluded from this study, because in effect, it is not an additional work-family policy.

This organisation also offered paid parental leave, but this study was conducted before paid parental leave was legislated in New Zealand. It is due to be passed into legislation in July 2002.

7.3 Sample Participants

Data were collected from all seven organisational sites. Through the organisation's intranet, a total of 206 employees were emailed the surveys, with data collection conducted at two times, with a one week break between surveys, to reduce the potential for common method variance. Survey One contained the predictor variables (see Appendix A), and Survey Two contained the criterion variables (see Appendix B). It must be acknowledged that a few variables are used

both as predictor and criterion variables, and therefore there is a possibility that common method variance may exist in relationships with these variables. This is discussed in greater depth in Section 9.7.

Because the organisation uses the terminology ‘family-friendly’ practices, and there might have been the potential for confusion, the surveys (see Appendix A and B) used the term ‘family-friendly’ when referring to the work-family practices explored in this thesis.

All survey responses were placed into a secure collection box, and these were collected in person by the author. The first survey returned 91 responses within the first day after distribution. Subsequent reminders to employees via e-mail increased the final number of Survey One responses to 119 by the end of the first week. One week later, Survey Two was distributed. There were 63 responses returned by the end of its first day. Emailed reminders with Survey Two attached achieved a total of 100 responses to Survey Two by the end of the second week of data collection. The total of 100 responses to both Survey One and Two (matched surveys) yielded a response rate of 48.5 percent.

Study participants’ demographics are as follows. The average age was 41.7 years ($SD=9.85$), with the majority full-time employees (91%), married (77%), and female (69%), which is demographically similar to the population. The average length of tenure was 9.2 years ($SD=8.3$), and respondents were well spread among job types with 29% managerial/professional, 22% clerical, 15% in planning, 11% financial and 10% in other occupations. In total, approximately 70% were blue collar workers and 30% white collar workers. The respondents were predominately white (92%), which is dissimilar for the region, which has a 14.7% Maori population (Statistics New Zealand, 2002).

For levels of education, 31% of respondents had some form of college education (secondary school), 28% held a tertiary certificate or diploma (a maximum two year tertiary qualification), 8% a professional qualification (e.g. the accounting

qualification ACA), 17% had a tertiary degree, and 16% had a postgraduate qualification. The average salary level was 4.1 (SD=1.5), which represents a level between \$35,000 and \$45,000 (SD=\$15,000).

7.4 Measures

The following section details the measures used in the study. Exploratory factor analysis was undertaken for measures that were unique or significantly adapted for this study.

Demographic information was collected including age, gender, race, education, job type, tenure, salary, employment status, and number of children. Marital status was also collected and was coded 1=married/de facto, 0=single.

Work-Family Conflict was measured using the 14-item Inventory of Work-Family Conflict (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalket, 2000). This is a bi-directional measure, with statements divided equally (seven each) between work interference with family and family interference with work, with anchors 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. This work-family conflict measure is a modification of an earlier scale (Kopelman, Greenhhaus, & Connolly, 1983). Sample questions of the work-family conflict scale include “On the job, I have so much work to do that it takes away from my personal interests” and “My job makes it difficult to be the kind of spouse, partner or parent I’d like to be”. This conflict measure (WFC) had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .89. Sample questions of the family-work conflict scale include “My family takes up time I would like to spend working” and “My family dislikes how often I am preoccupied with my work when I am at home”. This conflict measure (FWC) had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .71.

Job Satisfaction was measured using Lounsbury and Hoopes' (1986) 7-item scale, with response scale 1=extremely dissatisfied and 7=extremely satisfied. Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied or unsatisfied they were with different features of their present job. Questions included satisfaction towards co-workers, the work itself, pay and fringe benefits, physical surroundings at

worksite, immediate supervisor, promotional opportunities, and the job as a whole. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .84.

Work Strain is a measure developed for this study, which explores multiple strain-based aspects of conflict. This three-item measure had response scales 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. Questions asked were: "You are exposed to emotional demands at work?", "You are exposed to communication problems at work?" and "Your job leaves you feeling burnt out?". This scale had a reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of .79.

Exploratory factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) was conducted, and all three items loaded onto a single component with an eigenvalue greater than one (2.127).

Recruitment and Retention effects of work-family practices were measured by asking employees to indicate their agreement with the following statements: "Work-family programmes help retain employees" and "Work-family programmes help attract employees" (coded as 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). Rothausen et al. (1996) used a similar measure, although tailored for a specific work-family practice. This scale had a reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of .78.

Individual and Organisational Performance effects of work-family practices were measured by asking employees to indicate their agreement with the following statements: "Work-family programmes improve firm performance" and "Work-family programmes improve employee performance" (coded as 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). This scale builds on Rothausen et al.'s (1998) examination of recruitment and retention advantages associated with work-family practices. This scale had a reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of .79.

Morale and Loyalty effects of work-family practices were measured using a two-item scale, with questions asking employees to indicate their agreement with the following statements: "Work-family programmes increase employee morale" and

“Work-family programmes improve employee loyalty” (coded as 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). As with the last two scales, this scale builds on Rothausen et al.’s (1998) examination of recruitment and retention advantages associated with work-family practices, by focusing upon morale and loyalty benefits. This scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .87.

Satisfaction with Work-Family Policies was measured using a three-item scale, with questions asking employees to indicate their agreement with the following statements: “Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the amount of support provided for employee’s work and family roles by the organisation?”, “Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with benefits offered by the organisation?” and “Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with work-family initiatives offered by your organisation?” Responses were coded 1=extremely dissatisfied, 7=extremely satisfied. This is a measure based on those used by Rothausen et al. (1998). This scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .89.

Exploratory factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) was conducted, and all three items loaded onto a single component with an eigenvalue greater than one (2.454).

Perceived Organisational Support was measured using the Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) 16-item scale. Questions included “The organisation is willing to help me when I need a special favour” and “The organisation strongly considers my goals and values”. Items were coded 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree. This scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .92.

Organisational Commitment was measured using the Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), which consists of 15-items. Responses are coded 1=strongly agree and 7=strongly disagree, with six items negatively worded. Meyer and Allen (1984) note the OCQ “has been widely

used in research, and has been shown to have acceptable psychometric properties” (p.375). This scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .88.

Turnover Intention was measured using a single item scale from Lounsbury and Hoopes (1986), “All in all, how likely is it that you will try hard to find a job with another organisation within the next 12 months?”. Responses were coded 1= not at all likely, 2=somewhat likely, 3=very likely. Turnover intention has been shown to be a causal predictor of actual turnover, as shown in meta-analyses of turnover studies (Steel & Ogalle, 1984).

Fairness of Work-Family Policies was measured using a nine-item scale based on Grover (1991), and coded 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree. The original measure was slightly changed because it focused specifically on a parental leave scheme. The questions were reworded to be inclusive of work-family policies in general. For example an original question was “Those who choose not to have children should subsidize those who choose to have children under a parental leave programme”. This was modified to “Those who choose not to have children should support those who choose to have children through family-friendly programmes”. As in the original measure, five questions were negatively worded, for example “Supporting employees who have children is not fair to employees without children”. This scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .88.

Exploratory factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) was conducted, and all nine items loaded onto a single component with an eigenvalue greater than one (4.709).

Attitudes Towards Male Users of work-family policies was measured using a six-item scale based on Grover (1991), coded 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree. The set of items followed the stem “My male colleagues who would use work-family policies...” and included questions such as “Will be better employees in the long run” and “Want what is best for their children”. This measure differs somewhat from the original. In the original, Grover included four items that were

very occupation specific, in that case, a research university. These items included questions like “Are not particularly competent researchers” and “Want to devote more time to research”. As these questions were not as generalizable as other items, these four items were dropped. The attitudes towards male users scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .80.

Exploratory factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) was conducted, and all six items loaded onto a single component with an eigenvalue of 3.090.

Attitudes Towards Female Users of work-family policies was measured using a six-item scale, based on Grover (1991), coded 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree. The female set of items followed the stem “My female colleagues who would use work-family policies...” and included questions such as “Will be better employees in the long run” and “Are outstanding parents”. As with the male scale above, the four items specific to university research were dropped. The attitudes towards female users scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .85.

Exploratory factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) was conducted, and all three items loaded onto a single component with an eigenvalue of 3.410.

Benefits of Work-Family Practices were measured using a six-item scale, with responses coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. Questions followed the stem “Work-family programmes...”, and asked the following questions: “Help retain employees”, “Help attract employees” “Increase employee morale”, “Improve employee loyalty”, “Improve firm performance” and “Improve employee performance”. This scale had a reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of .91. This measure extends the 2-item Recruitment and Retention measure above, and includes 6 items on work-family advantages, as a specific advantages focus, such as on recruitment and retention, is not necessary. This measure seeks to explore a general, all-encompassing measurement of work-family benefits or advantages,

rather than focus singly upon a narrow advantage aspect.

Exploratory factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) was conducted, and all six items loaded onto a single component with an eigenvalue greater than one (4.101).

Start Family was measured using a single item scale from Grover (1991), “What is the likelihood of you starting a family or having more children in the future?”, coded 1=highly unlikely and 5=highly likely.

Managerial Position was measured by a single dummy variable based on current job types, where 1=managerial/supervisor job types, and 0=all other job types.

Work-Family Practice Use measurement was based on Rothausen et al. (1998) with a five item scale, 1=past use, 2=present use, 3=anticipated use, 4=never used, 5=unaware. This study examines use of the organisation’s six work-family practices: paid parental leave, domestic leave, flexible work practices, a before-and-after-school room, study leave and an employee assistance programme. Usage responses were recoded as a dummy variable 1=past/present/anticipated users, 0=non-users (never used or unaware of programme). The usages of work-family practices were combined. For example a respondent who has or intends to use all six work-family practices (either past, currently or in the future) are coded as 6. Respondents who have never used any practices and do not intend to use any are coded as 0.

7.5 Procedure

Because New Zealand organisations have only started to adopt work-family practices within the last decade (Callister, 1996), one challenge with this study was finding an organisation with multiple work-family practices. I visited the equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Trust, New Zealand’s only EEO site, which has government and private business support. One feature of this website is an area for EEO researchers to ‘advertise’ themselves regarding any research

within the EEO context. After placing an advertisement indicating my desire to research an organisation with work-family practices and the impact on employee attitudes, I was approached by an organisation that was willing to participate. The organisation was shown the two surveys and apart from making suggestions regarding salary scales and job types, they were happy to proceed. Ethical approval was sought at this time and passed by the University of Waikato Ethics Committee (Management Studies). It was acknowledged that I would present the findings to the organisation when data analysis was complete to provide them with an external interpretation of their work-family policies.

7.5.1 Pilot Testing

According to Zikmund (1997), surveys are the most common method of generating primary data. Surveys are also becoming increasingly popular as management tools, with applications ranging from measuring employee behaviours to developing strategic tools (Mackelprang, 1997). Because surveys are useful for information gathering from a sample of employees (Zikmund, 1997), I have chosen to use this research method. To improve the validity and generalisability of research findings from surveys, both surveys were pilot tested (Zikmund, 1997). Both surveys were tested on the same 25 individuals, with varying work experience and education levels, as a method of testing the questions and providing an indication of response times. Zikmund (1997) suggests pilot testing can help test a possible survey, thus allowing the researcher to identify any errors and biases inherent in the survey before fully using the survey. Suggestions regarding layout, question wording and irregularities were addressed. This also provided a guideline regarding length of time for completing both surveys, which were approximately 10 minutes for Survey One and approximately 20 minutes for Survey Two.

7.5.2 Distribution Method

An unusual aspect of this research was to use the organisations intranet as a way of survey distribution. While such a method is distinctive, it appeared to pose little difference from hand-delivered survey distribution. As all employees within the

city were linked by the intranet, it was easier to distribute the surveys to eight different locations simultaneously. I also discussed survey distribution with the organisation's Computer Support Manager, due to the large volume of emails being sent (206 emails with the survey attached). An advantage of this form of distribution is the speed at which all employees can be reached. For example surveys were available to all employees within minutes. In addition, when reminders were sent out, surveys could be included as attachments as reminders for those who haven't completed them. Respondents who had completed the surveys could simply delete the email.

7.5.3 Response Rates

Roth and DeVier (1998) have suggested that survey response rates are a very important issue in survey research. If the sample collected is insufficient, then all conclusions drawn on that sample could be rejected. According to Roth and DeVier (1998) "responses obtained from only a portion of their sample may not represent the full sample due to problems such as selective returns, volunteer bias, and other phenomenon. This leads to potentially serious concerns about the external validity of the entire research project (p. 97)". Groves, Cialdini and Couper (1992) reinforced this view when they stated that the lack of full participation in sample surveys threatens the inferential value of the survey. For research in the fields of human resource management and organisational behaviour, Roth and DeVier (1998) have offered five major methods for increasing the response rate of surveys, and suggest these methods can increase survey response rates and increase survey result validity. While two of these methods were not used (monetary incentives and personalisation), the present study did use the other three methods to enhance response rates.

1. Advance notice. As the organisation wanted the surveys to be distributed electronically, I also provided advance notice through the same intranet. This took the form of an email notification from me as the principal researcher and included an attached letter from the organisation's CEO supporting the study, and asking for participation in the study (see Appendix C).

2. Follow-up reminders. Both surveys were emailed out on a Monday, with follow up reminders emailed out on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, to update response rates and seek additional responses. The emails also carried the surveys in case earlier versions had been deleted.

3. Salient Issue. This refers to respondents having a strong attachment to the survey topic, in this case work-family policies. The examination of work-family practices within this organisation could have an increased response rate due to higher interest among respondents, as the topic of work and family is both “current and timely” (Roth & DeVier, 1998, p. 99).

Roth and DeVier (1998) have suggested other variables that can improve response rates, and two were used that best fit this study.

1. University sponsorship. The legitimacy that may be afforded by University sponsorship was used by using the University crest on all pages of both surveys, and opening each survey with an introduction detailing that the surveys were authorized by the University of Waikato Ethics Committee (Management Studies). This indicated university sponsorship and acknowledged the survey had been through a university process for ethical consideration.

2. Anonymity. In response to email notifications about the study, feedback suggested employees were not entirely comfortable in providing their names. To encourage anonymity, respondents were allowed to assign a “code name” of their choice to their responses. Most responses used their employee code (a 4 digit number), while others created unique names such as “ITLDO”.

The response rate of 48.5% after follow-up emails supports Roth and DeVier (1998) suggestion of increased response rates through reminders. While the response rate appears good, within this organisation’s context it is exceptionally high. The organisation’s human resource department undertook a work and family survey approximately six months before this study, to highlight areas of concern

regarding problems balancing work and family commitments, but received a poor response. Consequently the human resource department was impressed with the higher number of responses gained in this study. I suggest the reasons for the higher response rate are strongly related to following Roth and BeVier (1998) suggestions regarding response rates. For example, from the employee's perspective, the study was undertaken from an external source without ties to the organisation, which also ensured confidentiality for respondents. I also provided advance notices of the study and on one of these notices I had the written approval of the organisation's CEO, who encouraged participation. The other contributing factor could be that the majority of respondents were users of work-family programmes, with 80% of respondents using at least one of the work-family practices, and therefore having stronger attachment (salience) with the research. This salience factor, combined with the university sponsorship, which guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, probably encouraged higher participation for this study.

7.5.4 Handling Missing Data

Less than half the study cases had missing data, and those missing data were typically only a few. Only one case had 8% missing data. Since none of the variables had more than 10% of the cases missing, the methods of missing value replacement is not critical (Roth, 1994), and therefore mean series substitution was used for missing values.

7.6 Interviews

In addition to the surveys conducted as the major focus of this study, interviews were conducted to explore respondent use of flexible work practices. This practice was chosen because of all the work-family policies offered by the study organisation, flexible work practices have received the majority of attention, and it is particularly positive and advantageous. Therefore, 30 respondents of the original 100 survey respondents were chosen and interviewed to gather data on what they use the flexibility for, how useful the policy is for balancing work and

family, how advantageous it is, and whether they perceive any negativity from colleagues from using it. This qualitative data was collected six months after the original survey data was collected. This data was sought to offer a more indepth exploration of the major theoretical approaches of the present study. The findings from the interviews are displayed in Appendix D.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RESULTS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into four parts. Each part deals specifically with the analysis and results of the four components of this study: (1) work-family conflict, (2) work-family benefits, (3) work-family fairness, and (4) work-family backlash.

8.2 Work-Family Practice Use

Eighty respondents out of the 100 respondents (80%) had used at least one of the six work-family practices. Usage rates for practices are shown in Table 8.2.1. Usage rates by number of practices used are shown in Table 8.2.2.

TABLE 8.2.1 Work-Family Practice Use Ranked by Percentage

Work-Family Practice	Number	Percentage Use
Flexible work	60	60%
Domestic leave	35	36%
Study leave	31	31%
Employee assistance programme	30	30%
Paid parental leave	19	19%
After-school room	14	14%

TABLE 8.2.2 Total Work-Family Practice Use by Number

Work-Family Practice	Number	Percentage Use
0 number of practices used	20	20%
1 practice used	30	30%
2 practices used	17	17%
3 practices used	14	14%
4 practices used	14	14%
5 practices used	2	2%
6 practices used	3	3%

8.3 Work-Family Conflict

8.3.1 Results

Descriptive statistics for all the work-family conflict variables are shown in Table 8.3.1. The mean of 1.9 for work-family practice use indicates that the average employee used around two of the organisation's six work-family practices. Work strain has a mean of 3 (out of 5), and indicates a medium level of workplace strain. Job satisfaction, with a mean 4.6 (scale 1-7) indicates a positive level of job satisfaction just above the mid-point. This is similar for satisfaction with work-family policies, which has a mean 4.7 (scale 1-7). Given that conflict was measured on a scale 1-5, where 5 indicates a high level of conflict, the mean scores for work-family conflict (2.6) and family-work conflict (2.0) indicate overall low levels of conflict originating between both the home and the workplace. However, comparing these scores with other studies is difficult, given the lack of a standard conflict measure in the work-family conflict literature. Many scales are based on Kopelman, Greenhhaus and Connolly (1983), as is the one used for this study. Gutek et al. (1991) used these measures (and the 1-5 scale) for two studies, from which overall WFC mean scores of 3.2 and 3.4 and FWC mean scores of 1.8 and 1.7 can be computed (from data on p. 563). Compared to these findings, the results here indicate the mean scores of WFC and FWC are relatively similar in this study, with the WFC mean being lower and the FWC mean higher than mean scores in the Gutek et al. study.

TABLE 8.3.1 Correlations and Descriptive Statistics: Work-Family Conflict and Conflict Outcomes Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Number of children	1.6	1.4	--						
2. Satisfaction with work-family policies	4.7	1.0	.02	--					
3. Work-family practice use	1.9	1.6	-.08	.25*	--				
4. Work strain	3.0	1.0	-.23*	-.19	.28**	--			
5. Job satisfaction	4.6	.92	.16	.39**	-.07	-.34**	--		
6. Work-family conflict	2.6	.92	-.07	-.30**	.21*	.61**	-.39**	--	
7. Family-work conflict	2.0	.61	-.02	-.27**	.25*	.38**	-.24*	.70**	--

N=100. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. All significance tests are two-tailed.

8.3.2 Correlations

Table 8.3.1 shows that work → family conflict correlated significantly with family → work conflict ($r = .70$, $p < .01$). satisfaction with work-family policies correlated significantly (all $p < .01$) with job satisfaction ($r = .39$), and work → family conflict ($r = -.30$) and family → work conflict ($r = -.27$). Significant correlations were found (all $p < .01$) between work strain and job satisfaction ($r = -.34$), work → family conflict ($r = .61$), and family → work conflict ($r = .38$). Job satisfaction correlated significantly with work → family conflict ($r = .39$, $p < .01$) and family → work conflict ($r = -.24$, $p < .05$). Work-family practice use correlated significantly (both $p < .05$) with work → family conflict ($r = .21$) and family → work conflict ($r = .25$). Work-family practice use also correlated significantly with work strain ($r = .28$, $p < .01$).

These correlations suggest that satisfaction with work-family policies might be a useful predictor of work-family and family-work conflict, as will work-family use. The close relationships between conflict and work strain and job satisfaction, indicate that conflict could be useful predictors of these criterion variables.

8.3.3 Analysis of Hypotheses 1 and 2

Hypotheses 1 and 2 proposed the relationships between the two aspects of conflict used in this study (work → family conflict and family → work conflict). The hypotheses tested by t-test were (1) WFC > FWC, and (2a) Female WFC > Male WFC and (2b) Male FWC > Female FWC.

8.3.4 Results of Hypotheses 1 and 2

Hypothesis 1, which suggested WFC would be greater than FWC, was tested by a t-test between means. Similar to other studies, this hypothesis was supported with WFC (Mean=2.6) being greater than FWC (Mean=2.0). A t-test ($df=99$, $t=8.10$, $p < .001$) indicated this was a statistically significant difference. It is worth noting the low mean scores for both WFC and FWC, suggesting that respondents within this organisation on average experienced minor levels of conflict between the workplace and home, with the home producing significantly less conflict than the workplace. However, the finding that WFC > FWC is typical of other work-family conflict studies using a 5-point scale (Gutek et al., 1991; Judge et al., 1994; Netemeyer et al., 1996), although these studies typically have higher WFC mean scores and lower FWC mean scores. Analysis of the mean scores of WFC and FWC regarding gender differences was also tested by t-tests, to determine whether there were significant differences between males and females on WFC and FWC. Hypothesis 2a suggested women would score higher on WFC than men. The results indicate no significant difference between female WFC (Mean=2.5) and male WFC (Mean=2.8), t-test ($t=1.45$, not significant), and thus there is no support for Hypothesis 2a. However, there was a significant statistical difference regarding FWC, with male FWC (Mean=2.3) greater than female FWC (Mean=1.9), t-test ($t=2.6$, $p < .05$), which supports Hypothesis 2b.

8.3.5 Analysis of Hypotheses 3 and 4

To examine Hypotheses 3 and 4, hierarchical regressions were conducted. These hypotheses state that satisfaction with work-family policies and work-family practice use predicts a negative relationship with WFC and FWC. Table 8.3.2 presents the results of these analyses. In this analysis, demographic variables

(gender, marital status, and number of children) were entered as control variables in Step 1. These variables are controlled for, because within the work-family literature in general, and specifically with work-family conflict, they have been found to be predictors of work-family conflict (see Chapter Four, Sections 4.6.1 to 4.6.3). Predictor variables (satisfaction with work-family policies and work-family practice use) were entered in Step 2. Note that the predictor variable satisfaction with work-family policies was collected in survey two, not survey one as with other predictors, and is also used as a criterion variable in the work-family benefits section of this study. Similar to current work-family studies, use of work-family practices includes past use, present or current use, and future or anticipated use (Rothausen et al., 1998). In all, two sets of regression models resulted (WFC and FWC).

TABLE 8.3.2 Regression Analysis: Conflict and Work-Family Use

PREDICTORS	CRITERION VARIABLES	
	Work → Family Conflict	Family → Work Conflict
<i>Step 1:</i>		
Gender	-.142	-.241*
Marital status	.029	.032
Number of children	-.077	-.055
R ² change	.037	.075
F change (3, 96)	1.226	2.582
<i>Step 2:</i>		
Satisfaction with work- family policies	-.367***	-.338**
Work-family practice use	.291**	.309**
R ² change	.159***	.151***
F change (2, 94)	9.306***	9.142***
Total R ²	.196	.225
F statistic (5, 94)	4.585**	5.469***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Standardized regression coefficients. All significance tests were two-tailed.

8.3.6 Results of Hypotheses 3 and 4

The results show that satisfaction with work-family policies significantly predicts both WFC ($p < .001$) and FWC ($p < .01$). The negative direction indicates that as satisfaction with work-family practices, support and benefits decreases, work → family and family → work conflict increases. This finding supports Hypotheses 3a and 3b.

Work-family practice use also predicted WFC ($p < .01$) and FWC ($p < .01$). This relationship was positive, rather than negative, and therefore fails to support

Hypotheses 4a and 4b. This finding indicates that users of work-family practices experience greater conflict from the home or the workplace than did non-users. Overall, both regression models were significant, with work → family conflict $F(5, 94) = 4.585$ significant at $p < .01$, and family → work conflict $F(5, 94) = 5.469$ significant at $p < .001$. Overall, R^2 change (step 2) for both WFC and FWC were significant, with satisfaction with work-family policies and work-family practice use accounting for 15.9% of the variance of WFC ($p < .001$) and 15.1% for FWC ($p < .001$).

8.3.7 Analysis of Hypotheses 5 and 6

To examine Hypotheses 5 and 6, hierarchical regressions were conducted. These hypotheses state that work → family conflict and family → work conflict predict job satisfaction and work strain. Table 8.3.3 presents the results of these analyses. As with the previous analysis, demographic variables (gender, marital status, and number of children) were entered as control variables in Step 1. Step 2 consisted of the predictor variables (WFC and FWC). Two sets of regressions resulted (job satisfaction and work strain).

TABLE 8.3.3 Regression Analysis: Conflict Outcomes

PREDICTORS	CRITERION VARIABLES	
	Job Satisfaction	Work Strain
<i>Step 1:</i>		
Gender	-.222*	-.158
Marital status	-.056	.092
Number of children	.041	-.216*
R ² change	.047	.109*
F change (3, 96)	1.574	3.895*
<i>Step 2:</i>		
Work → family conflict	-.428**	.646***
Family → work conflict	.005	-.110
R ² change	.174***	.321***
F change (2, 94)	10.469***	26.508***
Total R ²	.221	.430
F statistic (5, 94)	5.318***	14.182***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Standardized regression coefficients. All significance tests were two-tailed.

8.3.8 Results of Hypotheses 5 and 6

The findings indicate that WFC is a strong predictor of both work strain ($p < .001$) and reduced job satisfaction ($p < .001$). However, FWC fails to predict either of these criterion variables. Therefore, there is support for Hypotheses 5a and 6a only. Overall, both regression models were significant, with job satisfaction $F(5, 94) = 5.318$ significant at $p < .001$, and work strain $F(5, 94) = 14.182$ significant at $p < .001$. Overall, R² change (step 2) for both job satisfaction and work strain were significant, with work-family conflict and family-work conflict accounting for 17.4% of the variance of job satisfaction ($p < .001$) and 32.1% for work strain ($p < .001$).

8.4 Work-Family Benefits

8.4.1 Results

Descriptive statistics for the work-family benefits variables are shown in Table 8.4.1. Of the perceived benefits associated with work-family policies, morale and loyalty has the highest mean at 4.0 (scale 1-5). This is followed closely by recruitment and retention benefits with a 3.8 mean. Individual and organisational performance benefits are the lowest of the three attitudes examining benefits, with a mean of 3.5. Overall, employees perceive that work-family policies have beneficial properties. Both perceived organisational support (mean 4.4) and organisational commitment (4.6) are both just above the mid-point of scale, indicating that overall employees have a slightly positive attitude towards commitment and support. The mean of 1.5 for turnover intention, where the mid-point is 2, indicates a low level of intention to leave the organisation.

8.4.2 Correlations

Table 8.4.1 show that the perceived advantages associated with work-family programmes all correlate significantly with each other. Recruitment and retention correlates with individual and organisational performance ($r=.72$, $p< .01$) and morale and loyalty ($r=.74$, $p< .01$). Individual and organisational performance correlates significantly with morale and loyalty ($r=.68$, $p< .01$). Two of these advantages are also significantly correlated with work-family practice use. These are recruitment and retention ($r=.21$, $p< .05$), and morale and loyalty ($r=.25$, $p< .05$). Work-family practice use also correlates with satisfaction with work-family policies ($r=.25$, $p< .05$).

TABLE 8.4.1 Correlations and Descriptive Statistics: Work-Family Benefits Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Number of children	1.6	1.4	--									
2. Work-family practice use	1.9	1.6	-.08	--								
3. Recruitment and retention	3.8	.87	-.13	.21*	--							
4. Performance	3.5	.86	-.11	.07	.72**	--						
5. Morale and loyalty	4.0	.89	-.11	.25*	.74**	.68**	--					
6. Satisfaction work-family policies	4.7	1.0	.02	.25*	.05	.01	.29**	--				
7. Job satisfaction	4.6	.92	.16	-.07	-.01	-.09	.09	.39**	--			
8. Perceived organisational support	4.4	.98	.12	.10	.08	.00	.24*	.51**	.64**	--		
9. Organisational commitment	4.6	.83	.18	.01	.04	-.02	.21*	.50**	.60**	.69**	--	
10. Turnover intention	1.5	.72	-.20	.05	.18	.15	.07	-.13	-.47**	-.37**	-.31**	--

N=100. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. All significance tests are two-tailed.

Attitudes towards the organisation and job are all significantly correlated with each other (all $p < .01$): job satisfaction and perceived organisational support ($r = .64$), organisational commitment ($r = .60$) and turnover intention ($r = -.47$), perceived organisational support with organisational commitment ($r = .69$) and turnover intention ($r = -.37$), and organisational commitment with turnover intention ($r = -.31$). Additionally, satisfaction with work-family policies correlates significantly (all $p < .01$) with perceived organisational support ($r = .51$) and organisational commitment ($r = .50$), and similarly, job satisfaction with perceived organisational support ($r = .64$) and organisational commitment ($r = .60$). The two satisfaction measures (satisfaction with work-family policies and job satisfaction) also correlate significantly with each other ($r = .39$, $p < .01$).

These correlations suggest that work-family use could be a useful predictor of specific work-family attitudes. However, the lack of significant correlations between attitudes towards the job and organisation, and work-family practice use suggests work-family practice use might not be a predictor of these attitudes. Nevertheless, given that the work-family literature frequently reports links between work-family use and job satisfaction, commitment, support and turnover, and because examining these relationships was central to the work-family benefits aspect of this study, regressions were conducted to ascertain if work-family practice use would predict these attitudes.

8.4.3 Analysis of Hypotheses 7 to 10

To examine Hypotheses 7 to 10, hierarchical regressions were conducted. These hypotheses state that work-family use will predict specific attitudes about the benefits associated with work-family programmes and satisfaction with work-family programmes and support of work and family roles. Table 8.4.2 presents the results of these analyses. As with previous regressions, demographic variables (gender, marital status, and number of children) were entered as control variables in Step 1. The predictor variable work-family practice use was entered in Step 2. Four regression models resulted (recruitment and retention, performance, morale and loyalty, and satisfaction with work-family policies).

TABLE 8.4.2 Regression Analysis: Work-Family Specific Attitudes

PREDICTORS	CRITERION VARIABLES			
	Recruitment and Retention	Performance	Morale and Loyalty	Satisfaction with Work Family
<i>Step 1</i>				
Gender	.290**	.361**	.388***	.058
Marital status	-.138	-.185	-.132	.096
Number of children	-.053	-.037	.006	.086
R ² change	.094*	.141**	.137**	.005
F change (3, 96)	3.324*	5.257**	5.069**	.169
<i>Step 2</i>				
Work-family practice use	.219*	.076	.267**	.275**
R ² change	.046*	.006	.069**	.073**
F change (1, 95)	5.110*	.630	8.277**	7.525**
Total R ²	.140	.147	.206	.078
F statistic (4, 95)	3.877**	4.085**	6.159***	2.016

*p<.05, **p<.01, *** p<.001. Standardized regression coefficients. All significance tests were two-tailed.

8.4.4 Results of Hypotheses 7 to 10

The findings indicate that work-family practice use is a strong predictor of attitudes relating to work-family policies. Work-family use predicts recruitment and retention benefits ($p < .05$), which supports Hypothesis 7. However, work-family use does not predict performance, and therefore fails to support Hypothesis 8. Hypothesis 9 is supported, as work-family use does predict morale and loyalty benefits ($p < .01$). Work-family use also predicts satisfaction with work-family policies ($p < .01$), which supports Hypothesis 10.

From the control variables, female respondents are more positive about the beneficial nature of work-family policies than men are. Female employees perceive greater recruitment and retention benefits ($p < .01$), performance benefits ($p < .01$), and morale and loyalty benefits ($p < .001$).

Overall, the regression models were significant, with recruitment and retention $F(4, 95) = 3.877$ significant at $p < .01$, performance $F(4, 95) = 4.085$ significant at $p < .01$, and morale and loyalty $F(4, 95) = 6.159$ significant at $p < .001$. Interestingly, while work-family practice use predicts satisfaction with work-family policies, the overall regression model for satisfaction with work-family policies is not significant with $F(4, 95) = 2.016$. Overall, R^2 change (Step 2) for three of the four criterion variables were significant, with work-family use accounting for 4.6% of the variance of recruitment and retention ($p < .05$), 6.9% for morale and loyalty ($p < .01$), and 7.3% for satisfaction with work-family policies ($p < .01$).

8.4.5 Analysis of Hypotheses 11 to 14

To examine Hypotheses 11 to 14, hierarchical regressions were conducted. These hypotheses state that work-family use will predict attitudes about the job and organisation. Table 8.4.3 presents the results of these analyses. As with previous regressions, demographic variables (gender, marital status, and number of children) were entered as control variables in Step 1. The predictor variable work-family practice use was entered in Step 2. Four regression models resulted (job

satisfaction, perceived organisational support, organisational commitment, and turnover intention).

TABLE 8.4.3 Regression Analysis: Job and Organisation Attitudes

PREDICTORS	CRITERION VARIABLES			
	Job Satisfaction	Perceived Organisational Support	Organisational Commitment	Turnover Intention
<i>Step 1</i>				
Gender	-.153	.084	.142	.023
Marital status	-.054	-.044	-.056	.141
Number of children	.087	.146	.216	-.146
R ² change	.047	.021	.052	.056
F change (3, 96)	1.574	.696	1.743	1.900
<i>Step 2</i>				
Work-family practice use	-.078	.116	.029	.059
R ² change	.006	.013	.001	.003
F change (1, 95)	.588	1.281	.081	.338
Total R ²	.053	.034	.053	.059
F statistic (4, 95)	1.323	.844	1.315	1.499

*p<.05, **p<.01, *** p< .001. Standardized regression coefficients. All significance tests were two-tailed.

8.4.6 Results of Hypotheses 11 to 14

As suggested by the correlations table (Table 8.4.1), the regression findings indicate that work-family use does not predict attitudes towards the job or organisation, which fails to support Hypotheses 11 to 14. Overall, the models are all non significant, with Step 2 (R^2 change) indicating that for all four attitudes, work-family practice use does not explain a significant proportion of variance. For job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and turnover intention, work-family practice use accounts for less than 1% of the variance, and only 1.3% for perceived organisational support.

8.5 Work-Family Fairness

8.5.1 Results

Descriptive statistics for the work-family fairness variables are shown in Table 8.5.1. The work-family benefits measure is a combination of the three benefit scales used in the work-family benefits section of this study, combining recruitment and retention, performance, and morale and loyalty. These were combined to produce an overall measure of employee perceptions of the benefits of work-family programmes. The work-family benefits mean of 3.8 (scale 1-5) indicates a moderately high level of support for the beneficial nature of work-family policies.

Perceived fairness of work-family policies relates to how fair respondents felt work-family policies are. A high score indicates that work-family policies are seen favourably, and that organisations and society must seek to support and adopt work-family policies. The mean 4.9 (scale 1-7) indicates an overall positive perception of fairness towards work-family policies. Attitudes towards users indicate what type of colleague respondents sees users of work-family policies as, with a higher score indicating a more positive perception. Thus, a high score indicates they are perceived to be good parents and good employees for using the work-family policies. The measures for attitudes towards male users (mean 4.7) and attitudes towards female users (mean 4.8) indicate an overall positive attitude towards users of work-family policies, for both male and female users.

TABLE 8.5.1 Correlations and Descriptive Statistics: Fairness Prediction and Attitudes towards the Job and Organisation Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Number of children	1.6	1.4	--										
2. Management position	.29	.44	.25*	--									
3. Start family	1.8	1.4	-.45**	-.01	--								
4. Work-family benefits	3.8	.79	-.12	-.03	-.01	--							
5. Work-family practice use	1.9	1.6	-.08	.09	-.06	.20*	--						
6. Job satisfaction	4.6	.92	.16	.16	-.20*	.00	-.07	--					
7. Perceived organisational support	4.4	.98	.12	.17	-.15	.12	.10	.64**	--				
8. Organisational commitment	4.6	.83	.18	.03	-.23*	.09	.01	.60**	.69**	--			
9. Fairness of work-family policies	4.9	1.1	.02	.06	.07	.26**	.23*	-.06	.20*	.03	--		
10. Attitudes towards male users	4.7	.79	.05	.20	.10	.39**	.23*	-.15	.13	.04	.41**	--	
11. Attitudes towards female users	4.8	.91	.13	.19	-.02	.42**	.17	-.16	.08	.05	.43**	.80**	--

N=100. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. All significance tests are two-tailed.

8.5.2 Correlations

Table 8.5.1 indicates the three criterion variables (policy fairness and attitudes towards male and female users) were all correlated significantly with one another. Fairness of work-family policies correlated significantly with attitudes towards male users ($r=.41$, $p<.01$), and with attitudes towards female user fairness ($r=.43$, $p<.01$). Attitudes towards male users and attitudes towards female users were very closely correlated ($r=.80$, $p<.01$), perhaps indicating little difference between overall attitudes towards male and female users. The perceived benefits of work-family policies were also significantly correlated with the criterion variables, linking with fairness of work-family policies ($r=.26$, $p<.01$), attitudes towards male users ($r=.39$, $p<.01$), and attitudes towards female users ($r=.42$, $p<.01$). Work-family practice use correlated significantly with fairness of work-family policies ($r=.23$, $p<.05$) and attitudes towards male users ($r=.23$, $p<.05$), but not with attitudes towards female users ($r=.17$).

These correlations suggest that work-family benefits and work-family practice use might be useful predictors of work-family fairness attitudes. However, the lack of significant correlations between fairness perceptions and attitudes towards the job and organisation indicate that such relationships most probably do not exist, and as such, hypotheses relating to these relationships will not be supported.

8.5.3 Analysis of Hypotheses 15 to 19

To examine Hypotheses 15 to 19, hierarchical regressions were conducted. These hypotheses state demographic and attitude variables will predict perceived fairness of work-family policies, and attitudes towards male and female users. Table 8.5.2 presents the results of these analyses. As with previous regressions, demographic variables (gender, marital status, and number of children) were entered as control variables in Step 1. The predictor variables (age, managerial level, start family, work-family benefits, and work-family practice use) were entered in Step 2. Three regression models resulted (perceived fairness of work-family policies, attitudes towards male users, and attitudes towards female users).

TABLE 8.5.2 Regression Analysis: Predicting Fairness

PREDICTORS	CRITERION VARIABLES		
	Work-Family Fairness	Attitudes Toward Male Users	Attitudes Toward Female Users
<i>Step 1</i>			
Gender	-.012	.214*	.182
Marital status	.006	.027	-.026
Number of children	.093	.212	.241*
R ² change	.009	.069	.088*
F change (3, 96)	.282	2.380	3.099*
<i>Step 2</i>			
Age	.088	-.001	-.072
Managerial position	.007	.196*	.179
Start family	.165	.180	.040
Work-family benefits	.246*	.308**	.356**
Work-family practice use	.211*	.199*	.110
R ² change	.115*	.204***	.181**
F change (5, 91)	2.385*	5.113***	4.520**
Total R ²	.124	.273	.270
F statistic (8, 91)	1.604	4.279***	4.201***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Standardised regression coefficients. All significance tests were two-tailed.

8.5.4 Results of Hypotheses 15 to 19

The variable work-family benefits predict perceived fairness of work-family policies ($p < .05$), attitudes towards male users ($p < .01$), and attitudes towards female users ($p < .01$). This supports Hypotheses 18a, 18b and 18c. Work-family practice use was also found to predict perceived fairness of work-family policies ($p < .05$), and attitudes towards male users ($p < .05$), which supports Hypotheses

19a and 19b. Of the other predictors, only managerial position predicts attitudes towards male users ($p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 16b.

Overall, the regression models for attitudes towards users were significant, with attitudes towards male users $F(8, 91) = 4.279$ significant at $p < .001$, and attitudes towards female users $F(8, 91) = 4.201$ significant at $p < .001$. The regression model for perceived fairness of work-family policies was not significant, $F(8, 91) = 1.604$. Overall, R^2 change (Step 2) for the three criterion variables are significant, with predictors accounting for 11.5% of the variance for perceived fairness of work-family policies ($p < .05$), 20.4% for attitudes towards male users ($p < .001$), and 18.1% for attitudes towards female users ($p < .01$).

8.5.5 Results of Hypotheses 20 to 22

Table 8.5.1 indicates no significant link between the criterion variables of job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, organisational commitment, perceived fairness of work-family policies, and attitudes towards male and female users as predictor variables. Thus, there is no support for Hypotheses 20, 21 and 22.

8.6 Work-Family Backlash

Work-family backlash relates to employees who do not use, or who might be excluded from using work-family practices, holding resentment against their organisation and work-family policies themselves. For example, childless employees could feel that organisational financial resources spent on childcare excludes them and consequently, they might perceive they are receiving less financial support than work-family practice users. Findings from the work-family benefits part of this study (Section 8.4) indicate that use of work-family practices is positively linked to attitudes about work-family policies specifically, but not to attitudes towards the organisation or job. These findings are important because, in effect, work-family backlash could be seen as the opposite or reverse of these benefit regressions. That is, users of work-family practices perceive greater benefits from work-family policies and have greater satisfaction with work-family

policies than non-users. This part of the study seeks to determine whether these non-users have significantly reduced attitudes about these aspects than work-family practice users, and whether these attitudes are negative. Rothausen et al. (1998) have noted that when discussing a backlash it is imperative to consider absolute levels of attitudes, because if non-users hold attitudes that are significantly different from users, but are still generally positive, there is no proof of backlash. This would indicate only decreased positive attitudes.

In examining work-family backlash, the literature has typically focused on users versus non-users of work-family practices. However, in Rothausen et al.'s (1998) seminal work on backlash, those authors examined only a single work-family practice (a childcare centre). The present study focused on six work-family practices. To determine whether a backlash or hostile response occurs from non-users, this study set out to examine total non-use of work-family practices; that is, respondents who were not past, present, or anticipated users of any of the six work-family practices. The rationale was that employees who have not used any of the work-family practices, or even considered using them, could hold "hostile responses" to users, the organisation, the work-family policies, and this will be seen in the attitudes previously examined in this study.

8.6.1 Analysis and Results of Hypotheses 23 to 26

Hypotheses 23 to 26 examined the relationships between users and non-users of work-family practices for those criterion variables that examined work-family specific attitudes. The hypotheses were all tested by independent sample t-test, where the test variables were the criterion variables about work-family specific attitudes, and the grouping variable was work-family practice non-use. Table 8.6.1 presents the results of these analyses, indicating non-user mean scores and standard deviations, user mean scores and standard deviations, t-test results and significance, for the work-family specific attitudes.

TABLE 8.6.1 Mean Comparisons: Work-Family Specific Attitudes

Criterion Variables	Non-Users (n=20)		Users (n=80)		T-test	Sig
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Recruitment & Retention	3.6	.88	3.9	.86	-1.230	n.s.
Performance	3.4	.84	3.6	.87	-.807	n.s.
Morale and Loyalty	3.6	.91	4.1	.86	-2.152	p< .05
Work Family Satisfaction	4.6	1.2	4.7	.96	-.695	n.s.

Overall, there was little support for non-users of work-family practices holding significant differences to users of work-family practices, regarding work-family specific attitudes. Hypothesis 23, which suggested non-users would hold significantly different attitudes than users towards recruitment and retention benefits, was not supported because there was no significant difference between non-users and users. Similarly, Hypothesis 24, which suggested non-users would hold significantly different attitudes than users towards performance benefits, was not supported. Lastly, Hypothesis 26, which suggested significant differences in attitudes between non-users and users for satisfaction with work-family policies, was not supported. Hypothesis 25, which suggested non-users would hold significantly different attitudes towards morale and loyalty benefits than users of work-family practices, was supported ($p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 25 was supported. However, the mean scores for non-users and users are both above the mid-point (scale 1-5, mid-point 3), therefore while there is a significant difference, both scores are still positive. This indicates that for morale and loyalty benefits, there are significant differences between non-users and users, although this does not represent a work-family backlash, as non-users perceive this benefit as being significantly less positive, not negative. In summary, non-users and users share similar attitudes towards the benefits associated with work-family programmes and satisfaction with work-family policies. The only significant difference is towards the loyalty and morale benefits of work-family programmes, but these are still positive.

8.6.2 Analysis and Results of Hypotheses 27 to 30

Hypotheses 27 to 30 test the relationships between users and non-users of work-family practices for those criterion variables that examined attitudes towards the job and organisation. The hypotheses were all tested by independent sample t-test, where the test variables were the criterion variables about attitudes to the job and organisation, and the grouping variable was work-family practice non-use. Table 8.6.2 presents the results of these analyses, indicating non-user mean scores and standard deviations, user mean scores and standard deviations, t-test results and significance, for attitudes towards the job and organisation.

TABLE 8.6.2 Mean Comparisons: Job and Organisation Attitudes

Criterion Variables	Non-Users (n=20)		Users (n=80)		T-test	Sig
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Job Satisfaction	4.7	1.0	4.6	.89	.186	n.s.
Organisational Support	4.3	1.0	4.5	.97	-.894	n.s.
Organisational Commitment	4.4	.85	4.6	.82	-1.197	n.s.
Turnover Intention	1.5	.68	1.5	.73	-.207	n.s.

Overall, there were no significant differences between non-users of work-family practices and users, in attitudes towards the job and organisation. Therefore, there is no support for Hypotheses 27 to 30. Therefore, non-users and users of work-family policies share similar attitudes for job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, organisational commitment, and turnover intention.

8.6.3 Analysis and Results of Hypotheses 31 to 33

Hypotheses 31 to 33 test the relationships between users and non-users of work-family practices for those criterion variables that examined perceived fairness of work-family policies and attitudes towards male users and female users of work-family practices. The hypotheses were all tested by independent sample t-test, where the test variables were the criterion variables about fairness and male and female users, and the grouping variable was work-family practice non-use. Table 8.6.3 presents the results of these analyses, indicating non-user mean scores and

standard deviations, user mean scores and standard deviations, t-test results and significance, for fairness and user attitudes.

TABLE 8.6.3 Mean Comparisons: Fairness Attitudes

Criterion Variables	Non-Users (n=20)		Users (n=80)		T-test	Sig
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Work-Family Fairness	4.7	1.1	5.0	1.1	-1.233	n.s.
Attitudes To Male Users	4.4	.68	4.8	.80	-1.651	n.s.
Attitudes To Female Users	4.5	.95	4.8	.89	-1.489	n.s.

Overall, there were no significant differences between non-users of work-family practices and users, towards attitudes about the fairness of work-family policies, attitudes towards male users, and attitudes towards female users. Thus, there is no support for Hypotheses 31 to 33. Therefore, non-users and users of work-family policies share similar attitudes for perceived fairness of work-family policies, and attitudes towards male users and female users of work-family policies.

CHAPTER NINE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into four parts, each dealing specifically with findings of the four components of this research: (1) work-family conflict, (2) work-family benefits, (3) work-family fairness, and (4) work-family backlash. In addition, each part offers a conclusion regarding the contribution made to the work-family literature. Finally, overall conclusions are offered that link the findings to the wider work-family literature, specifically to work-family practices. The limitations of this study are then identified. Lastly, the implications of these findings for human resource professionals, managers, and future researchers are discussed, as are the implications for policy development.

9.2 Work-Family Conflict

The present study sought to investigate several aspects of conflict between work and family. These aspects include conflict magnitude, satisfaction with work-family related aspects, work-family practice use, and whether the presence of conflict might predict job satisfaction and work strain. These aspects are discussed in this section.

9.2.1 Conflict Magnitude

In the present study, work → family conflict was found to be significantly greater than family → work conflict. This is similar to the findings of previous international research, for example Judge et al. (1994), Gutek et al. (1988, 1991), and Netemeyer et al. (1996). However, in the present study, New Zealand employees reported lower work → family conflict and higher family → work conflict compared to Gutek et al.'s (1991) sample. Netemeyer et al. (1996) asserted that work → family conflict is greater than family → work conflict

because employees reported that their family was more important to them than work. Therefore, conflict between work and family would be expected to be greater than conflict between family and work, as the home is viewed as more important. That is, conflict occurring in the workplace that intrudes on the family or home could have a greater influence because the home is of greater value to employees. An alternative explanation of this finding might be that the workplace holds greater opportunities to negatively impact upon home and family life, for example, work deadlines, longer working hours, and working weekends. This might lead to conflict that is strongest between the workplace and home.

While overall the present sample reported that work → family conflict was greater than family → work conflict, gender differences were found between sources of conflict experienced. Gutek et al. (1991) proposed that gender differences would exist where men or women were performing non-traditional roles or were occupied within non-traditional sectors, for example, males performing work in the home and women being in the workplace. That work in the home remains a 'non-traditional' domain for men in New Zealand is supported by recent research findings. Statistics New Zealand (2001) found men spend significantly less time on unpaid domestic work and childcare than women do. Women, however, were found to spend less time in paid employment than men, yet women make up approximately 45% of New Zealand's paid workforce. Drawing on Gutek et al.'s proposition, it was expected that men would register significantly higher family → work conflict than female respondents, whereas women respondents would report significantly higher work → family conflict than their male counterparts.

In the present study the male respondents were found to register significantly greater family → work conflict than their female counterparts. This supports Gutek et al.'s (1991) assertion that men performing non-traditional roles in the home might experience greater family → work conflict. Thus, in the present study, for some men the demands of domestic duties conflicted with the demands of paid employment. This finding might indicate that for men, domestic work is still a non-traditional sphere, compared to females. Men might also be less used to the demands of the family, given that women still dominate childcare roles. Therefore,

as family demands increase they could be perceived as more problematic for men who are less experienced in the domestic sphere, compared to women. In contrast to Gutek et al.'s proposition, however, women did not register greater work → family conflict than their male counter parts. This finding might reflect the high rate of participation in paid employment by women, which now makes the workplace a 'typical' role for women. Thus, it might be asserted that the workplace no longer constitutes a non-traditional environment for women, and that they are aware of the demands and expectations of the workplace, indicating that they are assimilated to this environment. This awareness of workplace demands does not necessarily lead to reduced work → family conflict for women, but perhaps an acceptance of these demands. This may explain why women have not reported greater work → family conflict than their male counter-parts in the present study.

9.2.2 Work-Family Policy Satisfaction

According to Kossek, Colquitt and Noe (2001), there is a need to examine employee satisfaction within work-family policies in their workplace. The present study used a satisfaction with work-family policies measure to examine employee satisfaction with work-family practices, benefits, and organisational support of work and family roles. Employees who registered higher levels of satisfaction with work-family policies perceived their organisation to be more supportive of their work and family roles and to be providing greater benefits. Moreover, these employees were more satisfied with the work-family practices.

As conjectured in Chapter Four, a negative relationship was predicted between satisfaction with work-family policies and both work → family conflict and family → work conflict. Therefore, as conflict between work and family increased, satisfaction with work-family policies decreased. Judge et al. (1994) suggested that job satisfaction would decrease when family-originated conflict interfered with the workplace. Similarly, because work-family policies are designed to allow employees greater balance between work and family responsibilities, as conflict increases, satisfaction with work-family policies would decrease. An explanation

is that employees might recognise that some of the work-family policies are not appropriate or significant enough to allow for better work-and-family role balance. For example, within the present study, the work-family practices focused upon children through domestic leave, after-school room, and paid parental leave. However, an employee experiencing conflict between family and work due to eldercare concerns would find few practices on offer useful.

9.2.3 Work-Family Practice Use

Frone and Yardley (1996) examined work-family conflict bi-directionally. While they did not examine work-family practice use, they did find a positive relationship between the importance of work-family practices and family → work conflict. They found no link between work-family practice importance and work → family conflict. They suggested that this indicated that parents primarily desired work-family practices to reduce family → work conflict, rather than reducing work → family conflict. However, Kossek and Ozeki (1998) argued that the relationship between work-family practice use and work-family conflict was poorly understood, and suggested that this relationship needed further investigation. The present study has drawn on Kossek and Ozeki's suggestion and has sought to investigate whether work-family practice use predicts levels of conflict between work and family by examining past, present, and future use of work-family programmes. It was expected that as employees used work-family practices their levels of work → family conflict would be reduced, and that employees sought work-family practices to also reduce family → work conflict.

The present findings show that while work-family practice use predicted both work → family conflict and family → work conflict, this relationship was positive, rather than negative as predicted. Thus, unlike Frone and Yardley's assertion, the present study found work-family practice use predicts conflict between work and family, and not merely family → work conflict. This finding highlights the importance of examining actual use of work-family practices as opposed to perceived importance of work-family practices. This suggests that the use of work-family practices has the potential to influence conflict between home

and work, which supports Kossek and Ozeki's call for examining work-family practice use and conflict. This finding strengthens the argument that work-family practices can influence conflict between work and family.

As noted above, the findings indicate that use of work-family practices links to greater work → family conflict and family → work conflict. Thus, a positive influence, as opposed to the expected negative influence, was indicated. There are several possible explanations for this. First, work-family conflict and work-family practice use might not necessarily occur simultaneously. That is, increased conflict between home and the workplace might not lead to immediate use of work-family practices. For example, an employee dealing with childcare problems might take time to examine the practices available; in the present study possible options include using domestic leave, flexible work practices, or the before-and-after school room. Alternatively, employees might delay using work-family practices if they perceive the intensified conflict as a short-term issue (e.g. having a sick child) as opposed to a prolonged issue (e.g. finding a childcare centre). Overall, the findings demonstrate that individuals experiencing greater conflict between work and family are more likely to be using work-family practices.

Another explanation for this effect might be the way work-family practice use was examined. Measuring work-family practice use by past, present, and future use of practices, as in this study, may have obscured some negative relationships. Further research that separates out past, present, and future usage may provide more insight into this area. Employees experiencing greater conflict might be positively related to future use of work-family practices. In effect, they could recognise the conflict they are undergoing, and then seek out work-family practices to reduce the conflict. Alternatively, current users of work-family practices might be expected to register significantly lower levels of conflict because they use work-family practices to better balance work and family roles. This highlights the difficulty in examining work-family practice use and work-family conflict with a cross-sectional study. Thus, whether work-family usage or work-family conflict is the cause cannot be determined.

9.2.4 Work → Family Conflict and Family → Work Conflict as Predictors

Many work-family conflict studies have examined job satisfaction as a predictor of work-family conflict (e.g. Babin & Boles, 1996; Brown & Peterson, 1993; Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001; Jackson & Schuler, 1985; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrin, 1996). Netemeyer et al. found job satisfaction negatively predicted work → family conflict and family → work conflict. In the present study work → family conflict and family → work conflict were examined as predictors of work strain and job satisfaction. The work strain measure examined job burnout, communication problems, and emotional demands of the workplace. The job satisfaction measure examined satisfaction with co-workers, the work environment, and the job itself.

The findings indicate that work → family conflict significantly predicted job satisfaction and work strain in the expected directions. However, family → work conflict did not predict job satisfaction and work strain. This finding indicates that conflict between work and the home leads to negative outcomes associated with job satisfaction and work strain. This finding also indicates that conflict between family and work is insufficient to negatively influence outcomes in the workplace. These findings also lend support to the need for a bi-directional examination of work-family conflict, as in the present study these two forms of conflict predict outcomes differently.

9.2.5 Conclusion

Kossek and Ozeki (1998) maintained that the management of conflict between work and family responsibilities has become a critical challenge for organisations. This study indicates that the New Zealand employees within this local government organisation reported levels of conflict similar to those in other countries, with workplace conflict being greater than conflict originating at home. However, differences in the present study, with lower work → family conflict levels and higher family → work conflict levels, compared to Gutek et al. (1991), does

suggest some differences between employees in the present study and respondents from other international studies.

Despite this, managers of this local government organisation should recognise that work and family balance issues are as important in New Zealand as in international organisations. This is reinforced by findings that indicate that the conflict between work and home predicts outcomes such as reduced job satisfaction and greater work strain. Perhaps the workplace offers greater challenges and demands than the home, which negatively influence job satisfaction and lead to increase work strain. The failure of family → work conflict to predict the job-related outcomes indicates that household challenges and demands are not strong enough to negatively influence work outcomes, and reinforces the separate examination of conflict between work and home and between home and work. Future studies that examine whether work → family conflict similarly fails to predict home outcomes, such as life satisfaction, would provide greater support for this notion.

The findings indicate that organisations should seek to reduce work → family conflict, as this will have positive benefits for both the organisation and employees through improved job satisfaction and reduced work strain. However, the findings of the present study do not show that work-family practices lead to reduced conflict between work and family. Further research is required that provides evidence of work-family policies reducing conflict before organisations can assume such policies will reduce conflict for their employees.

In summary, examining the relationship between work-family conflict and satisfaction with work-family policies and work-family practice use has been suggested in the literature. The present study indicates there are significant relationships between the two predictor variables, satisfaction with work-family policies, and work-family practice use, and both work → family conflict and family → work conflict. The two predictor variables accounted for a significant amount of variance for work → family conflict (15.9%) and family → work conflict (15.1%), indicating that satisfaction with work-family policies and work-

family practice use explain a significant proportion of the variance for work → family conflict and family → work conflict. The findings of this present study support the further examination of these variables, and provide support for many aspects that were previously unexplored within the work-family conflict literature.

9.3 Work-Family Benefits

Popular and academic literature over the past decade (Bhagat et al., 1985; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Hall, 1990; Osterman, 1995; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000) has illustrated that work-family practices can positively affect employee attitudes towards their job and the organisation. Yet, until recently, little empirical research has been conducted to support these claims (Lobel, 1991). The study by Lambert (2000) is one of the few empirical studies that has used social exchange theory to examine work-family practice use and employee attitudes. In that study, employee use of work-family practices was found to link with perceived organisational support. Thus, the present study aimed to analyse whether employee use of work-family practices influences their attitudes towards work-family policies, their job, and the organisation. The findings suggest that the use of work-family practices had a strong relationship with attitudes related specifically to work-family practices. The findings do not, however, indicate that a relationship exists between using work-family policies and attitudes towards job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, organisational commitment, or turnover.

9.3.1 Attitudes towards Work-Family Policies

Kossek and Nichol (1992) and later Rothausen et al. (1998), found users of childcare centres perceived that practice use was positively associated with recruitment and retention of employees. Their research, however, focused on the influence of a single practice on recruitment and retention. In the present study, multiple work-family practices were analysed to determine whether using these practices was linked with perceived benefits towards recruitment, retention, employee morale and loyalty, and performance.

9.3.1.1 Recruitment, Retention, Morale, Loyalty, and Performance

In the present study, the use of work-family practices did relate to employee attitudes towards recruitment, retention, morale, and loyalty. These attitudes related to the benefits employees perceived their organisation would gain through work-family practice adoption. Employees who used the organisation's work-family practices considered that the organisation would benefit through improved recruitment and retention of staff, and staff with increased morale and loyalty. However, the work-family practice users in this study did not link with benefits associated with individual or organisational performance. Thus the prediction that work-family practices will increase performance was not supported.

9.3.1.2 Satisfaction and Supporting Work-Family Roles

Use of work-family practices predicted satisfaction with work-family practices, benefits, and satisfaction with organisational support for employee work and family roles. Employees using work-family practices were more likely to feel higher satisfaction with work-family programmes than were non-users. The findings also show that females viewed work-family policies more favourably than did males, with the three criterion variables that examined advantages associated with work-family policies being significantly linked with gender. This finding might reflect that women view themselves as the greatest beneficiaries of work-family programmes. Alternatively, this finding may reflect women's disproportionate unpaid domestic work (as discussed in the previous section) and possibly their need for more work-family programmes.

The present study enhances our understanding of the relationship between work-family practice use and the associated benefits, because it has included an analysis of multiple practices and extended the range of perceived benefits beyond recruitment and retention. The examination of multiple work-family practices has indicated that a range of work-family practices (for example, paid parental leave, domestic leave, and flexible work practices) can lead to recruitment, retention, morale, and loyalty benefits. Thus, these benefits are not exclusively related to the

provision of onsite (and relatively expensive) childcare centers. This indicates that organisations might gain recruitment and retention benefits by offering less expensive and broader forms of work-family practices. The findings also suggest that work-family use is associated with a wider range of perceived benefits than recruitment and retention, including morale and loyalty benefits. Work-family studies often focus on the recruitment and retention benefits (Rothausen, et al., 1998). Finally, the present study indicates that even though staff used a variety of work-family practices, there was no perceived improvement in individual or organisational performance. One reason for this failure might be that employees do not believe that work-family practices alone can improve their performance and that of the organisation. Hence, it is possible that the stress of excessive workloads and long working hours might not be decreased through work-family practices alone.

9.3.2 Attitudes towards the Job and Organisation

A significant finding of this study has been the failure of work-family practice use to predict attitudes towards the job and organisation. These findings contradict the popular belief that the use of work-family practices will result in job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and reduce staff turnover (Cole, 1999; Judge et al., 1994; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Landauer, 1997; Mason, 1993; McShulskis, 1997; Overman, 1999; Scandura & Lankau, 1997; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Vincola & Farren, 1999). These issues are discussed below.

9.3.2.1 Job Satisfaction

For a long time, researchers have noted that many facets of work impact on job satisfaction (Locke, 1976; Rothausen, 1994). In the present study, job satisfaction was analysed by measuring employees' perceptions of their co-workers, the work they performed, the physical surroundings, and promotional opportunities. However, the use of work-family practices did not relate to job satisfaction. Thus, using work-family practices did not appear to influence employee job satisfaction. The failure to find a relationship might be because work-family policies do not target the aspects examined under the job satisfaction measure. This measure

targeted multiple aspects of an employee's job, including working conditions, colleagues, supervisor, promotional opportunities and workload. Thus, it might be that work-family practice use specifically targets attitudes about the benefits and satisfaction towards work-family policies, but not attitudes towards more general aspects, such as those noted above.

9.3.2.2 Organisational Support and Organisational Commitment

Lambert (2000) found that the provision of work-family practices led employees to perceive that the organisation was supportive of employees. Others, for example Grover and Crooker (1995), have found that employee use of work-family practices increased their commitment to the organisation. Grover and Crooker's findings are consistent with the assumptions embedded in the norm of reciprocity, where it is expected that organisational provision of a valued benefit would be reciprocated through increased employee commitment. Drawing on the existing research and the concepts embedded in the norm of reciprocity, it was expected that work-family practice use would be positively related to employee perception of organisational support and employee commitment.

Work-family use, however, was not correlated with employee perceptions of organisation support or employee commitment to the organisation. These findings indicate that the provision and use of work-family practice is insufficient in itself to make employees believe that the organisation supports them or to influence their commitment to the organisation. This may also indicate negative reciprocity (Sahlins, 1972), which is "the attempt to get something for nothing with impunity" (p. 195). Thus, employee use of work-family practices would lead to no felt obligations towards the organisation. However, this aspect was not explicitly explored, and might provide direction for future studies examining the link between work-family practice use and employee attitudes.

Under the norm of reciprocity, it would be expected that if employees viewed work-family practices as a benefit, they would feel that the organisation is supportive of them and thus influence their organisational commitment or

perceived organisational support (Lambert, 2000). That work-family practice usage did not link with perceptions of organisational support and organisational commitment suggests that employees might perceive work-family practices as a 'right' of employment as opposed to a benefit offered by the organisation. This differs from studies that have found that use of flexible work practices has been associated with increased organisational commitment (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Sheley, 1996). There are several possible explanations that support the assumption that employees might perceive work-family policies as an entitlement.

As noted in the previous section, women viewed work-family policies more favourably than men did. Thus, it might be proposed that working women do believe that work-family policies are a 'right' of employment. The assumption that women in particular view work-family practices as a right of employment may be supported by suggesting that the women in this study could view these practices as part of their overall compensation. In the present study, there was a significant difference in salary between female and male employees ($t = -18.954, p < .001$), with women earning less than their male counterparts. If the women are aware that the dollar pay gap is so significant, they may perceive that work-family practices in some way redress this inequality.

Alternatively, employees in general may perceive that the increased demands within the workplace require an organisational response to allow employees better management of their work and family responsibilities. Constant organisational downsizing, reduced budgets, and general employment insecurity have been associated with increased demands upon workers (Allen, Freeman, Russell, Reisenstein, & Rentz, 2001; Wagner, 2001). With these working conditions, employees may believe that organisations *should* provide ways to allow them to balance their work and family lives. Therefore, the provision of work-family practices might be viewed as necessary to perform in the current work environment. Again, this would suggest that the employees do not perceive they have received a benefit, thus they do not have the moral obligation to reciprocate with increased organisational commitment.

To clarify these issues, further research needs to be conducted that examines whether employees perceive work-family policies as a right or as a benefit. If the assumption holds that employees view work-family practices as a right, a requirement to function in today's work environment, or, indeed, as part of their overall compensation, then it could also be expected that the provision and use of these practices will not lead to a perception of organisational support or organisational commitment. Future studies that focus on the influence of individual practices might reveal whether there are relationships between specific practice use and organisational support and commitment.

9.3.2.3 Turnover Intention

Turnover intention was not predicted by work-family practice use. Similar to the other job and organisational attitudes discussed above, use of work-family practices did not seem to have the ability to hold employees to their organisation more than non-users of the practices. However, the low mean score for turnover intention does indicate that the average employee in this organisation was not considering leaving the organisation anyway. Other factors influence employee decisions for staying or leaving the organisation. The findings indicate that, despite the work-family literature, for this organisation work-family practice use did not predict turnover intention.

9.3.3 Conclusion

This study set out to explore the influence of use of multiple work-family practices on employee attitudes. The findings discussed in this section have focused on the relationship between work-family practice use, and attitudes towards the job and organisation. Work-family practice use did predict attitudes associated with work family policies. Work-family practice use was linked with employee attitudes towards satisfaction with work-family policies and organisational support of work-family roles. Positive links were also found between practice use and perceived benefits in terms of recruitment, retention, morale, and loyalty.

Connections between work-family practice use and employee perceptions of job satisfaction, organisational support, organisational commitment, and turnover were not supported. A variety of explanations were offered as to why there were no links. Work-family practices might not necessarily be linked to the factors that influence job satisfaction. These practices could be perceived as a right, part of a compensation package, or necessary to fulfil one's work role. Employees might also believe that wider changes to work indicate a lack of organisational support and the provision of work-family practices is insufficient to overcome this belief. These explanations suggest that the provision and use of work-family practices does not necessarily lead to employees reciprocating through increased organisational commitment. The findings imply that within this organisation, the norm of reciprocity effects may be limited to specific work-family related attitudes (benefits and satisfaction effects). Further studies are required examining the norm of reciprocity to determine its robustness as a theoretical lens for examining work-family policy use. It might be that examining organisations with additional practices, in different settings, or with longer work-family practice adoption periods, might provide different findings that better match the influence of work-family practice use on attitudes towards the job and organisation that is suggested by the norm of reciprocity theory.

9.4 Work-Family Fairness

A specific set of organisational justice theories has been used to examine many organisational phenomena, although they have not been widely used to examine work-family policies. Grover's (1991) seminal work is an exception. Grover used fairness theories to examine attitudes towards the proposed introduction of a parental leave policy. He found that demographic and attitudinal variables predicted the perceived fairness of the proposed parental leave policy, and attitudes towards male and female users of the policy. He examined the predictive value of six variables towards three criterion variables of fairness and attitudes towards male and female users. The six predictive variables were gender, parental status, childbearing age, attitudes towards women, likelihood of having children,

and likelihood of taking parental leave. In all, 17 relationships were found for the three criterion variables. Only one relationship was not supported.

In contrast to Grover's work, the present study aimed to examine fairness attitudes relating to six existing work-family policies. Like Grover, in the present study the three criterion variables used were (1) perceived fairness of work-family policies, (2) attitudes towards male users, and (3) attitudes towards female users. The three control variables used in the present study included gender, marital status, and number of children. Two additional demographic predictive variables used were managerial position and age. Three attitudinal predictive variables of (1) likelihood of starting a family, (2) work-family benefits, and (3) work-family practice use were used. The present study also sought to understand if perceptions of fairness predicted attitudes towards the job and organisation.

Overall, the findings supported the combined use of work-family practices (past use, present use, and future use). Previous research has been limited in its measurement of work-family programmes. For example, Grover (1991) examined use of a 'potential policy', and not a policy currently offered. Similarly, attitudes towards users of the parental policy were in fact 'potential male and female users', not actual users. The present study, by focusing upon six work-family practices that have been in operation for a long time period, offers a distinct and more applicable examination. The findings support the examination of past, present, and future use of work-family practices, and encourages future research examining practice use of existing work-family policies.

The findings indicate that when predicting fairness attitudes towards multiple work-family practices that are in operation, there may be more variability than found by Grover (1991), who explored a single, yet to be established, work-family practice. The findings from the present study show the variable work-family benefits were a good predictor of fairness perceptions. Work-family benefits linked significantly and positively with perceived fairness of work-family policies, attitudes towards male users, and attitudes towards female users. Despite this finding, when examining work-family practice use, this variable was found to

predict perceived fairness of work-family policies and attitudes towards male users only. Attitudes towards female users were not predicted by work-family practice use. Below are presented the findings for the demographic variables, attitude variables, and attitudes towards the job and the organisation.

9.4.1 Demographic Variables

Grover (1991) examined a number of demographic variables as a means to show association, stating that independent variables that are demographic lend “support to the theoretical direction of causation” (p. 253). Grover found employees who were female, had children, and were aged 44 years or under were more positive about the introduction of parental leave, and had more supportive attitudes towards male and female users of the policy. For the present study, demographic variables included the three control variables (gender, marital status, and number of children), while two demographic predictors (age and managerial position) were also examined. Thus, five out of eight variables were demographic in nature, which provided the opportunity for association if these variables significantly linked with the attitudes examined. However, there were too few relationships established to state that association was found in the present study.

In the present study, women were more likely than men to have supportive attitudes towards male users. However, no gender difference was found in attitudes towards female users. There are several possible explanations for this gender difference. Generally, respondents might perceive that women who make use of work-family practices are doing so to fulfil their home responsibilities. In contrast, the positive attitudes that women show towards male users could indicate that women perceive these men favourably because they are going beyond the ‘call of duty’ by helping in the home. That is, males may be seen as breaking the traditional model of a working male, while female users fail to gain such admiration. This finding may support the notion that family responsibility is still principally perceived as the role of women (Kossek, Huber-Yoder, Castellino, & Lerner, 1997; Humphries, 1998), and that when men participate it is seen more favourably than women.

The second control variable (number of children) builds on Grover's suggestion that parental status would predict fairness and attitudes towards users. However, family size rather than parental status was examined in this study because there might be greater insight achieved into exploring this unit relationship when examining the number of children, rather than simply having children or not. The result suggests the employees with larger families had more positive perceptions of female users, but not of male users. This may again indicate that these respondents perceived women and not men as most likely to provide childcare in most families. Findings from the gender and family size variables indicate that women respondents have more positive and supportive attitudes of male users of work-family practices, and respondents with larger families are more positive and supportive of female users of work-family practices.

The control variable marital status was not found to link with any of the criterion variables. Thus, employee marital status did not link with perceived fairness or attitudes towards male or female users. This contradicts Lerner's (1977) and later Lerner and Whitehead's (1980) suggestion that people view those similar to themselves more favourably. They termed this a unit relationship. The failure to find a consistent unit relationship between fairness perceptions and attitudes towards both male and female users of work-family policies in this study might suggest that such relationships do not hold when examining multiple work-family policies. One reason for this failure might be the gender association regarding work-family policies, for example, employees expecting female users rather than male users. Thus, examining the unit relationship may be less appropriate for work-family policies.

The lack of significant associations between demographic control variables and the criterion variables was also found for the demographic predictors. Similar to marital status, there was no support for age linking with the criterion variables. This suggests there were no significant differences between older and younger respondents in their views towards work-family policies and users of these policies. It was expected that older employees would hold more traditional views and thus be less supportive of work-family practices and their users, given that

they would expect women to be at home and men at work. However, it appears work-family policies and their users are not perceived differently by age, suggesting a more equal perception from young and old.

A new aspect of this study was the examination of managerial position in relation to the criterion variables. The managerial position variable was found to predict attitudes towards male users. Greenberg (1990) asserted that fairness should be important to managers, and this link does offer some support for this notion. The finding suggests that organisational members with greater status (managers), supported male users of work-family policies, but provided no evidence of similar support towards female users. Similar to the gender variable discussed above, this finding might represent management support for unexpected or non-traditional users of work-family policies. For example, males using paid parental leave and domestic leave might be unexpected. Thus, this result may indicate that managers expect female use of work-family practices but male use may be seen as more unique and rare, and therefore there is greater support for male users over female users. Conversely, it might indicate a gender bias where male users receive more support than female users. This finding is interesting given that the variables 'attitudes towards male users' (mean 4.7) and 'attitudes towards female users' (mean 4.8) are almost identical, and highlight that managers do have significantly different attitudes towards users by gender, compared to non-managers.

While these organisational managers perceive male users of work-family policies more positively, they do not view the work-family policies significantly more positive than non-managers. While attitudes towards supervisor or management support of users of work-family policies were not collected, this would be useful for future research in examining whether management support of work-family policies and attitudes towards users are related.

In summary, the demographic variables used within the present study failed to predict work-family policy fairness and attitudes towards male and female users to the same numerical extent as Grover's study. The present study's use of demographic predictors supported only three of 18 relationships examined,

compared to Grover, who found support for all demographic variable associations. The examination of fairness attitudes towards multiple work-family policies alone might not account for this variability, and it could be that some of the demographic predictor variables used, such as marital status and age, make only a small contribution to these fairness attitudes. Further studies are needed to explore these fairness perceptions of multiple work-family policies. In conclusion, unlike Grover (1991), there is no support for causation.

9.4.2 Attitude Variables

Examining employee attitudes towards the perceived advantages of work-family policies extended the current organisational justice literature. Despite the work-family literature being replete with references to the advantages associated with work-family programmes (see Chapter Three), few studies have examined attitudes related to these perceived advantages. The present study used a six-item measure that examined the perceived benefits associated with work-family policies including recruitment, retention, morale, loyalty, and performance. This variable was the only predictor of all three fairness perception criterion variables. Consequently, respondents who perceived work-family policies as beneficial also held stronger, more positive, fairness perceptions. This finding provides support for use of the work-family benefits variables in work-family studies. This variable also predicted the fairness of work-family policies (one of only two independent variables), indicating that those individuals who see work-family policies as advantageous also see the policies as fair and just, as well as being more supportive of male and female users of these policies. Significantly, the work-family benefits variable was also the only variable to predict attitudes towards female users. Therefore, employees who perceived work-family policies as having multiple advantages also perceived female and male users of work-family programmes more positively. These employees also regarded the policies more positively.

Another attitude variable that predicted fairness perceptions was the use of work-family practices. This finding supported the identity relationship (Lerner, 1977). This theory suggests that individuals who gain from work-family policies are also

more likely to view them positively. The findings indicated that work-family practice use predicted perceived fairness of work-family policies. This supports the notion of egocentric bias, which would see recipients of work-family policies judging the policies more positively compared to non-users (Grover & Crooker, 1995). Grover (1991) found employees who stood to benefit from a parental leave policy rated the policy more positively than excluded employees (non-parents). Similarly, within the present study, users of work-family practices did predict attitudes towards male users, also supporting the identity relationship, where the other is virtually indistinguishable from the self (Grover, 1991). However, the failure of work-family practice use to associate with attitudes towards female users does not support the identity relationship, indicating mixed support overall. Therefore, while some respondents shared a relationship with other employees (other work-family policy users), they did not support Lerner and Whitehead's (1980) assertion of sharing similar perspectives and values, at least in attitudes towards male users and attitudes towards female users.

The likelihood of starting a family did not predict the criterion variables, which offers a direct contradiction to Grover's results. The present findings illustrate that respondents expecting to start a family did not have more positive attitudes towards work-family policies and users of the policies, contrary to the unit relationship, where respondents sharing a relationship with fellow employees would be expected to share similar values. This failure might highlight the complexities of examining multiple work-family policies as opposed to single practices. Because the present study examined six work-family policies that extend beyond Grover's parental policy, for example, study leave and flexible work practices, the unit relationship might become less straightforward. While respondents planning a family did link with fairness perceptions towards a parental policy (Grover, 1991), the failure within the present study might be because this 'relationship' is not straightforward. Combining all the work-family policies together obscures any perceived similarities respondents may have in respect of other users of specific policies. Thus, the unit relationship might be harder to predict because respondent perceptions of association with other

colleagues are less clear when examining multiple work-family policies than a single policy.

In summary, the attitude variables were found to predict the criterion variables more successfully than the demographic variables. However, while Lerner's (1977) identity relationship was supported, the findings were mixed for the unit relationship.

9.4.3 Attitudes towards the Job and Organisation

Initially, demographic and attitudinal variables were used to predict the perceived fairness of work-family policies, and attitudes towards male users and female users of work-family policies. A new extension to Grover's study was to explore the possibility that the criterion variables (perceived fairness of work-family policies, and attitudes towards male users and female users of work-family policies) might predict other attitudes relating to the job and organisation. Thus, perceived fairness of work-family policies and attitudes towards male users and attitudes towards female users were used as predictors of job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, and organisational commitment. Justice theories have explained relationships between justice perceptions, and job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Aquino, Griffeth, Allen, & Hom, 1997; Koys, 1991; Ogilvie, 1986). The present study also examined perceived organisational support, as perceived fairness under justice theory should relate to various aspects of an employee's treatment by the organisation, and influence the employee's interpretation of organisational motives (Eisenberger, et al., 1986). The relationships between fairness perceptions of work-family policies and attitudes towards the organisation and job have not been tested previously.

The findings indicate that fairness perceptions did not predict attitudes towards the job and organisation. This might suggest that attitudes towards work-family policies do not have the strength to influence job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, and organisational commitment. This is supported by the earlier work-family benefits findings in the present study, where work-family

practice use also failed to predict these attitudes. Authors have maintained that predicting job satisfaction can be complicated, due to job satisfaction linking to many facets (Locke, 1976; Rothausen, 1994; Straw & Barsade, 1993). The findings of the present study indicate that work-family related attitudes and behaviours are not among these features, at least for these organisational participants. A reason for this expected relationship not being supported is that the fairness perceptions are work-family specific, and similar to the failure of work-family practice use in linking to general attitudes, it might be that fairness perceptions make only a small contribution towards these general attitudes.

9.4.4 Conclusion

An important aspect of this study was the examination of new relationships among perceived fairness of work-family policies and attitudes towards male and female users. As noted by Grover (1991), it is difficult to determine causality; however, he suggested that the use of demographic predictors (with at least as many demographic as attitude variables), would lend support for directional causation. Overall, the findings suggest perceived fairness of work-family policies are predicted by the perceived benefits of work-family programmes, and work-family practice use. Attitudes towards male users of work-family policies were predicted by managerial position, perceived benefits of work-family programmes and work-family practice use. Attitudes towards female users of work-family policies were solely predicted by the perceived benefits of work-family programmes. These findings, with only three significant demographic predictors, suggest causation is more difficult when examining multiple work-family policies, at least in the present setting.

The work-family fairness aspect of this study is important because the examination of multiple work-family policies is aligned with what this organisation offers. Grover's work was limited by focusing on a single work-family practice that was not currently in operation. The use of a work-family benefits variable and work-family practice use of multiple practices provides new avenues for predicting fairness. This study also provides support for justice theories as a means of understanding employee attitudes towards work-family

policies and their users, and provides further directions for research, improving our understanding of work-family policies and organisational justice theories.

The examinations of fairness perceptions towards general attitudes were also useful, even though the relationships were not supported. That perceived fairness and attitudes towards users did not predict job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, or organisational commitment might indicate that these attitudes are not powerful enough to associate with other attitudes towards the job and organisation. The findings here also suggest respondents who view work-family policies as beneficial, or those who use work-family practices, tend to view the policies themselves as fair and equitable, and perceive male and female users of these practices in a more positive and caring manner.

Overall, the findings indicate that examining the fairness of multiple work-family policies and attitudes towards male and female users of multiple work-family policies produces greater variability in relationships than Grover (1991). This could also be due to Grover examining a soon-to-be-added work-family policy, rather than an existing policy, and thus he might have drawn on respondents' expectations towards the policy, rather than actual experience with the policy. It also appears that predicting attitudes towards work-family policies and their users, within this organisation, is not as simple as unit and identity relationship principles suggest. Findings that support attitudes towards one gender over another, particularly towards male users of work-family policies, indicate complexities of these relationships that were not found in Grover's study, and support the exploration of multiple work-family policies with organisational justice theories. Further research that builds upon Grover's study, which is one of the few explorations of fairness perceptions of work-family policies, would provide greater understanding of these relationships.

9.5 Work-Family Backlash

While there has been much written about the positive relationship between employee attitudes and use of work-family practices, the potential backlash that

employees with no use for these programmes may experience is less understood. Justice theories suggest that employees who are excluded from work-family practices, for example through having no children, might feel resentment and anger towards their organisation, if it contributes resources towards policies that some individuals cannot use. The purpose of the work-family backlash component of the present study was to examine the relationships between employee attitudes towards the job, organisation and work-family policies, and the extent of work-family practice use. Rothausen et al. (1998) found employees who were non-users of an on-site childcare facility held significantly different attitudes towards the beneficial nature of work-family programmes, and satisfaction with the organisation's support for the care of family members. However, these authors found no difference between users and non-users regarding job satisfaction and turnover intention. In that study, the work-family backlash was observed by comparing attitudes about work-family programmes and about the job and organisation held by users with those held by the non-users of a childcare centre.

A substantive difference between the work-family backlash component of this study, and Rothausen et al.'s (1998) research, is that the present study examined use of multiple work-family practices. This raised some important considerations, for example, establishing how backlash was to be determined. Rothausen et al. (1998) assessed backlash using past, present, and anticipated use of a single work-family practice. However, when six practices are considered, potential difficulties lie in calibrating usage, and whether extent of usage or simply use/non-use should be analysed. Non-users were categorised as respondents who had not used and never intended to use all of the six work-family practices. The rationale was that those who used no practices would likely have cause to perceive a violation under organisational justice, because they had been totally excluded from work-family policies. Use of even a single practice would in effect indicate some form of inclusion within the work-family programme, and thus not lead to a perceived injustice and therefore "backlash". In the present study, 20% of respondents had not used, or did not anticipate using, any of the work-family practices.

The backlash component of the present study examined attitudes specific to work-family practices, attitudes towards the job and organisation, and fairness perceptions concerning work-family policies and users. Overall, the findings indicated no evidence of backlash. The attitudes of users and non-users of work-family policies were not significantly different overall. There was only one significant difference, and that was for the morale and loyalty benefits associated with work-family practices. Non-users held a significantly lower perception towards the morale and loyalty benefits of work-family practices, although this was not so for the other two advantages examined (recruitment and retention benefits, and performance benefits). When assessing whether a backlash exists, Rothausen et al. (1998) noted "It is important to consider absolute levels of attitudes" (p. 700), meaning that the values above and below the mid-point for attitudes must be considered. Rothausen et al. (1998) cited Kossek and Nichol's (1992) study as an example. Kossek and Nichol found recruitment and retention effects differed between users and non-users, with users positive and non-users negative towards the benefits of the programme. However, other findings of Kossek and Nichol's study were also described negatively, even when the overall attitudes between users and non-users were positive (above the mean scores). In the present study, the mean scores for morale and loyalty were both above the mid-point. Therefore, this represents not a backlash as such, but a reduced positive attitude about the morale and loyalty benefits of work-family policies in general. Therefore, non-users perceived the morale and loyalty benefits of work-family policies positively, but less positively than did users of work-family policies.

Importantly, not only were attitudes towards the organisation and job similar between users and non-users, but perceptions of the fairness of work-family policies, and attitudes towards male users and female users were also not significantly different. We might expect, under organisational justice theories, to see non-users displaying resentment towards work-family policies in their attitudes towards male and female users of these policies, and the perceived fairness of the policies. However, this was not the case. A unique aspect is the examination of these fairness attitudes between users and non-users of work-family policies has not been explored before.

The findings regarding attitudes towards the job and organisation were similar to Rothausen et al. (1998), who found no relationship between work-family practice non-use and general attitudes towards the organisation, stating “results suggest that any resentment or backlash which would be manifested either less positive or negative attitudes does not extend to general and behavioural reactions in this sample” (p. 699). While Rothausen and colleagues did find backlash for specific work-family attitudes such as recruitment and retention benefits, and satisfaction with organisational support of work and family roles, these were not found in the present study.

In examining use and non-use of six work-family policies, it might be that the nature of the need or desire amongst respondents in using these practices needs to be more clearly explored. For example, a non-user of all six work-family practices might hold no need or desire to use them, thus excluding any backlash potential. Rothausen et al. (1998) examined a childcare centre; so therefore, those without young children would in effect be excluded. However, the policies in the present study included many different family and work aspects, for example, the after-school-room, study leave, and flexibility. Thus, non-using employees could be those without any need or desire to use these practices, rather than being excluded because of the specific focus of the programmes. If respondents were not ‘excluded’, and thus not perceiving any injustice, then they would not form the resentment suggested by organisational justice theories. Future research might seek to examine employee need of work-family policies in addition to perceptions of fairness.

The lack of any backlash in the present study suggests the backlash phenomenon might not be as prevalent as some sources claim. While Rothausen et al. (1998) found backlash for work-family specific attitudes, the present study did not. Rothausen et al. (1998) suggested work-family backlash had a more limited effect on employee attitudes and behaviours than critics would suggest, and thus could be an issue that has been sensationalised by the media. By focusing upon multiple work-family practices, and comparing mean scores between users and non-users,

this study sought to determine whether the concept of a work-family backlash could be supported, and it was not.

The reasons for the failure to demonstrate a backlash effect could lie within the work-family policies themselves. These policies typically are seen as allowing employees to better balance work and family roles. For example, dual-career families, with spouses balancing multiple work and family tasks, are often portrayed as being under intensified pressures. It might be that non-users of work-family policies recognise they do not need the policies; perhaps because dependents have left home or they are currently childless. They may also recognise that these policies provide a 'social good', an organisational service or benefit that helps employees in balancing their lives, thus eliminating negative reactions that organisational justice theories suggest would develop. This is supported by non-significant differences in perceived organisational support and the perceived fairness of work-family policies. Non-users might view the policies and organisation as supportive and worker-friendly, even if they themselves have no need for the particular benefits offered by work-family policies.

9.5.1 Conclusion

The work-family backlash component of this study set out to explore the relationship between users and non-users of multiple work-family practices and the effects on employee attitudes. Prior research had focused upon single work-family practices. The present study builds on previous work in two major ways: first, through the examination of a range of employee attitudes, including work-family specific attitudes addressing advantages, satisfaction, and fairness, and attitudes about the job and organisation; and second, through examining multiple work-family practices.

The results imply that a backlash has no connection with the perceived benefits of work-family practices, and no link with satisfaction with work-family policies, work-family fairness, and attitudes towards the job and organisation. Perhaps employees who have little use for work-family practices do not register strong negative organisational attitudes, because they consider their organisation is

attempting to provide employee support through work-family practices, and this could in turn reduce any injustice perceptions felt through non-use. The lack of a work-family backlash could also relate to examining multiple work-family practices. These practices cover parental, study and domestic leave, onsite care, flexibility, and an employee assistance programme. Therefore, there are a greater number of options or programmes for employees to use. Rothausen and colleagues examined a childcare centre, and those excluded from its use through being single, without dependents, or with children already grown up, might have strong negative feelings. This might also have been intensified due to the high costs associated with on-site childcare facilities. However, the present organisation offers work-family practices that conceivably could be used by almost all employees, and not just those with young dependents. Even those individuals who are non-users might recognise that some of the practices could have potential at some future date, and thus avoid the negative resentment suggested by organisational justice theories. Overall, there is no support for work-family backlash in this organisation.

An important factor of this study was the setting, that is, New Zealand, where organisations have started to adopt work-family practices within the last decade only (Callister, 1996). The examination of the “backlash” effect within a new environment, where work-family practices are still uncommon and original, is rather unique. A longitudinal examination of this topic could be useful for improving our understanding of work-family backlash, to consider whether this backlash develops over time. Importantly, for the organisation used in this study, employee non-participation in work-family programmes will likely lead to no differences in attitudes compared to practice users, which should at least not discourage further work-family policy adoption.

9.6 Summary of Findings

The present study offers many unique aspects that aid our understanding of work-family practices, including how use of these practices relates to multiple employee attitudes. The major focus of this study was an examination of employee use of

multiple work-family practices. Work-family practice use was found to predict conflict between work and family - those experiencing greater conflict were more likely to use a greater number of practices. Examining work-family practice use and attitudes towards work-family policies was supported, but attitudes towards the job and organisation were not. The association between work-family practice use and attitudes towards the organisation and job were not as consistent as suggested by the literature. Despite these mixed findings, a definitive step was taken to build a theoretical approach to this relationship by using the norm of reciprocity, although the theory was not well supported. The findings suggest that within this organisation, simply offering work-family practices might not be sufficient to positively link with multiple attitudes, implying that work-family programmes are not sufficient to extract the moral obligation from employees suggested by the norm of reciprocity.

The examination of fairness attitudes offered support for additional variables, and the findings were markedly different from Grover (1991), which might be due to country differences and time differences (the year 1991 versus 2000). However, in the present study, the variance of the criterion variables attitudes towards male users and attitudes towards female users accounted for significantly greater variance than was found by Grover. Changes in the variables used, and the exploration of multiple work-family practices, might account for this change. Managerial position and the advantages of work-family practices were predictor variables, and provided unique exploration of fairness attitudes towards work-family practices. The lack of associations between most independent variables and the perceived fairness of work-family policies indicates this attitude is more complex, and difficult to predict, than attitudes towards male users of work-family policies. There were almost no associations between independent variables and attitudes towards female users, indicating this criterion variable is also difficult to predict. Users of work-family practices were more likely to perceive work-family policies as fair, and this supported the identity relationship. Similarly, work-family practice users saw male users of work-family policies positively, which supported the unit relationship. Interestingly, this unit relationship was not upheld for female

users, perhaps indicating that female users are expected to use the policies while males are not.

Despite the lack of associations between fairness perceptions and attitudes towards the organisation and the job, this finding offers an area for further exploration. While this examination extended Grover's (1991) work, the finding suggests work-family fairness attitudes make only a small contribution to attitudes towards the job and organisation, at least for this organisation. The failure of these fairness variables to associate with job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, and organisational commitment provides additional information that was previously unknown in the organisational justice literature.

Lastly, the work-family backlash findings tested an approach for examining multiple work-family practices, because comparisons of total non-users versus users of one or more of the six work-family policies had not been made before. The findings offered convincing evidence that an overall work-family backlash does not occur within this organisation. In general, non-users did not differ significantly in their attitudes towards the benefits of work-family policies, their satisfaction with work-family policies, their attitudes towards the job or organisation, their fairness perceptions, or attitudes towards male and female users. The notion that these employees would feel resentment at being excluded from work-family practices was not supported.

Future research might examine whether non-users feel work-family practices should be more flexible and wide-reaching to include them, what need they have for the policies, or specifically why they are not using the practices. The present study concurs with Rothausen et al.'s (1998) examination of work-family backlash, suggesting the phenomenon has been sensationalised, and therefore should not be seen as a major threat to organisational adoption of work-family policies.

In conclusion, the present study offered many findings that both supported and rejected claims in the work-family literature. Some of the findings are counter to

the current work-family literature, and many of the results offer findings that have previously been unknown, especially within the New Zealand context. The examination of work-family conflict within the New Zealand context has been very limited, and the inspection of work-family practice use is unique to the work-family conflict literature. Despite Lambert's (2000) findings supporting the norm of reciprocity, the present study offers less support for this theoretical approach. The findings here suggest the work-family literature has both overstated and poorly demonstrated the link between work-family practice use and attitudes. The examination of work-family specific attitudes and attitudes towards the job and organisation might offer a more fruitful platform for examining work-family benefits in future research, with findings supporting a strong link to work-family specific attitudes (e.g. the advantages associated with work-family policies and satisfaction with the programmes), but little support for links to attitudes towards the job and organisation.

Examining work-family fairness highlighted that work-family benefits and work-family practice use were significant predictors of the three criterion variables (perceived fairness of work-family policies, attitudes towards male users, and attitudes towards female users). The lack of association between fairness perceptions and attitudes towards the organisation and job suggests work-family programme perceptions have weak links with these general attitudes. Lastly, the lack of support for work-family backlash offers little support for organisational justice theories predicting employee negativity through non-access of work-family policies.

Generally, work-family practice use was a successful predictor throughout this study, highlighting many interesting relationships. In particular, examining use of multiple work-family practices is a unique approach within the literature, and using it to (1) predict conflict, (2) positive attitudes towards the policies, job and organisation, (3) fairness, and (4) backlash, offers an exciting and wide-ranging approach for studying the work-family interface. Despite single-practice studies dominating the work-family literature, examining multiple practices does provide far greater depth and analysis than exploring single practices. The multiple-

practice approach is particularly practical and useful for managers, given that organisations with work-family practices would typically offer more than a single practice. The strengths of this study are that multiple theoretical aspects regarding work-family policies have been examined within a single organisation, offering a rich, in-depth look at the relationship between work-family practice use and employee attitudes. The present study examined the conflict employees are under, the influence of work-family practice use and non-use upon attitudes, the fairness perceptions towards policies and users, and their relationship with attitudes about the organisation. In all, this study provides a representation of employee attitudes regarding work-family practice use that has not been previously explored, and represents significant contributions to the work-family literature.

9.7 Limitations

There are some limitations inherent in the sample and methodology that suggest caution when interpreting the present results. Zikmund (1997) has noted that surveys are the most common method of generating primary data, and are becoming increasingly popular as management tools. Applications range from measuring employee behaviours to developing strategic tools (Mackelprang, 1997). According to Podsokoff and Organ (1986), organisational behaviour research shows that self-reports have become “well-nigh ubiquitous as a form of data collection” (p. 531). In line with self-reporting are potential problems associated with this methodology. Podsokoff and Organ (1986) stated that “the most severe problems arise when measures of two or more variables...are collected from the same respondent and an attempt is made to interpret any correlation(s) among them” (p. 533). This problem is called common method variance. These authors note “because both measures come from the same source, any defect in that source contaminates both measures” (p. 533).

Podsokoff and Organ (1986) offered some procedural remedial approaches and statistical remedies, which were employed in the present study. They suggested the separation of measurement, where measures are collected at different times, as one procedure for potentially eliminating common method variance. In the present

study, predictor and demographic data were collected in Survey One. Survey Two (administered one week later) was used to collect criterion variables. Therefore, examining the relationship between criterion and predictor variables is more robust because these variables have not been collected at the same time. The time gap of one week between data collection ensured that responses to the Survey Two questions were not prompted by responses made in Survey One.

Podsakoff and Organ (1986) stated that “perhaps the first statistical procedure to be used in an attempt to control for common method variance is Harman’s single-factor test” (p. 536). This test involves placing all variables of interest into a factor analysis, and the results are examined to determine the number of factors that account for the variance. The basic assumption of the Harman’s one-factor test is that if a substantial amount of common method variance is present, either of the following will occur:

1. A single factor will materialise from the factor analysis, or
2. One “general” factor will account for the majority of the covariance in the predictor and criterion variables.

Harman’s single factor test was undertaken with the data used in this study. The factor analysis lead to 25 separate components, with the first two components having eigenvalues of 18.1 and 10.2 respectively, accounting for 18.3% and 10.3% of the variance. The remaining 23 components had eigenvalues ranging from 6.8 to 1.0, and accounted for between 7% and 1% of the variance. Given that a single factor failed to emerge, or that one factor did not account for the majority of covariance (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986), it appears that common method variance is not a substantial problem in the present study.

Despite this finding, Podsakoff and Organ (1986) have cautioned that this procedure, while straightforward and easy to apply, does have some inherent problems. Chiefly, the chances of finding more than one factor increases as the number of variables increases, and this is supported by the 25 components found in the present study by the Harman’s test. Nevertheless, given the separation of predictor and criterion variables in the two surveys, the time delay of one week, and the findings from Harman’s one-factor test, it is unlikely that all the

relationships found in the present study can be explained simply by common method variance.

While concerns with common method variance were somewhat managed by separating the surveys into predictor variables (survey one), and criterion variables (survey two), it must be acknowledged that three criterion variables were also used as predictor variables, and because these relationships contain variables collected at the same time, there is a possibility of common method variance. In the Results Chapters, Table 8.3.3 has job satisfaction predicted by work-family and family-work conflict, when all three variables were also collected in the same survey (survey two). In addition, satisfaction with work-family policies is both a predictor in Table 8.3.2, and a criterion variable in Table 8.4.2. Therefore, it must be acknowledged that there is some possibility for common method variance in these relationships, and consequently, we must interpret these relationships with caution.

Another limitation concerns the sample size. The present study had 100 respondents only. However, New Zealand does present a limitation in the number of larger organisations, with 98.9% of organisations having less than 50 employees (New Zealand Statistics, 1998). Thus, there are few large organisations available to provide large employee samples. Despite the small sample size, the present study was done in a workplace that is in many ways distinct from much previous work-family research. Kossek and Ozeki (1998) have faulted previous work-family conflict studies as examining “very homogeneous and specific groups and work contexts” (p.141), and this applies to the majority of work-family research in general. For example, the benefits of work-family practices have been extensively linked with IBM (LeRoux, 1985; Martinez, 1993; Mason, 1991; Schrage, 1999), which has multibillion-dollar resources (IBM, 2001). The organisation in the present study was chosen because it offered multiple work-family policies for its employees. Therefore, the smaller organisational size may provide greater generalisability amongst similar-sized organisations compared to the majority of the work-family literature. The sample size limitation is also somewhat tempered by the response rate. The response rate of 48.5% does offer

the small sample size greater strength when interpreting the results. Therefore, while the present study does have a small sample size, it should be viewed as a limitation inherent in much New Zealand organisational research. Nevertheless, a larger sample may have revealed more significant relationships than found here.

Additionally, one should also consider the setting of this study in interpreting the results. New Zealand is relatively new to the expansive array of benefits and work-family practices (Callister, 1996), and unlike the United States, medical care is highly subsidised in New Zealand, and private insurance is uncommon. Also, the number of work-family programmes offered in New Zealand is relatively low, compared with the United States, where greater numbers of policies are offered, including childcare centres and childcare subsidies. For example, Fel-Pro Inc. offers 20 work-family benefits (Lambert, 2000). Therefore, the findings within this study are limited by the fact they relate to only six work-family practices, which may under-represent the number of work-family policies in larger international organisations. In addition, managers in New Zealand organisations might have less discretion in offering employee benefits compared to American managers, making the type of benefits examined in this study rarer here than they would be in a United States public or private sector organisation.

Another limitation of this study is the under-whelming R squares in the work-family benefits component of this study. As in all studies, unmeasured variables (such as context of the establishment, the culture of the organisation, and other factors) might account for much of the variance in attitudes, as well as macro economic factors. Perhaps a more serious limitation is that use of work-family practices was measured by simply counting the number of practices used. Due to limitations in the data set, information on the number of times employees used individual practices, and how long they used them, was unavailable for this study. The assumption in the present study was that if employees use multiple practices, each designed to address a different aspect of work and family balance, then the associated attitudes would co-vary with the attitudes examined, whether conflict, benefits, fairness, or backlash. Clearly, other research could examine the different aspects of use, such as frequency, duration, and perceived usefulness or value of

the practices. Another option might have been another interpretation of the work-family practice use measure. For example, when examining work-family practice use, past, present, and future use of individual work-family practices, rather than combining use of six work-family practices, might have been a different option. However, this would in effect create six separate variables for work-family use, which would have been too cumbersome for some aspects examined here, especially given the sample size constraints. A problem of this approach would be that some of the number of cases (n) would be very small, which would have precluded systematic comparisons.

Another option would be to create three separate measures, one each for past use, present use, and future use, regarding all six work-family practices. Consequently, other measures than the single work-family practice use measure that was used in this study could have been employed. However, again, this might have been too unwieldy in some components of this study. The combined measure for past, present, and future use of multiple work-family practices was chosen because it was aligned with current approaches, chiefly Rothausen et al. (1998) for combining past, present, and future use, and Lambert (2000) for combining multiple work-family practice use into a single variable.

Despite these limitations, the present study had many aspects that were distinct within the work-family literature. Kossek and Ozeki (1998) have suggested that previous work-family conflict studies have been restricted by concentrating on single forms of interrole conflict (time or strain based), targeting gender or job groups, or by focusing upon a single work-family practice. This singular focus on a work-family practice is also found in the work-family backlash and work-family fairness literature, with studies focusing on parental leave (Grover, 1991) and childcare centres (Kossek & Nichol, 1992; Rothausen et al., 1998).

It should also be noted that this study does not, and was not intended to, uncover all potential long-term outcomes for employees. The assumption that work-family practices have a positive effect on family relationships is not universally accepted. Some researchers contend that organisations separate employee work and family

roles by decreasing employee commitment, emotions, and authority to the family for the benefit of the organisation (Kanter-Moss, 1989). Further research that examines employee use and non-use of work-family practices and attitudes regarding family isolation and the shift in focus from the family to the workplace, would allow the positive or negative effect of work-family policies towards family relationships to be examined.

Finally, another limitation was the lack of employee performance data. At the outset of the present study, the organisation agreed to provide employee performance data to be used to match work-family practice use with performance. However, the organisation had difficulties in producing these data and, at the end of data collection, decided not to provide the data. Future studies with access to such data could provide a more thorough testing of attitudes and performance with relation to work-family practice use, as suggested by the model in Chapter Three.

9.8 Implications

The implications for managers and researchers of the present study findings are detailed below, for each work-family category of this study: conflict, benefits, fairness, and backlash. In addition, organisational commitment is singled out for further comment. Lastly, the implications for government policy are explored.

9.8.1 Work-Family Conflict

The findings from the work-family conflict component of this study offer implications for practicing managers, human resource professionals and researchers. The work-family conflict findings indicated that use of work-family practices did have a relationship with the overall variance of both work → family conflict and family → work conflict, and work-family practice use predicted conflict between work and family. The positive direction of this relationship indicated that work-family practice use should not be seen as an immediate 'solution' for addressing employee conflict between the work and family commitments. It might be that work-family practice use is a response to conflict or potential conflict. Thus, as conflict between work and family increases, this

triggers a work-family practice use response. Importantly, the focus on outcomes from WFC and FWC indicate that for this study, only work → family conflict predicted lower job satisfaction and higher work strain. That is, conflict or potential conflict, originating in the workplace, predicted negative outcomes in workplace-related attitudes. Frone and Yardley (1996) have suggested that work-family practices focus almost exclusively on the family, and therefore tend to exclusively target family → work conflict. However, the findings in this study indicated work-family practice use also predicted WFC, and suggests that within this organisation, work-family practice use has the potential to reduce the negative workplace outcomes of work-family conflict. The implication for researchers is, because there is a bi-directional link between conflict and work-family practice use, research needs to examine what effect work-family practice use can have on reducing conflict and thus, workplace outcomes. This positive relationship might also be due to the cross-sectional nature of the present study. Longitudinal research could provide greater insight into identifying the relationship between work-family practice use and the sources of conflict. For example, what is the nature of and reasons for the conflict, and can these be associated with work-family practice use? Future research might also examine work-family practices in different ways to explore the influence on conflict. For example, flexitime may be a practice that has a significant association with reducing conflict, and examining employee frequency of use, (e.g. number of times used in a month), might highlight a greater predictor of conflict.

The implication for organisations is that work-family practices might not be the 'solution' to employees reducing the conflict that occurs at home or at work. While the work-family literature suggests work-family practices allow employees the opportunity to better balance their work and family commitments, this has not been explicitly proven, and the results here are inconclusive. It may be that in examining combined past, present, and future use of multiple work-family practices, the ability of one single practice to reduce conflict is not shown. Other research might also examine work-family practice usage as separate measures, for example, having three work-family practice use variables, one for past use, one for current use, and one for future use. While this study offers evidence of a link

between work-family conflict and work-family practice use that has seldom been exposed, the relationship raises as many questions as answers. Perhaps organisations and researchers should explore the outcomes of conflict more, examining the relationships between conflict, work-family practice use and outcomes. A longitudinal study design might see work-family conflict, conflict outcomes (job satisfaction and work strain) and work-family practice use (including frequency of use) collected at one time period. A second time period (e.g. a few months later) might collect the same information. Conflict scores and outcomes could be compared to determine whether those using work-family practices registered significant reduction in their conflict and outcomes between time periods one and two.

The separation of conflict as a bi-directional construct (work → family conflict and family → work conflict) is supported in this study, particularly with relation to predicting workplace outcomes of conflict, where work → family conflict was the only predictor of job satisfaction and work strain. The work-family conflict literature could also be improved with a standard work-family conflict measure, which would allow for comparisons between studies. Lastly, managers and organisations should work to better understand the bi-directional nature of conflict, because it appears that improved balance between work and family roles is not solely met by work-family practices, irrespective of their focus upon the family. Organisations need to recognise that their workplaces may be a source of conflict that negatively impact employees attitudes, and while work-family practices might predict this conflict, the ability of these programmes in reducing conflict from both sources (work and home) has not been established. Therefore, the organisation within this study could seek to reduce the negative outcomes from work, by adopting alternative practices that focus specifically upon work-related sources of conflict. These might include providing clearer lines of communication and having managers more closely manage workload allocation.

9.8.2 Work-Family Benefits

The implications from the work-family benefits study are far-reaching. This is because the work-family literature regards work-family practices as positively influencing employee attitudes and behaviours. This might be because the work-family literature is dominated by popular management sources, for example, *HRMagazine* and *HR Focus*, which tend to focus on successful organisations that are large in size and resources and offer a wide range of work-family practices. For example, the SAS Institute is a private computing firm that is often the focus of work-family case studies (Cole, 1999; Martinez, 1993; Schu, 1999). However, while the organisation offers such programmes as a 35-hour full time work week, 36,000 square foot gym, cardio machines, dance studio, live piano music in the cafeteria, childcare facilities, on-site health clinic, and an indoor lap pool, what seems to be lacking is rigorous examination of the impact these benefits have. For example while the organisation claimed US\$50 million a year savings in turnover (Cole, 1999), it may be that the set 35-hour working week, promoted and strictly upheld by the CEO (including compound gates locked at 6pm), is the driving contributor towards turnover reduction, not the other work-family policies and amenities themselves. This lack of testing is a fundamental weakness of the work-family benefits literature. The findings from the present study do suggest the connection between utilisation and attitudes has been somewhat overstated, which provides further incentives to test these relationships among a collection of work-family practices in a variety of settings.

The implication for human resource professionals is that they need to test empirically such relationships within their organisation, rather than assuming that offering work-family initiatives will automatically have a beneficial effect. While such a positive link might be found, until such a link is examined and found, it clearly cannot be taken for granted. Related to the above example on the SAS Institute, it might be that better employee control of their workload through reduced working hours is the fundamental factor influencing positive attitudes. This is supported by the work-family conflict literature, where long working hours have been established as a predictor of conflict (Burke, Weir, & Duwors, 1980; Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997; Gutek et al., 1991; Judge et al, 1994; Keith &

Schafer, 1980; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Netemeyer et al., 1996; Pleck et al., 1980). The implications for organisations seeking to adopt work-family practices should be to start small and slowly add additional practices, as the norm of reciprocity suggest this is typically the way social exchange relationships form. Blau (1964) asserts that relationships evolve slowly, initially with low value exchanges and only escalating to high reward exchanges as parties demonstrate their dependability. Organisations without any work-family practices should undertake research on employee attitudes and behaviours and work-family needs, before commencing work-family practices, then re-examine these as practices are added to gain a clearer understanding of the association such practices have. Similarly, researchers need to design studies that examine other data like actual turnover and employee performance (from an external source like an organisation's human resource department) to further facilitate understanding of the work-family relationship on employee behaviours.

Research examining the norm of reciprocity effects might also focus on both work-family practice use and the perceived value of each practice, which may produce clearer insight. For example, among employees who use flexitime continuously, but value it little, there may be little link with positive attitudes towards the organisation. However, another employee who uses the same practice a lot, and perceives the practice as invaluable, might hold more positive attitudes towards the job and organisation. An examination of perceived value of specific 'benefits' would allow a better testing of the norm of reciprocity effects. It might be that work-family policy non-users are happy to work in an organisation that offers practices allowing greater balance between work and family, and therefore findings might indicate little significant difference between users and non-users. Such a distinction has been suggested, with Grover and Crooker (1995) stating that "people are more attached to organisations that offer family-friendly policies, regardless of the extent to which the people might personally benefit" (p. 283). Research that seeks to address these aspects will improve understanding of this relationship, and start to provide stronger theoretical and empirical support (or non-support) for the currently generalised belief that work-family policies have strong positive links to employee attitudes and behaviours.

9.8.3 Work-Family Fairness

While there is an ample amount of general research using organisational justice theories, it is unusual that such research is undertaken on work-family policies. However, the fairness component of the present study adds to earlier work (Grover, 1991; Grover & Crooker, 1995; Rothausen et al., 1998) and suggests that examining fairness perceptions of work-family policies and attitudes towards policy users provides a noteworthy contribution to the literature. The implications for managers and human resource professionals are that employee fairness perceptions of work-family policies and attitudes towards male and female users are complex, not easily predicted, and are subject to gender differences.

Significantly, the findings of the present study provide mixed support for the unit and identity relationship. The unit relation signifies that those within a situation will align themselves favorably with those in a similar situation, while the identity relationship suggests that those who will gain from a policy will rate it favourably. For example, work-family practice users would be expected to rate the programmes more favourably than non-users. Significantly, unit relationships were found to be poor predictors in the work-family fairness component of this study. Thus, it might not be easy to predict perceived fairness attitudes through unit relationships. These attitudes appear more complex, especially attitudes towards male users and female users, where significant gender differences became apparent. The findings from this single organisation suggest that researchers should examine fairness perceptions through both identity and unit relationships, to provide greater understanding and improve the generalisability of these relationships when examining multiple work-family policies.

Importantly for organisations, it appears that determining employee fairness of work-family policies is complex, with findings indicating that among the variables examined, work-family benefits and work-family practice use are the only predictors of fairness of work-family policies for this organisation. Similarly, attitudes towards female users were predicted by the work-family benefits variable only. Therefore, managers cannot assume that certain groups (females, married employees, and those with families) will necessarily perceive work-family policies

as being fairer, and not hold gender-biased attitudes towards their male and female colleagues. Additionally, that managers within the organisation view male users of work-family policies more positively and not female users indicates some gender differences that might need to be addressed. However, these fairness attitudes about work-family policies and users did not predict attitudes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment, and highlights that work-family fairness perceptions could be limited to the work-family arena and not associated with more general attitudes.

The implications for researchers are that predicting fairness perceptions towards multiple work-family practices needs additional support to allow for generalisability, and replication could determine whether gender differences are specific to this organisation or are generalisable to other settings. Further research that seeks to examine fairness perceptions with attitudes towards the job and organisation might also indicate whether such a link (which has been found in other organisational justice studies) is generalisable to work-family policies.

9.8.4 Work-Family Backlash

The implications for managers regarding work-family backlash is that work-family practice users and non-users are likely to have little difference in attitudes. This applies to attitudes specifically targeting work-family policies and attitudes towards the job and organisation. Within this organisation, there were little differences in the attitudes of users and non-users, with only one significant difference towards morale and loyalty benefits, but the attitude was still positive overall. Interestingly, this finding suggests that, contrary to expectation, non-users do not have negative attitudes about the benefits of work-family programmes, satisfaction with work-family policies, fairness of policies, and attitudes towards users; this might be an early indication of a work-family “backlash”, because these attitudes relate specifically to the work-family programmes. The satisfaction with work-family policies variable included satisfaction with organisational support for work and family roles, and this attitude was not significantly different between users and non-users. This suggests that work-family practice non-users might understand that the organisation is trying to help employees balance their work

and family roles through work-family practices, and therefore hold no resentment towards other users, or the organisation. Perhaps these non-users do not have the same family demands as users; for example, their children could have left home already. Thus, non-users might be using a needs-based allocation principle rather than equality-based allocation principle.

The work-family backlash findings hold some implications for researchers. The use of independent mean tests for examining multiple work-family policy use and non-use appears a solid method for examining this phenomenon. In addition, comparing overall mean values between users and non-users will ensure that a true measure of backlash will be reported. As with this study, while a significant difference was found in the morale and loyalty advantage of work-family policies, even non-users had positive attitudes. Future research might also compare frequency of use and importance of work-family practices as other ways to examine the backlash potential. In addition, further examination of organisations with multiple work-family practices will add to the literature. One potential for exploring the backlash phenomenon might be through examining organisations where there are distinct job type divisions, for example, comparing office workers with front-line staff who might have little opportunity for using flexible working practices. This might provide a greater divide in attitudes between users and non-users.

Despite finding no evidence of a work-family backlash, there are still multiple Internet websites complaining about the disparity between users and non-users of work-family policies. For example, <http://www.dork.com/cfnews/workplace.htm> website hosts links to a collection of anti work-family articles. The website <http://www.singlesrights.com> offers statistics on single and non-parent American employees, and highlights the American taxation disadvantages from not having children. Also, <http://www.childlessworkers.com> highlights the disparity childless workers feel they receive from employers. Currently, there appears no similar websites on New Zealand employees, perhaps due to different taxation laws in New Zealand. Despite this, New Zealand organisations might still be wise to examine the backlash aspect, even if the overall difference of attitudes between

users and non-users is not significant. Organisations may be able to counter this by offering smorgasbord benefits that employees can choose from, for example, a collection of multiple work-family practices targeting not only parents but single employees too, such as offering childcare subsidies or gym subsidies or subsidised domestic services. Also, while work-family initiatives are still relatively new to New Zealand organisations, managers are probably less likely to worry about addressing a work-family backlash and more likely to seek to extract the benefits of such practices, whatever these might be for any organisation.

9.8.5 Turnover Intention and Organisational Commitment

While the single-item measure for turnover intention has also been used before (Lounsbury & Hoopes, 1986), this measure deserves additional comment, given its total lack of significant correlations within the present study. One explanation could be the setting of the present study. The organisation in the present study is located in a tranquil, rural, 'life style' region of New Zealand. Given the organisation is a major employer within the region, and that the region had a 1% higher unemployment rate than the New Zealand average of 6.6% at the time of data collection (Statistics New Zealand, 2001), it could be that the ability to move jobs locally, coupled with the lack of desire to leave the region, might have influenced the turnover intention attitude. Therefore, regional and employment factors could have adversely affected the ability of the turnover variable within the various components of the present study.

Of additional interest to researchers and human resource professionals must be the distinct lack of significant correlations amongst organisational commitment and the various components of the present study. While turnover intention may be influenced by unemployment rates and geographical location, it appears that employee commitment to the organisation is difficult to predict in relation to work-family practices. It may be that work-family policies make only a small contribution towards organisational commitment, perhaps due to the burdens employees find themselves facing in the workforce. The inability of this study to link organisational commitment to fairness attitudes and work-family practice use could be due to growing workloads and work commitments, remembering that this

organisation had recently increased working hours from 37.5 hours a week to 40 hours. Today's workplace has changed greatly over the past decade in New Zealand, with an increased performance focus, coupled with the drive for productivity and competitive advantage that has included public sector organisations (Boxall, 1993; Crocombe, Enright, & Porter, 1991), and the downsizing and restructuring that has reformed the public sector. Combined, these factors might have led employees to consider their workplace as 'a means to an end'. It might be that other factors such as salary are greater predictors of organisational commitment than work-family related attitudes and behaviours.

In addition, the variation of the organisational commitment measure was not excessive, with overall Standard Deviation =.83 (with users and non-user SD=.82 and .85 respectively). While the mean score for organisational commitment was positive, this was only marginally above the mid-point (4.6, mid-point 4.0). Therefore, the overall ability of organisational commitment to associate with various aspects within the present study, whether work-family practice use or fairness perceptions, might have been restricted due to the limited variability in organisational commitment scores. Meyer and Allen's (1991) differentiated measure of commitment (affective, continuance, and normative) might have been a better measure for the present study, and future research could use this commitment measure to examine work-family practice use and its link with commitment.

9.8.6 Government Policy Implications

Lastly, it seems appropriate to address the implications of work-family policies on government policy. The current government is made up of a coalition between the Labour party and the Alliance party. The Alliance party made legislating paid parental leave a major focus of its 1999 election campaign, and it became legislation on 1 July 2002. This study suggests that within this local government organisation, employees suffer conflict at levels and from sources that are similar to other industrialised countries. Among OECD countries, only Australia and the United States do not currently legislate for paid parental leave (International Labor Organisation, 1997), and this study does provide some support for the introduction of practices that might improve the balance of work and family roles. That

attention towards paid parental leave policy could indicate that New Zealand is more accepting of work-family policies, and therefore such policies might be seen as a credible human resource policy option. This is further highlighted by the upcoming election seeing the Alliance party campaigning to extend the paid parental leave period from 12 weeks to 14 weeks, including two weeks paid leave for men (Harre, 2002). This indicates work-family policies are gaining increased acceptance. The implications for policy makers are that work-family policies have the potential (according to the international literature) to offer organisations competitive advantages through greater employee attitudes, retention, and performance, and therefore such programmes should be openly encouraged.

The government, through part funding of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, does provide incentives for organisational adoption of work-family policies. However, this is currently through promotional awards only. A greater commitment to researching the relationship between work-family policies and employee attitudes and behaviour would provide greater knowledge and understanding of these effects, and could encourage organisational adoption of work-family policies throughout New Zealand. As the New Zealand Government calls for greater firm commitment to the knowledge economy, and complains about highly qualified people leaving the country for overseas (labeled the 'brain-drain'), work-family policies might be a useful tool for attracting and retaining top employees. Work-family programmes have been highlighted as an exceptionally useful tool internationally, especially within the United States, in the retention of computer programmers (Cole, 1999). However, while the present study does indicate employees perceive advantages from work-family practices, other beneficial links such as increased job satisfaction are less certain. Additional New Zealand research needs to be undertaken before such gains can be promoted as occurring in New Zealand organisations.

The implications for Government are that work-family policies might have the potential to improve business performance and employee's lives. However, this does require a greater commitment to examine the relationships between work-

family practice use and the multiple advantages that the literature suggests are available.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EMPLOYEE SURVEY 1.....257

APPENDIX B: EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2.....260

APPENDIX C: CEO COVER LETTER.....266

APPENDIX D: A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICE
USE.....267

Reference Number: _____

All information provided is strictly confidential. Any questions please contact Jarrod Haar, PhD Student, Waikato Management School, University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, HAMILTON. E-mail: jmh12@waikato.ac.nz. Thank you for your contribution.



This survey has been sanctioned by the University of Waikato Ethics Committee (Management Studies). The results will form the basis of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) examining the effects of family-friendly policies in New Zealand workplaces. This survey will proceed in two stages. This is the first part (survey one) and should take no more than 10 minutes. The second part (survey two) will be given to you next week.

Indicate your response to the following statements by circling the appropriate number.

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Age: 2. Sex: Male Female

3. Ethnicity (tick as many boxes as applicable)

NZ'er Maori
 P. Islander Asian
 European Other

4. Education Level: (tick one box only: the highest)

College
 Tertiary Diploma or Certificate
 Professional Qualification eg ACA
 Tertiary Degree
 Postgraduate Qualification
 Masters Qualification
 Other (specify) _____

5. Current Job Types: (tick one box only)

Managerial/Professional
 Engineering
 Planning
 Parks
 Cultural
 Clerical
 Financial
 Unskilled

5.a. How many years have you been working for (organisation name)?

6. Salary/Annual Income Scale: (tick one box only)

Under \$15,000 per annum
 Between \$15,000 and \$25,000 per annum
 Between \$25,001 and \$35,000 per annum
 Between \$35,001 and \$45,000 per annum
 Between \$45,001 and \$55,000 per annum
 Between \$55,001 and \$65,000 per annum
 Between \$65,001 and \$75,000 per annum
 Over \$75,000 per annum

7. Employment Status: (tick one box only)

Full-time employee (go to Q7.a.)
 Part-time employee (go to Q7.b.)

7.a. (Full-time employees only) What is the likelihood of you reducing your work hours in the future?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Highly Unlikely Highly Likely

7.b. (Part-time employees only) What is the likelihood of you seeking increased work hours in the future?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Highly Unlikely Highly Likely

8. Marital Status: (tick one box only)

Married/De facto Relationship (go to Q9.)
 Single (skip to Q10.)

9. Partner Details:

(a). How many hours a week (in paid employment) does your partner work?

Yes No

(b). Is it a managerial/professional position?

10. Parental Status

Are you a parent? (If no, got to Q. 10c)

10.a. If yes, total number of children in your care:

10.b. Please list the age/s of your child/children (in years, from lowest age to highest age eg 1yr, 3yrs & 8yrs)

Indicate your response to the following statements by circling the appropriate number.

10.c. What is the likelihood of you starting a family or having more children in the future?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Highly Unlikely Highly Likely

10.d. What is the likelihood, if you were expecting a new child (including adoption), of you taking parental leave?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Highly Unlikely Highly Likely

10.e. Childcare

In a typical week, what proportion (%) of time towards overall childcare do you personally contribute? (Put 0% if this is not a factor for you)

11. Caring for the elderly (parents/family)

In a typical week, what proportion (%) of time towards overall eldercare do you personally contribute? (Put 0% if this is not a factor for you)

12. Estimate the total number of hours in paid work in a typical week (hrs/week)

13. Estimate the total number of hours commuting to work in a typical week (hrs/week)

All information provided is strictly confidential. Any questions please contact Jarrod Haar, PhD Student, Waikato Management School, University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, HAMILTON. E-mail: jmh12@waikato.ac.nz. Thank you for your contribution.



14. Estimate the total number of hours overtime worked in a typical week (hrs/week)

B. WORK RELATED QUESTIONS

Think of a typical day at your workplace. Based on your work activities on an average day, please respond to the following statements by circling the appropriate number.

15. You work irregular shifts?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

16. Your work schedule is inflexible?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

17. You face ambiguity (uncertainty) in your work?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

18. You face conflict in your work?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

19. You receive low levels of support from your immediate leader or supervisor?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

20. You are exposed to physical demands at work?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

21. You are exposed to emotional demands at work?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

22. You are exposed to mental demands at work?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

23. You are exposed to a constantly changing work environment?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

24. You are exposed to communication problems at work?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

25. Your job overlaps several distinct and separate boundaries (eg different roles and departments)?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

26. Your job leaves you feeling burnt out?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

27. You are highly involved in your work?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

28. You are highly involved in your family?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

29. You are highly involved in other interests, for example a sport, hobby or leisure activity?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

30. Your job is challenging?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

31. Your job has variety?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

32. Your job has importance in the organisation?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

33. Your job allows you strong independence?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

C. FAMILY-FRIENDLY BENEFITS

Please indicate whether you have used the benefit in the past, are presently using the benefit, anticipate using the benefit, have never used the benefit and don't intend to use it, or are unaware that this benefit was available. Please indicate by circling the appropriate number below.

34. Unpaid Parental Leave

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Past Present Anticipated Never Unaware

35. Paid Parental Leave

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Past Present Anticipated Never Unaware

36. Domestic Leave

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Past Present Anticipated Never Unaware

37. Bereavement Leave

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Past Present Anticipated Never Unaware

38. Study Leave

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

 Past Present Anticipated Never Unaware

Reference Number: _____

All information provided is strictly confidential. Any questions please contact Jarrod Haar, PhD Student, Waikato Management School, University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, HAMILTON. E-mail: jmh12@waikato.ac.nz. Thank you for your contribution.



39. Flexible Working Hours

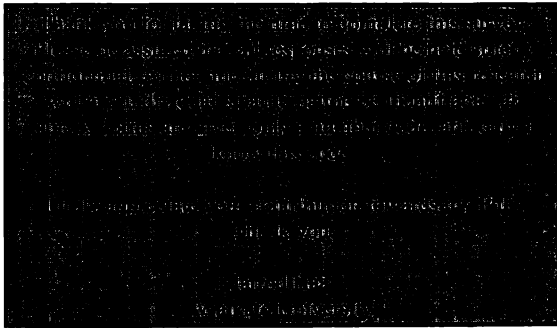
1	2	3	4	5
Past	Present	Anticipated	Never	Unaware

40. Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

1	2	3	4	5
Past	Present	Anticipated	Never	Unaware

41. Before/After School Room

1	2	3	4	5
Past	Present	Anticipated	Never	Unaware



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This survey has been sanctioned by the University of Waikato Ethics Committee (Management Studies). The results will form the basis of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) examining the effects of family-friendly policies in New Zealand workplaces. This survey is the second and last part of my survey, and should take no more than 30 minutes.

D. FAMILY-FRIENDLY BENEFITS

There are many reported benefits from family-friendly benefits, and I wish to gather your opinions on these. Please circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. Family-friendly programmes...	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
a). Increase employee morale	1	2	3	4	5
b). Improve employee loyalty	1	2	3	4	5
c). Decrease employee absenteeism	1	2	3	4	5
d). Help retain employees	1	2	3	4	5
e). Help attract employees	1	2	3	4	5
f). Improve firm performance	1	2	3	4	5
g). Improve firms image	1	2	3	4	5
h). Reduce employee stress	1	2	3	4	5
i). Increase employee commitment	1	2	3	4	5
j). Increase employee motivation	1	2	3	4	5
k). Reduce employee tardiness	1	2	3	4	5
l). Increase employee happiness	1	2	3	4	5
m). Improve customer service	1	2	3	4	5
n). Increase employee job security	1	2	3	4	5
o). Encourage employee's to 'go the extra mile'	1	2	3	4	5
p). Leads to higher quality employees'	1	2	3	4	5
q). Increase customer satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
r). Improve employee performance	1	2	3	4	5

E. JOBSATISFACTION

The next set of items deals with various aspects of your job. Please circle the number indicating the extent to which you are satisfied or unsatisfied with each of these features of your present job.

2. Your co-workers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied			Extremely Satisfied			

3. Your work itself.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied			Extremely Satisfied			

4. Your pay and fringe benefits.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied			Extremely Satisfied			

5. The physical surroundings at your worksite.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied			Extremely Satisfied			

6. Your immediate supervisor.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied			Extremely Satisfied			

7. Your promotion opportunities.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied			Extremely Satisfied			

8. Now, taking everything into consideration, how do you feel about your job as a whole?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied			Extremely Satisfied			

F. TURNOVER INTENTION

Indicate your response to the following statements by circling the appropriate number.

9. All in all, how likely is it that you will try hard to find a job with another organisation within the next 12 months?

1	2	3
Not at all likely	Somewhat likely	Very likely

10. I am confident that I will get a new job with another employer in the next 12 months.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree		Strongly Agree		

G. ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

With respect to your feelings about (organisation name), read the following statements and circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

11. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help my organisation be successful.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

12. I talk up this organisation to my friends as a great organisation to work for.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

13. I feel very little loyalty to this organisation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

14. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

Reference Number: _____

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15. I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

16. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

17. I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work was similar.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

18. This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

19. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

20. I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

21. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

22. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

23. I really care about the fate of this organisation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

24. For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

25. Deciding to work for this organisation was a definite mistake on my part.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

H. WORK-LIFE CONFLICT

Read the following statements about the relationship between your work life and your family and home life.

Circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

26. My family takes up time I would like to spend working.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

27. My personal interests take too much time away from my work.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

28. The demands of my family life make it difficult to concentrate at work.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

29. At times, my personal problems make me irritable at work.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

30. My work schedule often conflicts with my family life.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

31. After work, I come home too tired to do some of the things I'd like to do.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

32. On the job, I have so much work to do that it takes away from my personal interests.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

33. My family dislikes how often I am preoccupied with my work when I am at home.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

34. Because my work is demanding, at times I am irritable at home.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

35. The demands of my job make it difficult to be relaxed all the time at home.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

36. My work takes up time that I'd like to spend with my family.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

37. My job makes it difficult to be the kind of spouse, partner or parent I'd like to be.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Reference Number: _____

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38. I am not able to act the same way at home as I do at work.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

39. When I am assertive at home, it is not appreciated by my family.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

I. WORK ATTITUDES

Read the following statements and circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

40. People's misfortunes result from their mistakes

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

41. Getting a good job depends mainly on being at the right place at the right time

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

42. In the long run, people get the respect they deserve

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

43. Most times I feel I have little influence over the things that happen to me

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

44. Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

45. Most people don't realise the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

46. Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

47. Who gets to be boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

48. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work. Luck has little or nothing to do with it

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

49. The world is run by the few people in power and there is not much any individual can do about it

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree

II. WORK POLICIES

Read the following statements and circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

50. Supporting employees who have children is not fair to employees without children.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

51. Every parent deserves the right to take leave when a child is born.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

52. It is everyone's, including nonparents', responsibility to provide for children, and a parental leave policy helps to accomplish this task.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

53. It is not the organisation's responsibility to provide time off to new parents.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

54. Having a child is a strain on parents, and they deserve the aid of parental leave.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

55. Children are a necessary part of society and it is the responsibility of large institutions like District Councils to help in the effort.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

56. Those who choose not to have children should support those who choose to have children under a parental leave programme.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

57. In the past, employees have borne children without the benefit of special leave, and therefore it is not fair to offer parental leave to new parents.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

58. Having a baby is a personal choice and provisions for that event should be made by the family, rather than by the employer.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Reference Number: _____

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59. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the amount of support provided for employee's work and family roles by the organisation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Extremely Dissatisfied Extremely Satisfied

60. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with benefits offered by your organisation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Extremely Dissatisfied Extremely Satisfied

61. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with family-friendly initiatives offered by your organisation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Extremely Dissatisfied Extremely Satisfied

K. ATTITUDES RELATED TO GENDER

Read the following statements and circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

62. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

63. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

64. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

65. A women should be as free as a man to propose marriage.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

66. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

67. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions as equals alongside with men.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

68. A women should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

69. It is ridiculous for a woman to drive a truck and for a man to darn socks.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

70. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

71. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

72. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

73. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to University than daughters.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

74. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

75. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

76. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

L. FAMILY-FRIENDLY BENEFITS

The next set of items deals with your attitudes towards those employees who have, do, or may utilise family-friendly benefits. Read the following statements and circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

My MALE COLLEAGUES who would use family-friendly practices...

77. Will be better employees in the long run.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

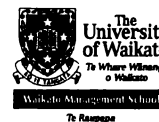
78. Are outstanding parents.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Reference Number: _____

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79. Want to devote more time to work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

80. Want an easy way out of their responsibilities to the District Council.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

81. Want what is best for their children.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

82. Are just too lazy to do their fair share of the work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

83. Tend to be above average workers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

84. Probably are extremely productive workers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

85. Are good fathers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

86. Are not particularly competent workers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

My FEMALE COLLEAGUES who would use family-friendly practices...

87. Will be better employees in the long run.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

88. Are outstanding parents.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

89. Want to devote more time to work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

90. Want an easy way out of their responsibilities to the District Council.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

91. Want what is best for their children.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

92. Are just too lazy to do their fair share of the work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

93. Tend to be above average workers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

94. Probably are extremely productive workers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

95. Are good mothers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

96. Are not particularly competent workers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

M. ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

Read the following statements and circle the number indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

97. The organisation values my contribution to its well-being.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

98. If the organisation could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary it would do so.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

99. The organisation fails to appreciate any extra effort from me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

100. The organisation strongly considers my goals and values.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

101. The organisation would ignore any complaint from me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

102. The organisation disregards my best interests when it makes decisions that affect me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

103. Help is available from the organisation when I have a problem.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

104. The organisation really cares about my well-being.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			

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105. Even if I did the best job possible, the organisation would fail to notice.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

106. The organisation is willing to help me when I need a special favour.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

107. The organisation cares about my general satisfaction at work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

108. If given the opportunity, the organisation would take advantage of me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

109. The organisation cares about my opinions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

110. The organisation takes pride in my accomplishments at work.

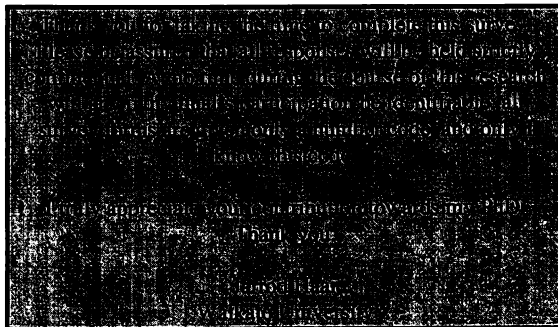
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

111. The organisation tries to make my job as interesting as possible.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree



1st November 2000

Dear Colleagues

Our company has agreed to be a participant in a doctoral research project undertaken by Jarrod Haar, through the Waikato Management School, University of Waikato. The study involves surveying employees of (organisation name). The goal of the study is to understand how employees deal with the complexities of work and family roles, and how our policies affect how employees balance work and family responsibilities. This project is very important as this area of research has not been examined in New Zealand. Our contribution would be significant.

The survey is being done in two parts. The first survey will be handed out on the week commencing November 13, and should take approximately 10 minutes. The author of survey, Jarrod Haar, will be available all week to answer your questions and collect the completed surveys throughout this period. Please be assured that all responses will be held strictly confidential. At no time during the course of the research will any employee's participation be identifiable. The second survey will be handed out on the week commencing November 20, and this should take approximately 20 to complete. As with the first survey, Jarrod Haar will be available all week to answer your questions and collect the completed surveys throughout the day.

The only information (organisational name) will receive is a summary report indicating total amounts – no individual responses will be included. Once again, confidentiality has been assured.

I see this is an opportunity for us to support exciting research and as such I hope you give the surveys your full support.

Sincerely,

Mr "Bloggs"
CEO
(Organisations name)

APPENDIX D

A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICE USE

Introduction

Despite the work-family literature indicating that there are many positive associations between employee use of work-family practices and their attitudes and behaviour, including increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover, the current study failed to find any match. Because the present study explored work-family practice use as a combined measure of all six practices, it was felt that exploring use of a single practice might provide greater links to the many positive effects suggested in the literature. As such, a qualitative study on users of flexible work practices was undertaken to explore the themes of the thesis in more depth. Flexible work practices were chosen as these practices receive the greatest attention and receive the greatest support for positive outcomes in the literature (Flynn, 1997; Hall et al., 1993; Lawler, 1996; Martinez, 1993; Sailors & Sylvestre, 1994; Saltzstein, Ting, & Saltzstein, 2001; Sommers & Malins, 1991; Thomas & Ganster, 1995).

Flexible Work Practices Literature

Flexible work practices include flexitime, telecommuting (working-from-home), and job sharing. According to Martinez (1993), changes in the makeup of the workforce (as outlined in Chapter Two) have caused a need for more flexible practices in the workplace. Gundersen, Rozell, and Kellogg (1995) suggested that flexitime, which allow workers to vary their beginning and ending times around a set of core hours, offer working spouses a better opportunity to balance work and family demands for their time. American studies have found work hour flexibility to be the most desired and preferred work-family benefit (The Conference Board, 1991; Gundersen, Rozell, & Kellogg, 1995). Hall et al. (1993) and Loscocco (2000) have asserted that scheduling flexibility, such as flexitime, is the most

widely adopted work-family policy in place today, and this is supported by adoption rates from American firms illustrating 40% to 80% for flexitime (Doucet & Hooks, 1999; Durst, 1999; Hall & Parker, 1993; Morgan & Milliken, 1992; Wood, 1999), 37% to 50% for job sharing (Hall & Parker, 1993; Morgan & Milliken, 1992), and 20% to 40% for telecommuting (Doucet & Hooks, 1999; Durst, 1999; Hall & Parker, 1993; Morgan & Milliken, 1992). The adoption rates for these practices are relatively unknown in New Zealand, and while New Zealand has been suggested as lagging behind the United States on work-family policy adoption (Callister, 1996), within the present study use of flexible work practices had the highest percentage (69%) of all six work-family practices, indicating it is readily accepted in the present study's organisation.

The high rates of adoption of flexible work practices, and specifically flexitime, often relate to the cost of these programmes, as adoption of flexible work practices can be relatively cheap, as options such as flexitime do not typically require additional resources. For example, IBM successfully incorporated flexibility into the workplace at little or no cost (Martinez 1993). In conjunction with low costs, there are many reported benefits associated with flexibility. For example, Sommers and Malins (1991) contended that flexibility in terms of working hours improved employee productivity through reduced tardiness and absenteeism, and improved morale. Thomas and Ganster (1995) found nurse use of flexibility reduced work-family conflict and led to fewer mental and physical health problems. According to Saltzstein, Ting, and Saltzstein (2001), flexible work schedules could be effective tools in promoting job satisfaction. In addition, many studies have suggested that flexible work practices reduce employee turnover (Flynn, 1997; Hall et al., 1993; Lawler, 1996; Sailors & Sylvestre, 1994).

In spite of the many positive influences associated with flexible work practice use, the present quantitative study found no relationship between total work-family practice use and attitudes towards the job and organisation. This is particularly surprising, given the plethora of support for flexible work practices. However, Glass and Estes (1997) warned of mixed reports on the benefits of flexitime, which Loscocco (2000) indicated could be explained through variations in

supervisor support, programme specifics, and individual needs. Therefore, a closer, more in-depth examination of flexible work practice use might provide greater illumination of the influence work-family practices can have on work-family conflict, work-family benefits and work-family backlash. As a result, a qualitative approach to flexible work practice use was undertaken to provide a closer look at relationships between balancing work-family responsibilities, the benefits of work-family practice use, and whether employees feel their colleagues resent flexibility users. While there are many qualitative approaches that can be used for analysing qualitative data, thematic analysis is a popular method, which allows responses to be arranged into themes in relation to the research questions. This approach is discussed in more detail below.

Thematic Analysis

Owen (1984) used thematic analysis to explore the way participants use discourse to interpret their relationships. Owen (1984) stated that thematic analysis approach aims to “actively enter the worlds of native people and to render those worlds understandable from the standpoint of a theory that is grounded in *behaviours, languages, definitions, attitudes, and feelings* of those studied” (Denzin, 1971, cited in Owen, 1984, p. 274). While Owen (1984) offered thematic analysis for the interpretation of interview notes and transcriptions, this method can be used to understand any phenomenon. Thematic analysis has become a widely accepted qualitative approach used in many different disciplines, including health (Bowman & Fine, 2000; Braun & Gavey, 1998; Marshall & Swerissen, 1999), business ethics (Kernisky, 1997), communication (Corbett, 2001; Kassing, 2002; Sloan & Krone, 2000), and human resource management (Kamoche, 1995).

A thematic analysis seeks to identify specific trends, attitudes, or content categories, and then draw inferences from them (Jones & Shoemaker, 1994). Kernisky (1997) described thematic analysis as classifying dominant themes on the basis of characterizations or repeated general issues. According to Jones and Shoemaker (1994), the objective of thematic analysis is to extract and analyse themes inherent within the message. Braun and Gavey (1998) noted that thematic analyses can be used to identify issues and themes related to a specific topic. The

focus of thematic analysis can include themes within interviews, as well as themes within texts (Jones & Shoemaker, 1994).

Owen (1984) offers three criteria for a theme: (1) recurrence of the same thread of meaning in different words; (2) repetition of words, phrases, or sentences; and (3) forcefulness of vocal inflection, volume, or dramatic pauses. Not all of these elements are required, a reoccurrence of enthusiasm amongst respondents towards work-family policies would be sufficient to provide evidence of a positive theme towards work-family policies. Owen (1984) suggests this technique allows salient meanings to be discovered.

Zorn and Ruccio (1998) suggested thematic analysis allows the researcher to identify themes within individual interviewees' responses. This can preserve individual perspectives in addition to finding themes common to interviewees (Zorn & Ruccio, 1998). According to Wood, Dendy, Dordek, Germany, and Varallo (1994), thematic analysis "is doubly interpretive because it not only probes symbolic constructions, but also relies on discursive accounts as the primary data that reveal the meanings [participants] generate for their experiences" (p. 116). According to Jones and Shoemaker (1994), the primary strength of thematic analysis is its ability to identify the motivations and concerns of communicators.

However, thematic analysis is not without its limitations. Jones and Shoemaker (1994) noted that approaches like thematic analysis could suffer from bias in inference. These authors suggested the meaning of a message is relative to both the communicator and the receiver, and it is therefore the researcher's duty to infer the meaning correctly. A researcher could counter this aspect by establishing clearly what terms and meanings are, to ensure respondents understand the questions put to them. The use of prompts and additional information, such as "an example might be..." might also aid the researcher from making incorrect conclusions by having respondents understand what the researcher is asking.

Jones and Shoemaker (1994) also added that words with multiple meanings and symbolic language could be troublesome. For example, employees might hold different meanings towards family, for example including immediate family

members only, while others might include a far wider interpretation. Symbolic language like 'family-friendly' might also hold myriad interpretations for different employees. Therefore, direct research questions that are clear and precise would aid the interpretation of data collected. Additionally, the researcher might ask respondents for their meaning of the term, such as flexible work practices, as this might itself raise interesting aspects and themes.

Method

Sample Participants

Thirty employees from various departments within the study organisation, who had previously participated in the work-family surveys, were selected and invited to participate in a short interview regarding one of the work-family policies on offer at the organisation (flexitime). This selection was not strictly random as it included interviews with members of the organisations women's working group, which deals with matters pertaining specifically to women, including work-family programmes. Of this group, five members were interviewed and not all were users of flexible work practices. Overall, study participants' were very similar to the overall demographics of the survey respondents. The average age of interview respondents was 41.6 years (41.7 years for the surveys), 70% female (69% in surveys), 10% Maori (8% in surveys), 63% married (77% in surveys), and 60% with dependents (67% in surveys).

Interview Procedure

Due to the qualitative data collection requiring a third visit to the organisation (twice for the two surveys), interviews were kept short and informal (approximately 10-15 minutes in length), so as not to be a burden on the organisation and its employees.

Respondents were met either in their office or a private meeting room at their request. Respondent were briefly explained about the interviews following up on some aspects of the previous (quantitative) study, and respondents were assured that their responses would be confidential. Interviews covered four major questions, which were:

1. What do you associate with flexible work arrangements? Prompt: For example, what type of practices does NPDC offer? Have you used any of these? (What for? How long have you used them?), and How did you like them? (How positive do you think they are?).
2. How useful is it for balancing your work and family commitments? e.g. family.
3. Describe under what conditions would you use these practices?
4. Do you perceive any “negative” consequences/effects from using these practices? e.g. fellow workers, supervisors, career?

Hand written notes were taken of interview responses.

Data Analysis

Similar to Owen (1984), the author sorted through the transcripts to determine specific themes amongst responses to the research questions. A strength of the current data collection was that respondents were questioned on specific areas, for example work-family balance, work-family benefits, and work-family backlash, which made understanding and interpreting their responses easier. Each research question, and sub-question, was therefore analysed to show the overall perceptions of employees towards the questions, for example, the ability to balance work and family roles. For each question, responses were sorted to show whether there was strong agreement or disagreement with the questions, or some measure in between (e.g. neutrality). These responses were then grouped for all 30 respondents to show an overall commonality between them. This was repeated for each research question. Quotes were selected that best represented the overall support (or not) of the research questions, and then additional quotes were used that exposed interesting aspects, or illustrated new meanings or clarifications towards the questions. As there were few negative responses, these were also included to offer a somewhat balanced response.

Results and Discussion

Of the 30 respondents, 22 were users of the flexibility (73%) and 8 were non-users (27%). The following three tables detail various percentages regarding

different aspects of the respondents, including benefits mentioned, frequency of use by dependent status and frequency of use by gender.

Table D.1 lists the predominant positive and negative comments made by respondents, and how many times these comments were mentioned.

Table D.1

Comments	Number of times comment made	% (As a total of all respondents)
Very useful/good - users	22	73%
Very useful/good – non-users	8	<u>27%</u>
		100%
Help balance work and family	26	87%
Generic advantage comment	8	27%
Reduce stress	8	27%
Positive manager	7	23%
Productivity	4	13%
Negative comment	3	10%

It can be seen that respondents were unanimous in their praise of the flexibility, even amongst non-users. Users typically stated the policy was very good, while non-users noted that while they did not use them, if needed they would, and thus, they too perceived the flexible work practices as very positive. The ability for flexibility to balance work and family commitments was strongly noted, with 87% of respondents perceiving flexibility could improve work-family balance, and this also included non-users. Generic positive comments were made by 27% of respondents, and included specific one off comments such as improved staff retention (one respondent only). More specific comments included the ability of flexibility to reduce stress (27%), and improve productivity (13%). Having a positive manager was an important and positive aspect for 23% of respondents. Despite all respondents offering positive comments, three respondents also offered negative comments too. One was specifically towards a manager and their failure to allow this employee use of flexibility initially, while the other two

comments were from front-line staff, excluded from using the flexibility. Despite the exclusion, these two staff members also noted that it was simply a disadvantage of their current position, and they both hoped to take advantage of the practice in the near future.

Table D.2 shows the breakdown of respondents, and the percentage of use and non-use by those with and without dependents.

Table D.2

	Respondents with dependents	%	Respondents without dependents	%
Flexibility users	15	83%	7	58%
Flexibility non-users	3	17%	5	42%
Total	18		12	

Respondents who had dependents and used flexible work practices made up 83% of respondents with dependents, while those without dependents who used the flexibility was made up of only 58%. Having dependents appears to be a major influencer on utilising flexibility amongst respondents. Overall, those without dependents were less frequent users of the flexibility, with only a few respondents using it regularly. Infrequent users typically focused on doctor or dentist visit, and projected possibly using it for study (as there was a local Polytechnic near by). Those frequent users did so for sports, hobbies or personal business, but even these frequent users were typically only once a week. Most non-user respondents were not bothered by the fact – typically indicating they felt they had no need to use it. This further supports the needs-based allocation principle conclusion drawn from the thesis. Non-user respondents were still supportive of colleagues who used the flexibility. Only one respondent highlighted any major difficulty and this was attributed to her manager’s interpretation of the flexible work policy. Overall, respondents without dependents were using the flexibility among only 58% of this

group, and irrespective of gender were only part-time users, and typically for personal reasons only (e.g. medical and health).

Table D.3 shows the breakdown of respondents, and the percentage of use and non-use by gender (male and female).

Table D.3

	Male Respondents	%	Female Respondents	%
Flexibility users	7	78%	15	71%
Flexibility non-users	2	22%	6	29%
Total	9		21	

This table shows that respondent use is relatively even by gender, although comparisons are harder to make given the non-random sample, and that this is a subset of the larger study. Overall, male and female use of the flexibility is similar, within a 70% to 80% range.

The responses were grouped into themes, and these are presented in two parts. The first part covers responses relating to the sections explored in the body of the thesis: work-family conflict, work-family benefits and work-family backlash. The second part explores respondent findings that offer unique aspects not originally explored in the thesis. These relate to what flexible work practices were actually available to employees, and distinctions among users for what the practices were used for.

Work and Family Conflict and Flexibility

I asked respondents how use of the flexible work practices allowed them to balance their work and lives. Most respondents (87%) who utilised the flexible work practices indicated it was very successful in allowing them to balance their work and family commitments. Even respondents who used this work-family policy only on rare occasion maintained it provided them with a 'support net' or

‘safety net’ that gave them confidence and assistance if they ever had to use it, for example, in an emergency. This is encapsulated in the following statement.

Flexibility helps me balance my life – it keeps me sane! I couldn't do these things [work and family roles] if I didn't have it [the flexibility]”.

An important aspect of the organisation was a recent change in trading hours. Traditionally the organisation operated 8:30am to 5:00pm, but in an endeavour to be more accessible to the public, the organisation now operates between 8:00am and 5:00pm, with an hour for lunch (originally only a half hour). The problems this causes for parents, and the ability of flexibility to remedy this was captured in the following statements. It is interesting to note that only one male indicated he used the flexibility to deal with children, and this respondent has a handicapped daughter. He stated,

“I use the flexibility everyday to allow me to help my wife settle our [handicapped] child into her daily routine. It's imperative – if I wasn't able, I'd have a large amount of stress in my life...it helps me balance my day to day life”.

Other parental comments (all from mothers) included:

“Flexibility reduces the stress of getting to work at exactly 8am - it allows me to balance my work and family commitments”.

“It is essential for balancing my life. The option to use it in emergencies is invaluable. It was so stressful without it [the flexibility], you have to give up on motherhood between 8am and 5pm”.

“The flexibility makes my life easier. If I can't find someone to look after the kids before school starts, I can come in late, and it's not an issue”.

“The flexibility does help me balance things...it's been very useful personally”.

One respondent, who had just returned back to the organisation (now part-time), with a new baby, was also positive about the ability of flexibility to allow balance. She stated,

The flexibility is good for balancing my work and family – but now I have to rev up my family in the morning [getting the family ready for work and school]!”

Some respondents (27%) mentioned the flexibility allows them to reduce stress and this is highlighted in the following comments.

“Having the policy, even if you don’t use it, is important. It’s nice to know its there – it keeps my stress down. It’s a great idea!”

“Flexitime is good for balancing my life and my work – it keeps me less stressed”.

One male respondent, who described himself as a ‘sports fanatic’, and who used the flexibility to gain greater gym access through his lunchtime, stated,

“The flexitime option allows me to decreases my stress – all the pressures are gone when I’m working out. Work becomes your life if you have no kids, but with the flexibility, I can workout through my lunchtime, and, come 5pm, I’m ready to go home to my kids”.

Lastly, one respondent, with a serious health problem, uses the flexibility to allow her to ‘book up’ time in lieu for when she is sick. She stated,

“The flexibility helps me balance my life – especially financially. I can stock pile the time for when I’m sick... it’s a relief”.

It is important to note that while 87% of respondents suggested flexible work practices allow them to better balance their work and family commitments, they did not have to be using the flexible work practices all the time to note these

positive effects. 50% of the non-users respondents maintained that having the opportunity to use it in an emergency or a crisis gave them a greater feeling of relief and control over their lives. This suggests that respondents do not have to be actually using flexible work practices to respond positively towards their life and work commitments. In fact even those who haven't used flexible work practices and who maintained they would not be in the future, provided positive feedback on its ability to balance their work and personal commitments, simply by being available. This 'safety net' aspect of flexible work practices was viewed very positively. This finding suggests that there may be no attitudinal difference between users and non-users of flexible work practices, given that it is perceived as a 'safety net' that could benefit all employees at some future stage. This might also explain the lack of significant differences in attitudes between users and non-users amongst all the work-family practices. Overall, the qualitative responses indicate use of flexible work practices does have a strong influence on balancing work-family responsibilities, which supports the findings of an association between work-family practice use and work-family conflict.

Work-Family Benefits and Flexibility

Respondents were questioned regarding how they perceived the organisations flexible work practices. The strongest commonality among respondents was their overwhelming support and enthusiasm towards the flexible work practices with all 30 respondents (100%) offering strong, positive comments towards the flexible work practices. Thus, while eight of the 30 respondents were not users of flexible work practices, they still offered positive and supportive comments. Overall, the comments were strong, affirmative and encouraging of the policy. This is typified by the following quote,

"The flexibility is a good thing. It is a positive thing – having the opportunity to use the flexibility. Well done on the Council for making it available".

The positive responses were particularly prevalent among working parents, with the following quotes highlighting the affirmative attitude towards flexible work practices.

“As a working mother flexibility is a big bonus! Yes! Yes! The kids get the best out of you”.

“The flexitime is very good. My boss is very supportive – he’s great”.

“My manager is very supportive of the flexibility. He knows if I have to use it, it’s for a good reason”.

One respondent, who has a handicapped daughter, stated

“Flexibility is quite positive – this place has been good to me and my daughter, and I promote it”.

Other positive comments are captured in the following quotes.

“Flexibility is brilliant - in the private sector you’d usually have to be ‘up the line’ [hierarchy] to benefit from this type of thing”.

“Flexitime is really helpful – they allow me to do what I want. It’s quite groovy!”

“We need more flexibility at work. It helps get the work done. It makes employees happier, its win-win, and we’re not frustrated”.

“I’m very positive about the flexibility – it keeps my stress low. If I’m using flexitime – it’s in the organisations favour, its beyond question. If I’m taking time off, I’ve put more than enough extra hours in”.

One respondent, who used the flexibility to allow them to commute to work from over 100 kilometres away, stated,

“The flexibility is brilliant – I couldn’t have done it [my job] without it”.

Not only were users positive about the flexible work practices. There appeared some positive support from non-users, as shown by these comments.

“Even though I don’t have children, I know its awkward to fit children around set times, so I’m very supportive of flexitime”.

There were also some specific positive comments, which have occurred within the work-family literature, for example reducing stress (27% of respondents), and increasing productivity (13% of respondents). 27% of respondents made some positive comment, typically one or two respondents on a single benefit, such as improving retention (one respondent). These are highlighted by the following quotes

On stress benefits:

“The flexitime is very useful – it keeps my stress down!”

“It’s nice to know it’s there [the flexibility] – it helps keeps the stress down”.

“The flexibility helps reduce the stress of getting to work at exactly 8am!”

“Work would be so stressful without the flexibility”.

“It [the flexibility] is imperative – if I was able to use it, I’d have a large amount of stress in my life”.

“The flexibility allows me to exercise, which is good. It lowers my stress”.

On increased productivity benefits:

“It’s a huge advantage [the flexitime] for both organisation and employee! The employee gets some freedom [flexibility] and the organisation gets better performance”.

“By using the part-time work flexibility, I think the organisation gains – I’m very efficient, and very productive!”

On retention benefits:

“I’m a big fan! It makes me more keen to come back to work after having babies”.

Lastly, one respondent who has a front line staff position, and therefore has to be available from 8:00am to 5:00pm, suggested that even those restricted in access to flexible work practices, still view them positively.

“It would be nice if we could use it, but fair enough, we need to be there. But all employers should offer it [flexible work practices]”.

Despite all the positive comments, there were three negative comments made. Because the overall number was so low (only 10% of respondents), this was not developed into its own theme, but included in the benefits section to indicate there were a few non-positive comments made. Importantly, one of the negative comments was about the ability of their supervisor in allowing flexibility use, and the other two comments were followed up by comments that limited the overall negative remarks. These are discussed below.

The following respondent stated she applied to use the flexible work practices (flexitime) and was told she wasn’t allowed. This was the only respondent who indicated they were told not to apply for using the flexible work practices. She maintained that her position did not hold any special authority or power that would require her to always be in attendance. After further discussions with her manager, she was allowed to ‘unofficially’ use the flexitime once per week. Her comments are below.

“I ‘unofficially’ use flexitime on a Wednesday, when I take my dog for a walk. It’s a competition dog and with me working all day I need to spend time walking him...I’m training him competitively”.

When I probed this respondent further about how she feels about being only able to use it ‘unofficially’ once a week, she stated

“It’s all bullshit! I want to have an extra half hour lunch everyday so I can walk my dog. That’s it. There’s two other guys to cover me for the last half hour...it really bugs me because I only wanted it for Winter – in summer, the days long enough for walking after work...it’s a safety thing – I want to walk him [the dog] before its dark – a women walking the streets at night is not smart!”

This was the only strongly worded negative comment made by respondents.

Despite this, the respondent still perceived the flexibility as positive, but it was her managers handling of the policy that was principally viewed negatively.

The other two negative comments were both made by front-line staff, which were unable to use the flexibility because of their job requiring public contact throughout working hours. They stated,

“People have a right to be there for their kids, and in family emergencies or a crisis. We shouldn’t be kept from sorting it out! But, as front-line staff, I’m resigned to not using it. Nice if you can have it, but alas, need to be here!”

“I would like to use it, but in reality I can’t. I’m pretty much resigned to the lack of flexibility; it’s a draw back of the job! A reality of a customer focus area!

Importantly, these respondents were still positive overall about the flexibility, despite being excluded from using the practice.

When respondents were prompted regarding their attitudes towards the flexible work practices, all were positive (100%). Most were smiling and nodding when talking about their overall positive attitude the flexibility provides. Even respondents restricted from using the flexibility due to being in front-line positions (the only employees excluded from using the flexibility) were basically resigned to currently being unable to use it, but felt positively about the future opportunity to use the flexibility. The organisation was, at the time of interviews, recruiting part-time workers for front-line positions, to allow current workers the opportunity to utilise the flexibility like their colleagues. This may account for the positive attitudes from the front-line staff, as they might see the opportunity to use flexibility in the future. Hence, they may view themselves as 'non-users' only temporarily. Overall, employee attitudes were very positive towards the flexible work practices and also towards their immediate supervisor or manager, with 23% of respondents praising their manager. This suggests that the immediate supervisor might hold a significant influence on the use, and thus satisfaction of using flexibility, and offers directions for future quantitative studies. It might be that supervisor support moderates the relationship between work-family practice use and attitudes towards the job and organisation. Unfortunately, a supervisor support measure was not collected in the present quantitative study, and therefore cannot be explored further in the present study.

There were very specific advantages mentioned by respondents, such as reducing stress (27% of respondents), and increasing productivity (13% of respondents). While further attitudes such as job satisfaction and turnover intention were not explored, the overall positive aspects displayed by respondents did suggest an overall positive link with flexibility use and attitudes about the job. Significantly, since the organisation was portrayed far less often as the 'benefactor', this might be a factor in why there was no link between work-family practice use and perceived organisational support and organisational commitment. If employees feel these practices are important but are more a 'right' of working in today's hectic environment, rather than a reward or benefit from the organisation, then this might explain the lack of a significant link. It has been noted that many facets of work impact on job satisfaction (Locke, 1976; Rothausen, 1994), and it might be that while flexibility is highly regarded, many other aspects influence this

attitude, making work-family practice use insufficient for increasing job satisfaction. Further qualitative and quantitative studies that explore these aspects might elucidate these complex relationships.

Work-Family Fairness/Backlash and Flexibility

Respondents were asked whether they perceived any 'negative' consequences from using flexible work practices. This was to explore work-family fairness and backlash from a qualitative approach. Associated with the strong positive comments about work-family benefits, respondents held an overall lack of negative, unfairness or backlash towards their own use of the practices, or the use of others. There was little evidence of any backlash or unfairness perceptions towards users, as summarised by the following quote:

"No hassles from other employees. No hassles at all".

Other positive comments included,

"I've never had any negatives – people accept it. You set the time, and that's good. Especially when planning future leave".

"I don't get any negatives – I use it for coaching, and people see that as a good thing!"

"People are pretty good. If you had the commitments, you'd hope to use it too! In the end, you are still working the same hours".

"I get no hassles from fellow employees. I'm confident, and so are they, that I'm still working my 40 hours!"

One senior manager noted that,

“The principle of flexibility is understood. The work goes on, it has to be done. People have to understand that if its been approved then they have to accept it”.

There were five comments (17% of respondents) that initially suggested some unfairness perceptions or work-family backlash might have been apparent. However, further probing of respondents determined these comments occurred very rarely, or were more likely comments from colleagues when the respondent first started using the flexibility, and whose opinions subsequently changed over time once they knew what was going on (i.e. colleague using the flexibility). No respondent felt there was any serious resentment by their colleagues. Examples included,

“Sometimes I sense a bit of negativity – when you come in late or leave early. The might joke about it, but I personally feel it – a bit guilty”.

“The older employers tend to complain a bit – like, ‘I never had flexitime’, - they don’t see it [flexible work practices] as beneficial!”

“The majority are supportive. However, a few are ‘concerned’ I’m getting away with something!”

“When someone is away [using the flexibility] then there is an increase in the pressure on the rest of us!”

“I’d say a while back there was a misconception [of my using flexibility], but when they realised I’m here at 7am so I could leave early, then ‘no worries’!”

Use of the practice, or in fact, the seldom use of the practice, might be important, as discussed below:

“All employees use it, so there’s no hassles! I only use it from time to time anyway”.

“Other employees are okay...well, I think so! I don't do it [use the flexibility] often, so no problem!”

One respondent who is a non-user of the flexible work practices, and cannot use the flexibility because of their front-line job role, stated

“It's not terribly fair, but it's the reality of the job – I'm the public front, so there is no flexibility! You have to serve the customers and take the phone calls”.

Overall, similar to the quantitative data from the present study, there appears little evidence of any work-family backlash, or any general negativity towards the policies or users. Some responses highlight that there can be a misconception that employees are leaving early for no good reason, until this is clarified by the employee, for example, stating they started early. This suggests that employees themselves reduce the backlash effects of their colleagues by communicating, probably informally rather than formally, their reasons for using the flexibility, and that they have balanced their normal workload by a shift in hours – not by reducing their workload. This technique would also support the needs-based allocation principle by providing colleagues with the knowledge that the use is ‘needed’, for example, childcare, after-schooling etc., which should lead to greater understanding and no negative attitudes.

Flexible Work Practices Definition

An unexpected problem faced in interviewing respondents on the flexible work practices, was in defining what flexible work practices actually were. The interview question was “What do you associate with flexible work arrangements”, and the prompt was “For example, what type of practices does [the organisation] offer?” Almost all respondents (93%) looked puzzled and said “You mean flexitime?” The organisation’s work-family policy document has a category ‘flexible work practices’, but no employee used this term. While the policy suggests this includes such practices as flexitime, job sharing, telecommuting (work from home) and part-time work, it is interesting to note that only one

respondent, a personal assistant to a manager, even mentioned telecommuting, about which she said,

“My boss has offered me telecommuting, but I just have so much work to do, and it’ll be easier doing it here, so I didn’t take him up... [pause] ...although I do often take work home on the laptop to work over the weekend anyway”.

While there were a few respondents who were part-time employees, there was a distinct lack of job-sharing and telecommuting employees. The fact that only one respondent even mentioning telecommuting suggests that telecommuting is more rhetoric than practice. According to the organisation’s Human Resource Department, the organisation was in the process of hiring four job-sharing employees as cover for front-line staff, but my interviews captured only one respondent using this option.

In general, flexible work practices are seen as meaning flexitime to the majority of respondents. While this finding is not in itself a problem, I suggest the organisation might be trying to appear more ‘modern’ and ‘progressive’ by claiming telecommuting as a flexible work practice, when almost no employee is actually given the opportunity and resources to utilise it, and offers direction for future research. Consequently, interview responses should be seen in the context that flexibility and flexible work practices typically mean flexitime for the majority of workers. Respondents typically used the term ‘flexitime’ or ‘the flexibility’ when referring to these practices. It also became apparent that some respondents’ utilised flexibility without realising it was part of the organisations ‘family-friendly’ policies. Respondents often used the flexibility and acknowledged the organisations support, but in failing to recognise it as a family-friendly practice, might suggest the utilisation number found in the first surveys (60% for flexible work practices) is under represented.

Flexibility Use: Gender Similarities Amongst Respondents Without Dependents

Respondents without dependents were very similar regarding the use of the flexibility. These respondents often commented that they had ‘no need’ to utilise the flexibility. There were 12 respondents without dependents, seven were users and five were non-users. The following statements typify their responses.

“Flexibility? I don’t use it. I’ve got no hubby, no children. I don’t need it!”

There appeared no gender difference in replies among respondents who were without dependents, whether they were single or married. It appears that the lack of dependents is a significant aspect in what respondents utilise flexibility for. Those respondents who said they don’t utilise the flexible work practices were probed by asking them under what conditions would they use it.

The following quotes are from the two male users of flexibility who do not have dependents.

“I’m new to this place [the organisation] and the region. I’ve already used the flexibility for unpacking my stuff [household]. I guess I’d like to use the flexibility for travel – take a half day on Friday’s. I play sports on the weekend, so nothing to use the flexibility on other than to create ‘long weekends’”.

“I don’t use it [flexibility]. I have no children, so no real need”.

The following quotes typify the responses from female users and non-users of the flexibility.

“I use the flexibility to coach my younger sisters netball team”.

“I don’t use the flexibility. I guess I could use it for study, maybe sports...getting driving lessons!”

“I use it for the dentist, the doctor. Maybe some personal travel – heading up north – making it a long weekend”.

“I use it all the time, at least once a week - for the doctors, various appointments...such as selling my car, time with my bank manager [respondent was finalising a new mortgage]”.

“I don’t use it, but if I did...maybe I’d do a course at the Polytechnic”.

“I don’t use the flexitime – I have no children”.

The following respondent is a woman who is an occasional user of flexible work practices. When probed further, her comments highlighted an important aspect that came through in some of the interviews – that respondents would typically only utilise the flexibility if there were some job cover for them.

“I use flexitime very occasionally for the doctor, dentist, that sort of thing. I can start late and finish late – it gives me the opportunity to be late”.

When this respondent was probed for other potential uses, she replied,

“I could use it for study, but I’d only do it if there was cover! I’d choose study that occurred at the least inconvenient time for my boss...I don’t need to use it for exercise – I do that after work or at the weekends”.

Flexibility Use: Gender Differences Amongst Respondents With Dependents

While respondents without dependents were very similar in their use of flexibility, the utilisation of flexible work practices by female respondents with dependents was drastically different than that of male users with dependents. Of the 18

respondents with dependents, 15 (83%) were users of the flexibility. Female respondents with dependents focused almost exclusively upon their children and family, and typically not upon themselves. This differs from male users who were almost exclusively focused upon activities without their dependents (e.g. exercise or sports). Importantly, the utilisation of flexibility does not appear to change whether the mothers are in a relationship (married or de-facto) or not (single). They still carry the majority of the child caring and household roles irrespective of marital status. The focus of women upon their children is highlighted by the following quote,

“When they changed the starting times from 8:30am to 8am, that made things very difficult [at home]. Now I use the flexibility to get my daughter to school – it’s okay to arrive 15 minutes late and make the time up through my lunch. If there were a sports day or something, I wouldn’t hesitate to be there! Sometimes it’s hard to make up the extra time, like if it’s for a three or four hour stretch - because I need to get home by 5pm - I need to get back to the family”.

This single mother of two children uses the flexibility everyday, and stated,

“I use the flexibility by working late, through lunchtimes, even weekends, so I can start late and drop my kids off to school. I also use it for sports days and school events...although not as much as I should!”

Another working mother, used the flexibility for coaching others,

“I use the flexibility to coach my daughters netball team. I start early, say 7am or 7:30am everyday so I can go to practice at 3:30pm once a week – as that’s when its scheduled - after school”.

The following quote is from a mother with a partner working full-time, so she only works part-time.

“Working part-time allows me to drop the kids off at school and pick them up at the end of the day...I also take time off without pay during the [school] holidays so I can look after my children”.

Further use of flexibility to allow a focus on family is typified in the following quote,

“I use the flexitime to have a short lunch so I can take my daughter swimming in summer”.

When respondents were probed about using the flexibility for themselves, typical answers included,

“I don't get to use it on myself, unfortunately”.

The following respondent said she could use the flexibility quite a lot because she has minimal public contact. She stated,

“I use it [flexitime] for my kids prize giving, to drop off and pick up my kids, the kids sports day. I have also used it for a mother and daughter lunch [a social group]”.

When probed about using the flexibility for herself, this employee raised an interesting comment.

“I use it for going to the doctors, the dentist, but we have a code number for this...”

When I probed the respondent about this aspect further (coding dentist visits), she said it was new, within the past few months, and that it meant the department met those hours when she was absent for medical or health reasons. She didn't know if this was available in any other department. As such, I returned to a previous respondent who worked in the payroll department, and queried her about this practice. She informed me that the practice meant some departments (at this stage

only the one department) would meet the costs of employees going to the doctor or dentist – the employee wouldn't have to make up the time, as the time was charged to the department. This respondent was unsure as to why it was only currently being done in one department. Interestingly, the women whose department would pick up the cost/expense were full of professional, highly skilled, and highly educated employees. This might suggest a resource dependence approach to work-family commitments within this department. Further exploration of whether organisations meet the personal needs of some employees over others would provide evidence of a resource dependence approach to the allocation of work-family resources. While outside the scope of the present study, it does offer directions for future studies.

While female respondents with dependents almost exclusively used flexibility for their dependents, male respondents were significantly different. Male respondents typically used flexibility for their own personal use, as typified by the following quotes,

“I use the flexibility for running. I like some physical activity at lunch time”.

“I like to start early, so I can leave early and maybe get in some fishing or hunting”.

“I like to use it [the flexibility] during day light savings – I start early and can shoot off to go fishing”.

This respondent, who stated earlier he used the flexibility to help care for his handicapped child, also uses the flexibility on himself, as captured in the following statement.

“Sure I use it [flexibility] mainly on the family [specifically a handicapped child], but I also exercise 3 times a week in my lunchtime, and the flexibility gives me the option of working out longer if I want to”.

The following male respondent with three children, described himself as a 'sports fanatic'. Regarding his use of flexibility he stated,

"I love to go surfing - the surf here is great! I'll go out for a surf or a gym workout four times a week. When I workout all the pressures are gone. It's time for me! I enjoy myself. When I go home at 5pm, then I'm ready for the kids!"

Another male respondent, who likes to workout at the gym, stated,

"I start at 7am so I can get a full hour and a half at the gym. I find the flexibility has a real positive as exercise gets my stress down! I can also use the flexibility if I want to have a beer with the 'boys' at 4pm on a Friday!"

Overall, there is evidence to suggest a gender difference in use of the workplace flexibility practice. It appears that gender roles are reinforced by the flexibility practice, as women with dependents almost exclusively use the flexibility for their children, and not on themselves. Male users however, almost exclusively used flexibility for exercise and sports, and only one male user used the flexibility for family related commitments. Importantly though, six out of the nine male respondents (67%) noted the positive effects this had on themselves, such as reducing stress and allowing them to focus on their children at the end of the day. Whether there becomes a role trade-off at home, with these fathers taking care of dependents while the mother has a chance to relax is unknown, and offers an avenue for future research. Perhaps male users feel the pressures of being the bread-winner in the family, and this is reinforced with gender (males) correlating significantly and positively with salary (Pearson's correlation, $r=.59$, $p<.01$). Also, men work longer hours than females (Pearson's correlation, $r=.37$, $p<.01$). Perhaps these male flexibility users feel they earn the larger income, and work longer hours, and thus deserve the use of flexibility on themselves to ensure their long-term ability to work and earn the higher income. It might also be that there is a trade-off at home, and these men might do more around the home. However, Statistics New Zealand (2001) findings show as a national average, New Zealand

women spend 71% more time on domestic duties than do men, indicating this might be unlikely. Again, further studies that explore these issues would enable these relationships to be better understood.

Limitations

There are some limitations inherent with the thematic analysis approach that must be considered when interpreting these results. In particular, interviewer bias, which includes the interviewer misinterpreting or distorting responses, or encouraging or discouraging certain responses (Sekeran, 1992), might have occurred. While this is a possibility due to the researcher alone doing the interviews, writing up responses, and performing the thematic analysis on the data, this was reduced by doing structured interviews, where the researcher knew exactly what information was needed and a predetermined list of questions were used (Sekeran, 1992). The specific research questions typically sought an agreement, disagreement, or neutrality with the questions, for example, how useful are flexible work practices for balancing your work and family commitments, thus making the analysis of data much easier. In addition, the use of percentages as a way of indicating respondent support for a theme, for example, 87% agreement for flexibility enhancing work-family balance, also improves the interpretation. Importantly, the interviews did not involve unstructured interviews, where broader and typically several factors are explored, which would make interpreting responses under a thematic analysis potentially more difficult. Future research using thematic analysis should, where feasible, include an external researcher not involved in primary data collection, and perhaps include a response sheet that encourages 'body language' elements to be noted per respondent, for example, nods head, smiles in agreement, is enthusiastic in response etc. This would ensure body language aspects within thematic analysis, are fully integrated in the interpretation of data.

One last aspect that might limit the findings is that the sample was not truly random. Interview participants were chosen from the original 100 respondents, thus creating a non-random sample to begin with. In addition, five respondents were all from the same 'women's group' which founded and support the work-

family policies within the organisation. However, interviewee bias, where respondents do not give the truth, but provide information they think the interviewer is expecting or wants to hear (Sekeran, 1992), was probably not present because of these five respondents, one offered a largely negative response (the only negative response received), and another was neutral.

Conclusion

In conclusion the qualitative interviews reinforced much of the findings from the quantitative analysis of work-family practice users. Specifically, users of flexibility perceive greater work-family balance through using the practice, and this was supported by the thesis study finding, which found work-family practices linked with work-family conflict and family-work conflict. One disadvantage of comparing the quantitative and qualitative data is that the thesis explored use of six work-family practices, and not flexibility alone, as explored here. I re-ran the work-family conflict regressions with total use (past, present and future) of the flexibility practice as a predictor, instead of total use of all six practices. While the findings indicate the relationship between flexibility use and both WFC and FWC was not significant, they were both in a negative direction, and both regression models were significant (WFC $p < .05$; FWC $p < .01$). Unlike combined use of all six work-family practices, which held a significant and positive relationship with conflict, the negative relationship with flexibility use suggests that this practice might reduce conflict, and that appeared the case from the qualitative study. It might be that examining use of all six work-family practices 'clouds' or 'dilutes' the influences of single practices, such as flexitime. This is further shown through flexitime holding a negative relationship with WFC and FWC, while total work-family practice use was positive. Despite this difference, this highlights the advantage of interviews and does offer this organisation some evidence that flexibility does allow greater work-family balance, and the ability to reduce conflict levels.

A significant finding of the qualitative study was the positive links to work-family benefits, which had only moderate support in the quantitative study. However, the qualitative aspect did not readily explore aspects such as job satisfaction,

organisational commitment and perceived organisational support. It might be that in exploring these attitudes directly with a qualitative methodology would encourage respondents to answer in a positive way, thus leading to social desirability bias as a possible source of common method variance (Kline, Sulsky & Rever-Moriyama, 2000). Therefore, while much of the respondent feedback was positive and relates very much to the positive benefits or advantages found with work-family practice use in the thesis (recruitment and retention, and morale and loyalty advantages), other beneficial aspects were not explored. Future studies that explore qualitatively attitudes such as, reducing turnover intention, and increasing job satisfaction, would add valuable information to the work-family literature. It might also be of interest to determine whether employees perceive different advantages and positive effects from different work-family practices, for example flexitime compared to domestic leave.

There are some aspects of the current qualitative study that could have been expanded. Importantly, enlarging the sample size would have improved the overall generalisability of the qualitative findings. If interviews could have been conducted with all 100 original respondents that would have made comparisons between the quantitative and qualitative data more robust. If interviewing all 100 respondents became impossible, then a totally random selection of respondents (perhaps 50), would also improve the generalisability. In addition, employees might have been asked about attitudes towards the job and organisation, such as job satisfaction and turnover intention, to determine whether these related themes became apparent. Also, further exploration into the other work-family practices on offer (paid parental leave for example), might also have produced original findings.

Lastly, the qualitative research did confirm little support for a work-family backlash, as was found in the thesis through quantitative analysis. The inference that non-users will hold significantly different, and negative, attitudes than users, was not supported, and indicates that the needs-based allocation of resources might predominate in this organisation. Under need-based allocation, rewards are allocated according to need of the employee (Deutsch, 1975; Greenberg, 1987; Schwinger, 1986), and thus if non-users do not use the work-family practices

because of no need, then they would support other employees who use it, because they must, therefore, actually need it. The interviews did highlight that there was some felt negative reaction from colleagues, typically at employees using the flexibility to leave work early, however, this stopped once it was explained that the flexibility using employee came in early to leave early. Implications for employers and union groups could be to encourage employees to discuss and outline their flexibility plans and to communicate the fairness aspects of using the policy. For example, informing colleagues that next week an employee will be starting work early Monday to Friday, to allow them to leave earlier on the Friday. This might eliminate colleague suspicions, for example, ‘why is s/he leaving so early?’ and thus reduce the possibility of negative feelings.

Overall, the qualitative data provided strong support for the quantitative data, and does offer more indepth support for certain relationships, principally use of flexibility holding a negative relationship with work-family conflict. Therefore, the interviews offer more support for flexibility being able to reduce employee conflict levels that was previously found in the thesis data. In addition, some new aspects were discovered, including the organisation’s terminology of flexible work practices really meaning flexitime only. Also, the split between use by gender into family spheres by mothers and personal spheres by fathers, suggests some work-family practices such as flexitime, might actually reinforce gendered stereotypes rather than allow an even spread between work and family spheres.