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**THE LABOUR FORCE IN TRANSITION:
THE WORK AND FAMILY PROGRAM
A CASE STUDY**

Mary Perri

**A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Sociology and Anthropology**

**Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

August 1993

c Mary Perri, 1993



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ABSTRACT**The Labour Force In Transition: The Work and Family Program****A Case Study****Mary Perri**

With the increased participation rates of women with dependents in the labour force, employers have been faced with increased demands for job designs that take these responsibilities into account. In response to this, many companies have initiated Work and Family programs. This case study illustrates the components of the Work and Family program that are present at a major Canadian Bank. Data analysis suggest that those women most likely to take advantage of the program are those in the higher income levels who can afford to take time off without pay. These findings further suggest that such programs may play a major role in career planning for women in higher income jobs. However, for those women in low income jobs who cannot afford time off, these options remain elusive. Furthermore, the data indicated that males are less interested in the Work and Family program regardless of their occupational level.

For Rosa

whose courage, love and determination was an inspiration ...

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To my family ... particularly my children, Natasha and David: a *big thank you*. For all those week-ends and evenings when I wasn't around ... well it is finally over! To Joe and my mother for their moral support and endless days and nights of babysitting, I thank them wholeheartedly. Lastly, to Dave Nanderam, I am appreciative for his advice and for being there.

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Appendix B Interview Guide

"Women will be men's equal only when women will be allowed to be mediocre." (Female, Senior Manager)

"I have the impression that males feel this program has resolved all of our problems. In reality, we need more than a hot line (help centre) or brochures to end our misery." (Female, Manager)

"I am very sympathetic to women and the fact that they have children and they are responsible for them. My secretary is on maternity leave with her third child and she has hinted to the fact that she would like to work flexiplace - in other words a few days a week from the home. That's impossible. We need her in the office everyday; it just would not work out for our department. I feel for her ... but ..." (Male, Senior Manager)

"They should make managers more sensitive to the needs of the working parent ... not necessarily the needs of women. This should not only be a women's issue. Don't any of the males that work in this place have children? They should be taught the values of the family and how to blend them in with work." (Female, Loans Officer)

"You have to keep reminding the institution that they are not giving you a present. When you work part-time, there is an impact on a long-term basis. They hide that very well." (Female Lawyer)

INTRODUCTION

Historically an employer would employ an individual, pay him/her a salary accompanied with some fringe benefits, (e.g. a pension plan, dental and/or medical plan) and perhaps the possibility of advancement within the organization. Problems and concerns within the family were dealt with at home. There was a clear separation of work and family activities. Furthermore, unwritten rules such as, "never bring family concerns to the office," or "put in long hours regardless of family responsibilities" dictated the separation of work and family activities (Magid, 1986). Today, however, such guidelines are impossible for many workers and employers are being forced to accommodate workers' family obligations. For most women and men today, employing organizations and family are the two *central* institutions in life (Mortimer, Lorence, & Kumka, 1986) each of which exerts its own, often contradictory demands on the other.

The nature of the workforce is changing and will continue to change. One of the most significant changes is the increase in the number of and proportion of women in the labour force. Most noticeably, as women continue to invest heavily in education, employers cannot afford to overlook them as potential employees even at the most senior levels within the organization. Changes in the work force are accompanied by changes in values, creating a need to balance the demands of both work life and family activities (Hall, 1986).

Also, with pressures for employment equity legislation, the composition of our workforce may change drastically in terms of race, sex and age. There are on-going efforts within organizations to increase the number of women in upper management as well as visible minorities, and aboriginal people. Although such attempts are not all of an organization's own accord; they are all legislated to do this. This involves accepting different values, and understanding different traditions. It means changes in attitudes, hiring and promotion practices. It means treating people in minority groups as individuals and not as members of a minority group. This suggests that blending economics and values into the corporate structure, therefore, *should* be the model of the future.

Secondly, the traditional family with a single breadwinner, usually the male, and a spouse who remained at home to care for the children and manage the household is no longer predominant. The dual-career family is very much evident today (Galinsky & Stein, 1990).

In 1976, almost 60% of Canadian families with preschool children were traditional families, by 1990, approximately half of all couples with young children were dual-earners, most often with both parents' employed full time (Statistics Canada, 89-529E, 1992). The shift is even more evident among families in which the youngest child is of school age. In 1976, about 43% of families with school-age children were traditional families; by 1990, traditional families had become a minority. In 1990, the proportion

of traditional two-parent families with children aged 6 or older (20%) was only slightly higher than the proportion of one-parent families (18%) with children of the same age (Statistics Canada, 89-529E, 1992).

Child care has traditionally been regarded as a women's issue and not as a business concern, therefore, not an economic concern. However, with the large increase in the number of employed females, and changes in the traditional family, employers can no longer afford to ignore this phenomenon if they wish to remain competitive. The general assumption here is that such workers may need assistance coping with family concerns (i.e. day care facilities, or a flexible work schedule) if they are to concentrate on their work activities while at work. Thus, the "price tag" that employers will eventually be responsible for by failing to provide Work and Family Programs is: a work force crippled by the stress and distractions of the demands of both work and family.

Hardy and Hough (1991), note that men have also been the focus of much public controversy and negative attention in the last thirty years. Women could be blamed for raising these issues. But at the same time, they could be thanked for raising the level of consciousness of the males regarding the problem (Hardy & Hough, 1991). Women argue that feminism frees men from the economic burden of supporting a family alone (Farrell, 1986). Of course, the counter argument is that such sharing merely increases the work load for both men and women.

Although employers may feel that such programs are too costly, studies by Galinsky & Stein (1990), have shown that such programs increase productivity, increase employee morale, decrease absenteeism, and decrease turnover. Employees also remain loyal and more committed to their employer. Galinsky, a child care expert, has shown in her research that companies have reported paybacks in terms of increased productivity and employee satisfaction. "It also helps keep and retain valued employees," Galinsky added.

There has been a growing trend toward work flexibility and re-defining of the traditional work day (Bloom and Trahan, 1986; Evans, Doz, Laurent, 1990). With work flexibility, companies assess employees by what they produce and not the hours they work (Bureau of National Affairs, 1989). There has been a paradigm shift in the belief system of organizations. Employees juggling work and family demands need greater control over their work environments and time. Women's increased participation in the labour force is leading to a major shift in family responsibilities and increased demand for support such as child care. Many organizations are responding through the introduction of job-sharing programs, and flexible working hours. These programs do not come without a price: there are costs and benefits attached to these.

This is a study of the Work and Family program initiated by a major Canadian Bank. This case study will address issues related to parents work experience including: workplace support and flexibility. How available are workplace benefits and policies that

might support parents (e.g. parental leave, job sharing, and flextime)? More specifically, this discussion will address such issues as: i) who benefits from these programs, ii) the perceptions of managers, iii) males versus females, and, iv) management versus non-management will be examined.

The research framework for this study is shown in Figure 1 on the next page. This framework illustrates the interaction between changes in the labour market and the organization's response to these changes. The study is organized as follows. Chapter one lays out the theoretical foundation which is necessary if we are to fully comprehend the impact of both tangible (e.g. structural changes in the labour force) and intangible (e.g. societal values) forces on organizational changes.

Chapter two will focus on the issue of organizational change. More specifically we discuss; i) the changing nature of the labour force, ii) the structural changes in the composition of the family, iii) global competition, and finally iv) the effects of the recession.

In Chapter three I will discuss the evolution of child care services. Women have always worked, but the work they do is quite different. A higher proportion of women have higher levels of education, hold higher management positions, have delayed starting families and are being challenged with the double role they must play. This has necessitated some adjustments in the way organizations view women. As a result,

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

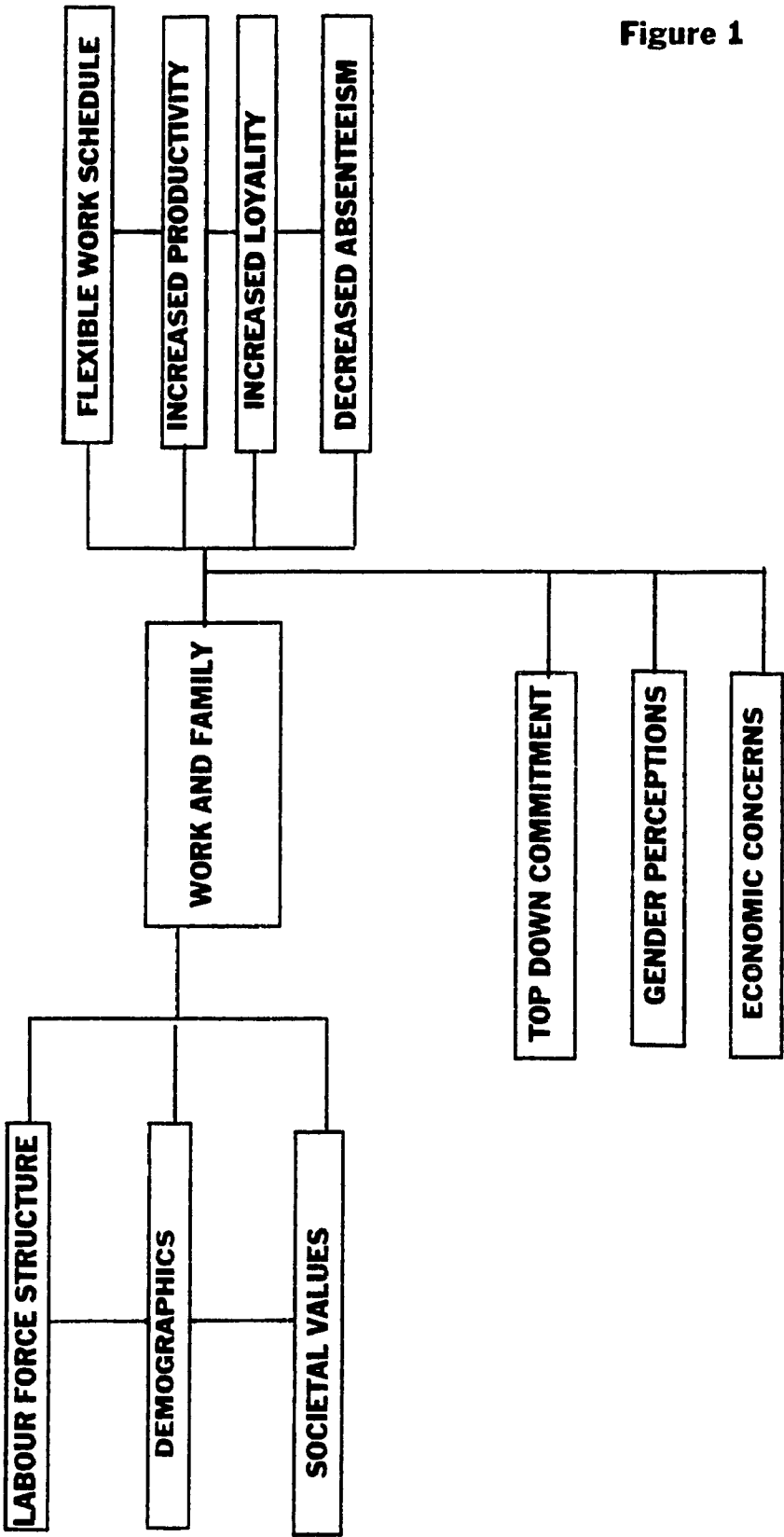


Figure 1

organizations are introducing programs and policies to change its corporate environment to accommodate women. It seems that the application and administration of these policies is being met with some resistance.

Chapter four introduces different modules which illustrate the relationship between life at work and life at home. This discussion is followed by a description of various alternative work schedules.

In Chapter five I will introduce my case study, provide some background on the organization. Also, I will outline my methodology and discuss the findings. Finally, I will have some concluding remarks in Chapter six.

CHAPTER 1

ORGANIZATIONS - A THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Introduction:

Life for most people today is shaped by one or another form of organization. As employees, we spend the majority of our waking hours in work organizations. For many people, organizations are a main source of their identity, (Sofer, 1972). Peter Drucker (1970, p. 44) observes, "Young people today will have to learn organizations the way their forefathers learned farming."

As a prerequisite to our discussion on organizational theory, we will provide a generic definition of an organization as defined in **The Harper Collins Dictionary of Sociology** (1991, p. 345-346).

Organization 1: "a type of collectivity established to pursue specific aims or goals, characterized by a formal structure of rules, authority relations, divisions of labour and limited membership or admission. This term is used mainly to refer to large-scale or complex organizations, which prevails all aspects of social life in modern society, for example, business enterprise"

Organization 2: "any purposeful arrangement of social activity or set of activities. Organization in this sense implies active control over human relations for specific ends, for example, work organization to specify allocation and coordination of tasks, patterns of authority, forms of recruitment, and employment relationships."

Based on the above definitions, organizations can be highly varied and often highly complex. However, we will begin with a simple model which describes the characteristics of an organization. They are: i) organizational structure, ii) social structure, iii) participants, and iv) the environment.

The Elements of Organizations:

Mintzberg states that "the structure of an organization can simply be defined as the total sum of ways in which its labour is divided into distinctive tasks and how its coordination is achieved among these tasks" (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 3).

i) Organizational Structure:

"Every organized human activity - from the making of pots to the placing of a man on the moon - gives rise to two fundamental and opposing requirements: the division of labour into various tasks to be performed, and the coordination of these tasks to accomplish the activity. The structure of an organization can be defined simply as the sum total of the ways in which it divides its labour into distinct tasks and then achieves coordination among them."
(Mintzberg, 1979, p. 3)

Structure, therefore, is basically a simple concept: the division of tasks for efficiency and clarity of purpose and coordination between the interdependent parts of the organization to ensure organizational effectiveness (Thompson & Strickland III, 1983). Structure balances the need for specialization with the need for integration. It provides a formal means of decentralizing and centralizing consistent with the organizational and

control needs of the strategy.

Structure is not the only means for getting the "organized" to implement the strategy. Reward systems, planning procedures and information and budgetary systems are other examples that should be employed. In the day-to-day implementation of strategy, these elements operate interdependently with the formal organizational structure¹ to shape how things are done. The other means are also important, but it is through structure that management attempts to balance internal efficiency and overall effectiveness within the broader environment.

The need for structure becomes more apparent as a business evolves. In a small firm, for example, where one main person manages current operations and plans for the future, organizational structure is relatively simple. Owner-managers have no organizational problem until their late-night sessions assimilating financial information, and pressed calls on potential customers are inadequate to meet the demands of a business's increasing volume. As the magnitude of business activity increases, the need to sub-divide activities, assign responsibilities, and provide for the integration and coordination of the new organizational parts becomes imperative. Diversity and size create unique structural needs for each firm, but structural choices involve basic underlying features common to most business organizations (Thompson & Strickland III,

¹. Organizations are planned. The plan is the formal structure - an organization chart specifying the hierarchy of authority and the rules. See **Foundations of Modern Sociology**, Spencer, Metta, 1985.

1983).

Jobs are locations within organizational structure. Thus, if we wish to understand how individuals are matched with jobs, we need to know what positions exist, how they are connected, and what rules are applied for sorting workers among them. This kind of research can be conducted only at the organizational level. (Baron and Bielby, 1980; Baron, 1984; Hodson and Kaufman, 1982) Not only are workers with differing characteristics employed, but workers with similar characteristics are treated differently depending on the organizational setting. For example, Stolzenberg (1978), using data from a national employment survey, has shown that size of the employer strongly affects the relation between a worker's education and his or her occupational status. His research suggests that education is a more important variable in recruiting workers in large-scale organizations than in small organizations.

Talbert and Bose (1977), examining survey data on retail clerks in a single metropolitan area, observed that in addition to the characteristics of individual workers, such organizational features as the degree of work routinization, type of clientele serviced, and status of merchandise handled affect employees wages. They suggested that since women and men are differentially located in organizations, much of the disparity in their earnings is attributable to sex segregation among store types, departments within stores, and jobs within departments. Although government rules forbid overt job discrimination by race or gender, we know far too little about the inter-organizational

mobility processes by which employees, once hired, are routed to different organizational locations that, independent of individuals' abilities, have a major impact on potential earnings and career opportunities. Kanter's (1977) description of the maze of traps, dead ends, escalators, and fast tracks associated with different positions and departments in the large corporation she studied suggests how intricate and subtle are the mobility processes at work in contemporary organizations by virtue of their own internal labour markets.

The presence of internal labour markets provide an especially pertinent example of how organizations manage the mobility process. The classical economic assumption that workers move freely from job to job and firm to firm, has been severely challenged by labour and institutional economists such as Kerr (1954) and Doeringer and Piore (1971). The latter analysts have emphasized the extent to which information, opportunities, mobility and rewards are differentially structured and shaped by varying occupational levels, industry, and organizational arrangements. Among the more important distinctions they introduce is that between internal and external labour markets. Doeringer and Piore (1971, p. 1) define internal labour markets as those within "an administrative unit, such as a manufacturing plant, within which the pricing and allocation of labour is governed by a set of administrative rules and procedures." The key features of internal labour markets are (1) a cluster of jobs that (2) are hierarchically structured into one or more job ladders representing a progression in knowledge or skills, and that (3) include a few "entry ports" at the lower levels connecting them with wider, external

labour markets (Althauser and Kalleberg, 1981). The more internal labour markets that exist, the more mobility processes within a society are shaped by organizational job structures and their hiring and promotional processes rather than by market processes, and the more control organizations have over their membership boundaries.²

And what are the factors that lead to the creation of internal labour markets? Williamson (1981) argues that the most important influence on what type of labour market is created is the specificity of the human assets. The human assets of an organization are, of course, the skills and knowledge of its personnel. Specificity refers not simply to the extent of specialization of knowledge and skills, but to the degree to which these skills are transferable across employers. The deeper and more specialized one's skills are in the view of a specific employer, the more dependent is that employer on that employee, and vice versa. Thus, it is in the interests of both to create a "protective governance structure, lest productive values be sacrificed if the employment relation is unwittingly severed", (Williamson 1981, p. 563). An internal labour market serves the employee's interests by providing the prospects of upward mobility through a career path, with increased earnings accompanying progression in skills. And the employer's interests are served because valuable workers in whom investments in training have been made are less likely to desert them for a competitor.

² Althauser and Kalleberg (1981) also point out that internal labour markets can exist within and under the control of occupations. Occupations provide an alternative to organizations in the structure of jobs and work activities.

Although there remain differences in the explanations of internal labour markets, there is agreement, that their existence within an organization constitutes a significant boundary in the mobility process: would-be participants encounter barriers to entry and are restricted to a limited number of low-level positions from which they must work their way up; current employees enjoy job security and anticipate future advancement, reducing the probability of turnover and increasing their commitment to the organization.

ii) Social Structure:

Social structure refers to the routinized aspects of the relationships between employees within an organization. The structure of any human grouping can be analytically separated into two components. As Kingsley Davis (1949, p. 52) suggests,

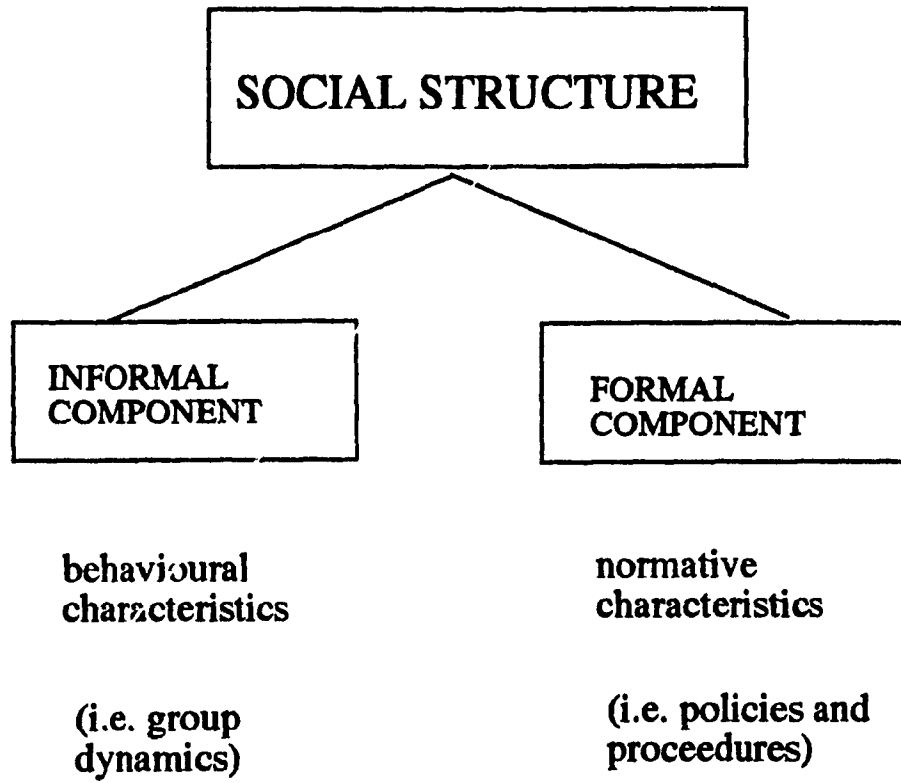
... always in human society there is what may be called a double reality - on the one hand a normative system embodying what *ought* to be, and on the other a factual order embodying what is ... these two orders cannot be completely identical, nor can they be completely disparate.

We will examine Davis's first component: the *normative structure*, which includes values, norms and role expectations. Briefly, values are the criteria employed in selecting the goals of behaviour; norms are the generalized rules governing behaviour that specify, in particular appropriate means for pursuing goals; and roles are expectations for or evaluative standards employed in assessing the behaviour of occupants of specific

social positions. A social position is simply a location in a system of social relationships.

The second component which Davis refers to as "a factual order", we will call the *behavioural structure*. This component focuses on actual behaviour rather than on prescriptions for behaviour. Homans' (1950, p. 33-40), well-known social classification of social behaviour into activities, interactions, and sentiments suggest the type of elements that constitute the behavioural structure. Since our concern is with the analysis of behavioural *structure*, rather than simply behaviour, we will focus on those activities interactions and sentiments that exhibit some degree of regularity - the recurrent behaviour of a given individual or similarities in the behaviour of a class of individuals. Such actions, exhibiting some consistency and constancy in their general characteristics, are themselves arranged into larger patterns or networks of behaviour.

As Davis reminds us, the normative structure and the behavioural structure of a social group are neither independent nor identical, but are to varying degrees interrelated. See Figure 2 on the next page. Behaviour shapes norms, just as norms shape behaviour. Therefore, groups vary in the extent to which their normative and their behavioural structures are aligned. All social groups - or *collectivities*, to use the more general term - are characterized by a normative structure applicable to the participants and by a behavioural structure linking participants in a common network or patterns of activities, interactions, and sentiments. These two interrelated structures constitute the *social structure* of a collectivity.



The social structure of an organization varies to the extent to which it is formalized. A formal social structure is one in which the social positions and the relationships among them have been explicitly specified and are defined independently of the personal characteristics of the participants occupying these positions. By contrast, in an informal social structure, it is impossible to distinguish between the characteristics of the positions and the characteristics of the participants. In an informal structure, when specific participants leave or enter the system, their roles and relationships develop and change as function of their personal characteristics and the interactions that occur among them.

iii) Participants:

This component includes the demographic characteristics of the participants. For example, their age, gender and ethnic distributions have important consequences for many aspects of organizational structure and functioning. The structural features of organizations - the opportunities they create and the sorting rules they use for selection and retention and promotion have equal consequences for participants.

The mix of participants has implications for the organization. Considering only those participants who are identified as members of the organization, who are recruited and how long they remain with the organization has a range of implications for the structure and performance of the organization. In their research on organizational

membership and demographic composition, McNeil and Thomson (1971), and later on (1983) Pfeffer found that the demography of the organization - the aggregated characteristics of its members, including their age, sex, education, ethnicity, and length of service is increasingly recognized as a major determinant of organizational structure and performance. For example, we want to know as much as we can about who the members of the organization are, what they are like with regard to their roles as employees, and what kind of culture exists among them. Albrecht (1988) in his research on organizational development found that the basic demographics of the organization can tell us a great deal about the people as a kind of society at work. For example, a company may have a very high proportion of women employees. This will have certain implications for interest, views, and values and personal needs and preferences for work styles. While very young childless working women may not be so interested in the balancing act between work and family, older working women may have a greater preference for this issue. Older women may view part-time work or job sharing a priority.

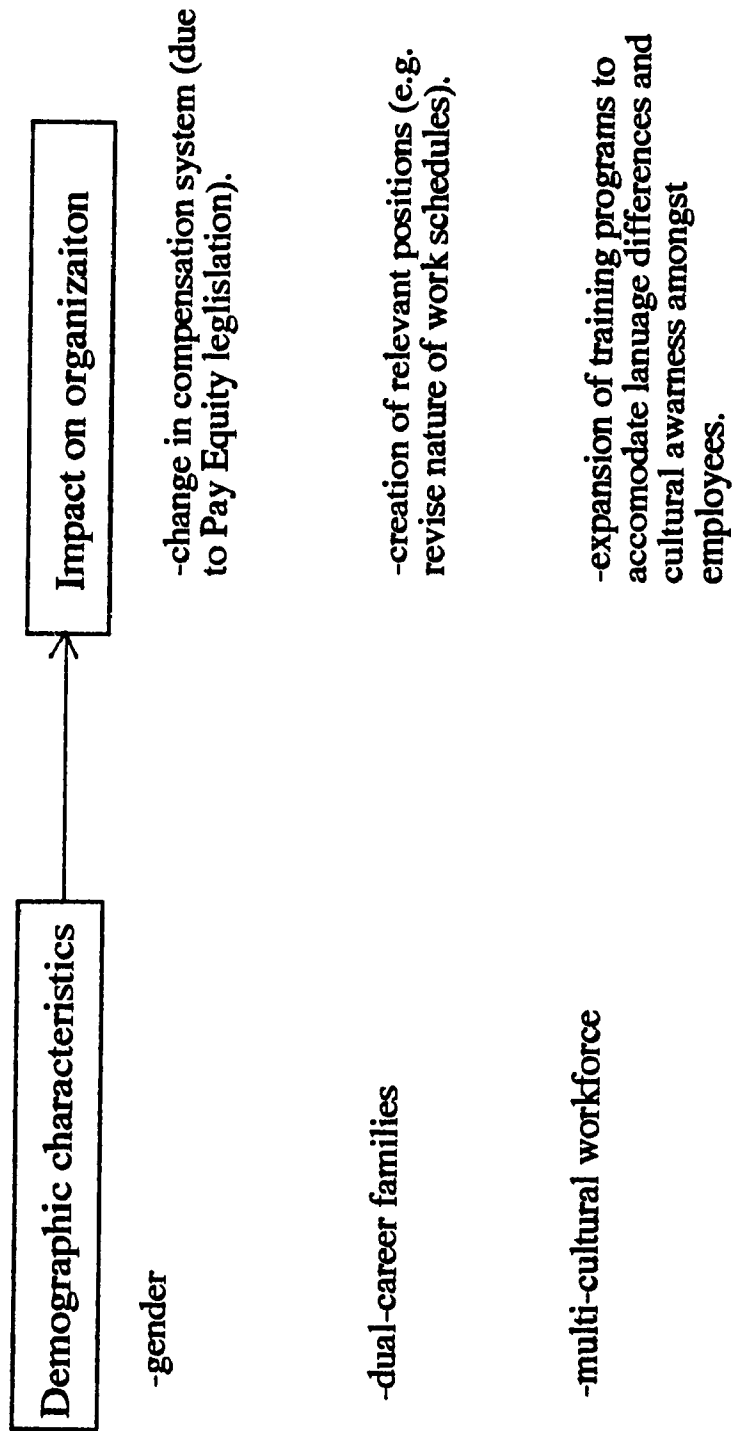
As another example, in a work force made up of young people, retirement plans and a seniority oriented benefit system may have very little appeal and may not serve as very strong deterrents to turnover. For these people, liberal vacation plans, opportunities for leave without pay, and rapid mobility opportunities may be much more important.

For these and other reasons, the age, gender distributions and ethnic background of the work force are very important elements of information since they do, in fact, influence organizational design changes. See Figure 3 on the next page.

Mintzberg (1979), and Pfeffer (1983), found that the demographic composition of organizations is influenced by such factors as the growth rate of the organization and the industry in which it is located, and finally the rapidity with which the organization's technology is changing. For example, the increase of technology in an industry usually is suggestive of more routine clerical tasks - these are usually performed by women. Also, this type of change is sometimes accompanied by an increase in part-time work. Pfeffer suggests that the more rapid these changes, the more likely the organization will be hiring new and better-educated workers. The personnel practices that are followed are dependent on whether the organization is unionized or not. For example, those that are unionized are more likely to be promoted on the basis of tenure rather than solely by merit (Pfeffer, 1983).

The effects of demographic composition are wide-ranging. Their variety can be indicated by a few illustrations. Kanter (1977) has examined the consequences of widely varying proportions of group members having one or another attribute, for example, the ratio of men to women, whites to blacks or younger to older participants - on the attitudes and performance of the group. Focusing on a collection of women who occupied less

IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHICS COMPONENTS ON ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



20
Figure 3

than 10 percent of the salaried jobs in a corporation, Kanter observed that the few women reaching the upper levels of management were trained as tokens: because they were "different" they were highly visible, the ways in which they varied from the majority took on exaggerated importance, and performance pressures were heightened by their "life in the limelight." Kanter (1977, p. 241-242) explains how tokenism can shape the behaviour and expectations of those involved:

Tokens of Type O who are successful in their professional roles face pressures and inducements to dissociate themselves from other O's, and thus they may fail to promote, or even actively block, the entry of more O's. At the same time, tokens are less than successful and appear less than fully competent confirm the organization's decision not to recruit more O's, unless they are extraordinarily competent and not like most O's. And since just a few O's can make the X-majority people feel uncomfortable, X's will certainly not go out of their way to include more O's.

In this manner, tokenism can become a self-perpetuating system. It is not only the initial resource mix and the assortment of incentives that shape the structure and performance of organizations. The creation of an organization is not a one-time event, but a continual process.

iv) Environment:

Every organization exists in a specific physical, technological, cultural and social

environment to which it must adapt. No organization is self-sufficient; all depend for survival on the types of relations they establish with the larger systems, (e.g. companies conform to employment equity legislation) of which they are a part. Early analysts of organizations, tended to overlook or underestimate the importance of organization-environmental connections, (Sofer, 1972), but recent research such as Mintzberg's (1979) study of organizations places a great emphasis on these connections.

For example, very few organizations assume full responsibility for the socialization and training of their participants. Employees come to the organization with heavy cultural and social baggage obtained from interactions in other institutions (Goffman, 1961). Participants are involved in more than one organization at any given time. These external environmental interests and commitments (e.g. government bodies or union membership), inevitably influence the behaviour of participants in any given organization and, in some instances, strongly influence it. To regard participants as completely contained by the organization is to misperceive one of the fundamental characteristics of organizations: that they are systems built on the partial involvement of their members (Lawler, 1992). Similarly, few organizations create their own technologies; rather, they import them from the environment in the form of mechanical equipment, packaged programs and sets of instructions, and trained workers. Any specific organization must also adapt to the larger occupational structure; for example, government regulations, union rules or professional norms - in the selection and

deployment of workers within the organization.

Open Systems:

Now that we have discussed some of the more generic components of an organization, we will examine the relationship of these components from two perspectives. First, the open system - a more classical interpretation. Secondly, we will discuss a more contemporary approach such as the one developed by Henry Mintzberg (1979).

For the purposes of this research, I decided to focus primarily on the open systems perspective. Since it provides a more realistic representation of the organization in my research. For example, it more closely illustrates the relationship between the organization in my case study and external environmental factors which affect organizational change. Before we begin our discussion on the components and advocates of the open systems perspectives we need to preface our discussion with a working definition.

Definition:

Boulding (1956), suggested that rather than viewing the organization as a coherent system of relations oriented to the pursuit of specific goals, we might view it more accurately as an opportunistic collection of divergent interest groups temporarily banded

together. Pondy, and Mitroff (1979), stated that organizations are not closed systems, sealed off from their environments, but are open to and dependent on flows of personnel and resources from outside (Pondy, Mitroff, 1979). Also, if an organization is to survive, it must induce participants to contribute resources, energy and time to it. Individuals have different interests and value various inducements: they join and leave the organization depending on the bargains they can strike - the relative advantage to be had from staying or going. Therefore, an open systems perspective of an organization is defined by Blau and Scott (1962, p. 3) as "coalitions of shifting interest groups that develop goals by negotiation; the structure of the coalition, its activities, and its outcomes are strongly influenced by environmental factors."

Characteristics of Open Systems:

"Open systems are capable of self-maintenance on the basis of a throughput of resources from the environment." As Buckley (1967, p. 50) notes, this throughput is essential to the system's viability. Some analysts have characterized an open system as having the capacity for self-maintenance despite the presence of throughput from the environment; their assumption is that because organizations are open, they must defend themselves against the environment. This view is misleading since interaction with the environment is essential for open system functioning. As Pondy and Mitroff (1979, p. 7) argue, rather than suggesting that organizational systems be protected "against environmental complexity," one should realize that "it is precisely the throughput of

nonuniformity that preserves the differential structure of an open system."

This is not to say that open systems do not have boundaries. They do, of course, and must expend energy in boundary maintenance. But it is of equal importance that energies be devoted to activities that span boundaries. Because of the openness of organizations, determining their boundaries is always difficult and sometimes appears to be quite an arbitrary decision. All systems are made up of subsystems and are themselves subsumed in larger systems - an arrangement that creates linkages across systems and confounds the attempt to erect clear boundaries among them. Finally, to determine whether a system is open is itself a matter of how the boundaries of the system are defined. As Hall and Fagen note, "whether a given system is open or closed depends on how much of the universe is included in the system and how much in the environment" (Hall & Fagen, 1980, p. 201).

A classic viewpoint of an organization that is based on the open system perspective is the one developed by Weick (1974).

Weick's View on Organizations:

Karl Weick (1969: rev. 1979) provides a more dynamic (as opposed to static) view of organizations within the open systems framework. Weick cites, with approval, Bateson's (1972, p. 334) motto "stamp out nouns." He argues,

The word organization is a noun and it is also a myth. If one looks for an organization, one will not find it. What will be found is that there are events, linked together, that transpire within concrete walls and these sequences, their pathways, their timing, are the forms we erroneously make into substances when we talk about an organization. (Weick, 1974, p. 358).

Weick suggests that rather than talking about organizations, the focus of our attention should be "organizing". This is a very explicit example of the manner in which the open systems perspective attempts to shift attention from organizational structure to organizational process.

Weick defines organizing as "the resolving of equivocality in an enacted environment by means of interlocked behaviours embedded in conditionally related processes" (1969, p. 91). We will attempt to decipher this definition. Weick argues that organizing is directed toward information processing generally and, in particular, toward removing its equivocality. He explains that:

"... the basic raw materials on which organizations operate are informational inputs that are ambiguous, uncertain, equivocal. Whether the information is embedded in tangible raw materials, assigned tasks or union demands, there are many possibilities, or sets of outcomes that might occur. Organizing serves to narrow the range of possibilities, to reduce the number of "might occurs." The activities of organizing are directed toward the establishment of a workable level of uncertainty (Weick, 1969, p. 40)."

Weick's major concern, therefore, is to spell out the implications of the open systems perspective when applied to the level of individual participants and the relationships among them.

We now turn our attention to a more contemporary description of an organization.

Mintzberg's Model:

Mintzberg's typology of structural configurations is reflective of the open systems approach to the extent that each structural configuration illustrates a particular relationship between the organization and its particular environment. The work of Mintzberg reflects a contemporary view of the open systems approach since his argument is that the most effective and efficient form of an organization is dependent on its market environment and its technology.

Mintzberg uses a classification system comprised of five structural configurations which describe organizations. The prevalent structural configuration is contingent on various internal and external environmental factors such as, 1) the age of the organization and, 2) the product/service. Furthermore, Mintzberg argues that each of these structural configurations do not exist independently and that no one structural configuration is superior to another. Any organization, he argues, may simultaneously exhibit characteristics of more than one structural configuration.

Each of his structural configurations is comprised of a specific coordinating mechanism, divisionalized form of labour and form of decentralization. Table 1 on the following page illustrates the components of Mintzberg's model. Let us examine each component in brief.

Table 1
Mintzberg's Structural Configurations

Structural Configurations	Prime Coordinating Mechanisms	Key Part of Organization	Type of Decentralization
<i>Simple Structure</i>	Direct supervision	Strategic apex	Vertical and horizontal centralization
<i>Machine Bureaucracy</i>	Standardization of work process	Technostructure	Limited horizontal decentralization
<i>Professional Bureaucracy</i>	Standardization of skills	Operating core	Vertical and horizontal decentralization
<i>Divisionalized Form</i>	Standardization of outputs	Middle line	Limited vertical decentralization
<i>Adhocracy</i>	Mutual adjustment	Support staff	Selective decentralization

Source: Mintzberg, H., *The Structuring of Organizations; A Synthesis of the Research*, 1979, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall Inc., p. 301.

Coordinating Mechanisms:

Mintzberg describes the five coordinating mechanisms which explain the fundamental ways in which organizations coordinate their work. They are the most basic elements of structure, the glue that holds the organization together (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 3). They are:

Mutual Adjustment achieves the coordination of work by the simple process of informal communication (Mintzberg, 1979). Control of the work rest in the hands of the doers. This form of coordination is used primarily in the simplest forms of organization where everyone is a "specialist" of sorts.

Direct supervision achieves coordination by having one person take responsibility for the work of others, issuing instructions to them and monitoring their actions (Mintzberg, 1979). One person assumes responsibility for the work of others even though they all perform specific tasks. For example in football, the quarter-back supervises all other team members. This coordinating mechanism is a natural extension of the former when the organization begins to grow.

Work processes are standardized when the contents of the work are specified or programmed (Mintzberg, 1979). For example, on an assembly-line, the job may require a specific action at a specific time - regardless of the worker's personal traits.

Standardization of outputs occur when the results of the work - for example, the dimensions of the product or the performance are specified

(Mintzberg, 1979). Mintzberg cites taxi drivers as an example. They are not told how to drive or what route to take, they are simply informed where to deliver their fares. Taxi drivers have to have the same skills in driving, just as doctors require the same skills in removing an appendix.

Standardization of skills (and/or knowledge) occurs when the kind of training required to perform the work is specified (Mintzberg, 1979). In this case, workers come to the job with the appropriate skills/knowledge required to perform a job. For example, a dentist will react routinely to a patient who requires a root canal; since his/her professional training, with respect to this situation, is standardized. In essence, standardization of skills achieves indirectly what standardization of work process or of work output does directly; it controls and coordinates the work.

Division of Labour:

The various divisions of labour represent a cross-section of "those charged with overall responsibility for the organization" (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 24).

The *strategic apex* refers to top management. Absolute power over all aspects of the organization resides at this level. At this level, the direction and mission of the organization is developed and diffused throughout the rest of the organization.

Middle line refers to the range of managers from senior managers to shop-floor supervisors. This section is characterized by a scalar chain of power and authority and acts as a liaison between the workers and top management.

The *operating core* is the level at which input is transformed into output. It usually represents the bulk of the workforce in most organizations and is characterized by assemblers, for example, shippers, purchasing agents and so on.

The *technostructure* represents the realm of the analyst. For example, within this realm, we find work study analysts like engineers and planning and control analysts like Quality Control personnel; and personnel analysts like Human Resources personnel.

Finally, there is the *support staff structure*. This group is characterized by workers that provide the day to day support and includes secretarial and legal personnel.

Forms of Decentralization:

Vertical and horizontal centralization - when decisional power is concentrated in the hands of the individual who resides at the top of the organizational hierarchy (e.g. President and Chief Executive Officer). This individual also directly coordinates all organizational functions.

Limited horizontal decentralization (selective) - in this case, power is still concentrated in the upper echelons of management (i.e. at the strategic apex), but some personnel within the Technostructure (e.g. analysts) gain some power simply because of their technical expertise.

Limited vertical decentralization (Parallel) - managers have delegated powers by virtue of the divisions that they are responsible for. For example, in the banking industry, Bank X has many divisions which are headed by managers with "equal" power.

Selected vertical and horizontal decentralization - managers from various divisions may direct/control resources across divisions as necessary. For example, if one division requires technical expertise from another, or when one manager is temporarily in control of another similar division.

Vertical and horizontal decentralization - decision power is concentrated in the operating core of the organization. For example, in a highly specialized organization (e.g. stock market) individuals have specialized knowledge/skills, therefore, they are in a position to manage themselves.

Structural Configurations:

Organizations in their infancy stages would display characteristics of a *simple structure* configuration. Similarly, organizations that are relatively small would also display characteristics of a simple structure configuration.

Organizations that provide a stable product (e.g. utility companies) would be suited to a *machine bureaucracy* configuration. Most large organizations in society fall into this category. They have multiple layers of management and they are slow to react to environmental changes.

Organizations that are characterized by professionals who usually work independently of each other (e.g. universities) would be suited to the *professional bureaucracy* configuration. In this case there is a standardization of skills and knowledge but workers are free to perform a variety of functions. The medical profession is a good example. Every doctor is required to pass standardized examinations before they can go on and specialize in a specific area.

The *divisionalized form* is more a set of quasi-autonomous entities coupled together by a central administrative structure than it is an integrated organization. The divisionalized form is most widely used in the private sector of the industrialized economy. This form differs from the other four configurations in one important respect. Each division has its own structure, (i.e. strategic apex to operating core). This form relies on different product markets as a basis for the structure of each division. Financial organizations are a good example. Banks have many divisions that offer different products, (i.e. personal loans, corporate loans, and insurance).

"Adhocracies", for Mintzberg, are the most appropriate models with dynamic and unpredictable environments. This structure is one of extreme flexibility (Mintzberg, 1979). Therefore, it utilizes information systems that report on external events and trends, delegates authority to personnel with the greatest expertise, fosters free vertical and lateral communication, and creates integrative devices that facilitate intensive collaboration to solve complex adaptive problems (Thompson, 1967, Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Most adhocracies are also characterized by skilled technocrats whose decisions are guided more by their professional training than by the policies (Burns & Stalker, 1961). To adapt to rapidly-evolving market needs, product/service technologies are made as flexible as possible (Stinchcombe, 1959-1960). Finally, the strategy of the firm is often one of customization or innovation (Miles & Snow, 1978). The goal is to stay on top of markets by providing state-of-the-art goods and services.

Prevalent Views on Organizational Theories:

Mintz, Shultz and Mintz (1979), suggest that one goal of organization management has always been maintaining equilibrium between stability and change in response to both internal and external environmental pressures. Authors such as Lawler (1992), Herrick (1990), Hirschhorn (1984) state that the survival of bureaucratic organizations is being challenged because of their inability to respond flexibly and appropriately to the needs of their employees and environment .

These authors advocate that an open system view offers the needed alternative to bureaucracies. This view does not reject being organized as a condition of modern human enterprise. Rather, it presents a way of understanding and developing organizations so that management processes and individual human potential work together instead of against each other. This model can enable organizations to become more flexible both internally and externally, while maintaining stability and purpose.

Bureaucracies became the usual dominant form of organizations during the industrial revolution. A bureaucracy may be characterized as an organizations pyramid with wealth, power, and control concentrated at the top. Leaders are concerned with determining who belongs and rewarding those whom they like.

Classic bureaucratic theory (Mintz, Shultz and Mintz, 1979), and practice assumed a relatively stable, predictable environment. The above authors suggest that this assumption was largely grounded in the world view of Isaac Newton, who saw the world and all its components as mechanistic, network of causes producing inevitable effects. People were considered inherently weak, lazy, avaricious, lustful and disposed to evil. Therefore, they had to be organized to work in a reliable, predictable fashion to achieve chosen organization goals.

A more recent approach seems to be that more workers fit Abraham Maslow's description of "self-actualized" people. He characterized such people as uniformly devoted to some task, calling, vocation, or beloved work (Maslow, 1967). Contemporary scholars Mintz, Shultz and Mintz (1979) advocate placing meaningful tasks above wage, and satisfying relations with co-workers above fringe benefits. They prefer responsibility, freedom, creativity, and supportive relationships to economic security and bureaucratic conformity.

At the same time, more women and minorities are working, bringing a wide variety of expectations, orientations, backgrounds, and problems. These diverse values and motivations have profound implications for organizational planning, development and operation. Organizations can no longer count on the work ethic and the profit motive to provide cohesiveness and direction for everyone (Mintz, Shultz, and Mintz, 1979). The

quality of life and the challenge and satisfaction of jobs must also be taken into account.

An open organization interacts with its environment. Feedback is the key operating principle. Research by Pasmore (1988) indicates that the open systems view also defines adaptability in terms of the capacity for internal responsiveness. Organizational planning must take account of diverse motivations and values, perspectives and resources of employees. In the bureaucratic hierarchy these decisions are made at the top and passed down. The thought given to views and aspirations of personnel at lower levels depends on the wisdom and personalities of the authorities. The open systems approach, on the other hand, demands that planning be organization-wide and ongoing. All members provide input and feedback, with the group recognizing the special competencies of individual members, and with competence serving as the crucial element in decision-making.

Summary:

Each organizational element discussed: structure, participants, and environment, represent an important component of all organizations. However, Mintz reminds us that no one element is so dominant as to be safely considered in isolation from the others. Organizations are first and foremost, systems of elements, each of which affects and is affected by the others. And no organization can be understood in isolation from the larger environment.

Mintzberg discusses various organizational structures. These include the simple structure, machine bureaucracy, professional, and adhocracy. Furthermore, his model for describing an organization is contingent on the various combinations of, i) coordinating mechanisms, ii) divisions of labour, and iii) power/authority decentralization strategies as they relate to factors such as the age and size of the organization as well as its relationship to the environment.

The open systems view of organizational structure stresses both individual participants and subgroups - as well as the looseness of connections among them. Parts are viewed as capable of semiautonomous action; many parts are viewed as, at best loosely coupled to other parts.

Contemporary research also seems to support the open system perspective. The major argument being that given the changes in demographics, current restructuring and global competition, most organizations need to be more responsive to their business environment if they wish to survive and remain competitive.

In the next section we will discuss organizational change. More specifically, the interaction between changes in the labour market and organizational change.

CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Introduction:

Organizations today are increasingly being called upon to address the issue of their employees' family responsibilities (Rodgers & Rodgers, 1989). The issue is a cause for concern because (1) there is increasing debate on the effect of these responsibilities on job performance (2) researchers believe that dependent care is becoming a strategic issue that corporations can use to achieve competitive advantage (Thomas and Thomas, 1990). Aside from these concerns there is a growing acceptance that corporations have a responsibility to society as a whole and to their employees in particular (Lewin, 1983; Bozeman, 1987). This responsibility is a social and ethical one, and must include caring for the "organizational family" (Robin and Reidenbach, 1987; Buchholz 1989). Robin and Reidenbach (1987) argue that caring for the needs of the employee - including dependent care needs - must be considered a basic "organizational value" and integrated into a corporation's strategic planning process. Further, according to Buchholz, such concerns relate to a corporation's ethical perspectives, for "... ethics deals with questions that relate to make a life worth living ..." and "helping people to achieve such a life."

Indeed, some large companies have responded to the demographic shifts in the workforce and society with programs designed to ease the conflicts employers experience

between work and family demands. The Bank of Montreal, for example, has a full-time executive whose title is Vice-President, Workplace Equality. This Bank is committed to the needs of the family and has set-up various flexible work options as well as leave of absences for various purposes. These include community service, education and care for the elderly. IBM recently decided to spend more than \$25 million to assist employees with their needs for child care and elder care (Galinsky & Stein, 1990).

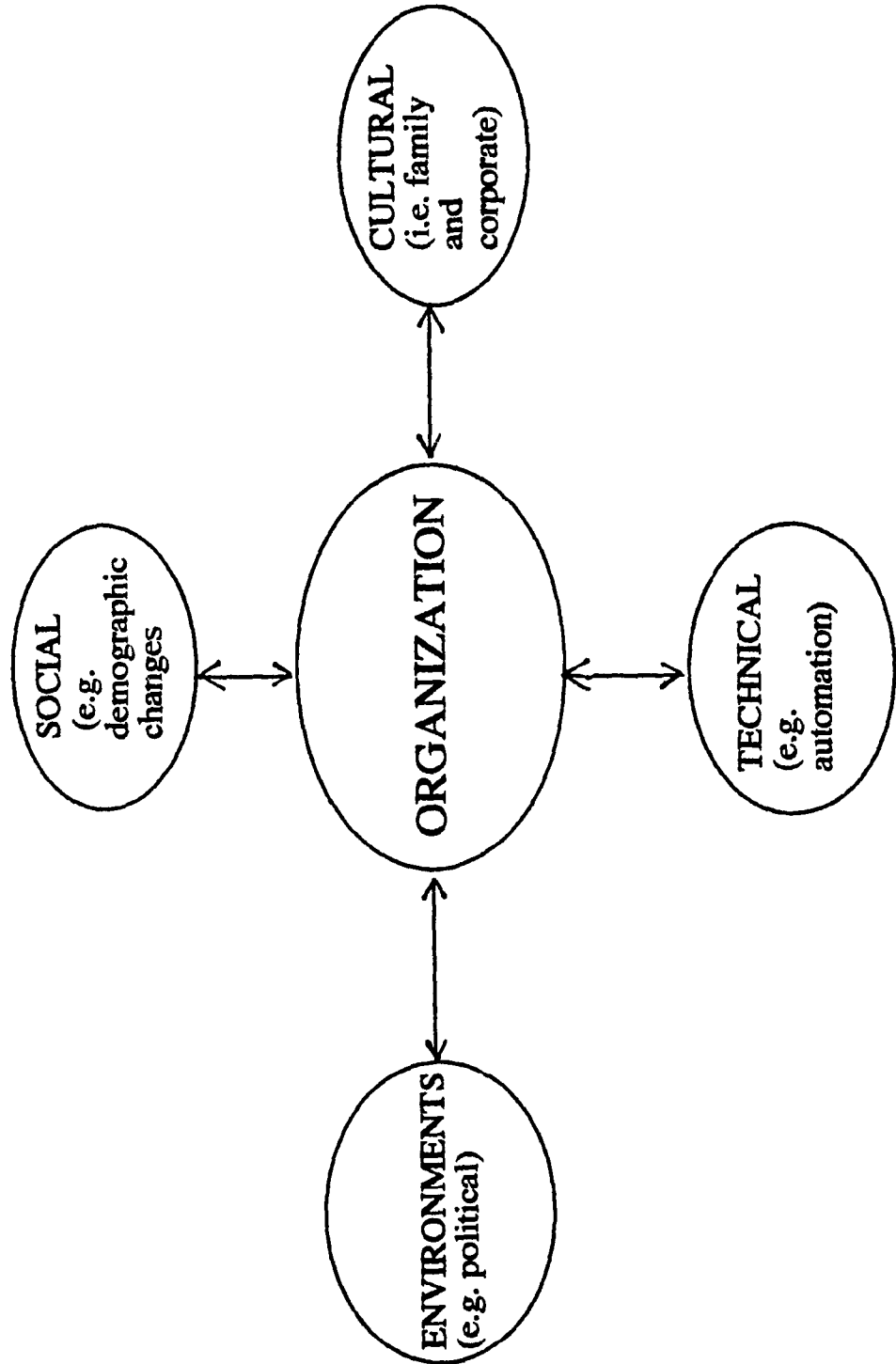
Before we examine *how* organizations change we need to understand *why* they change. For the purpose of this discussion, I will argue that the factors which affect organizational change can be classified under two main areas. First, we will look at the impact of structural changes in the labour market at the level of the firm. Secondly, we will focus on some more intangible cultural changes, and their impact at the level of the firm. More specifically, we will address; i) changing attitudes about work, ii) the change role of women, and iii) family structural changes/corporate cultural changes (see Figure 4 on the next page).

Structural Changes in the Labour Market:

Demographics:

Demographic trends contribute to the social pressure we now place on managers to address firms' institutional effectiveness. With more than 70% of women between the ages of 20 and 44 working, for instance, companies today find themselves forced to confront employee concerns about child rearing, day care and mobility. In

COMPONENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL INTERACTION



Canada, estimates show that by 1995 some 66% of preschool children and 75% of school-age children will have mothers who work outside the home.³

Participation Rates:

The number of women and men participating in the labour force has steadily increased from 1966 to 1993. This is illustrated in Table 2 on the next page.

³ See Milliken, F.J., Dutton, J.E. , and Beyer, J.M. "Understanding Organizational Adaptation to Change: The Case of Work-Family Issues," **Human Resource Planning**, 13: 1990, 91-107.

Table 2
Historical Participation Rates by Sex and Age

Year	Total	Males (25-65) (000s)	Females (25-65) (000s)	Young Workers (15-24) (000s)
1966	57.3	79.8	35.4	56.2
1967	57.6	79.3	36.5	56.6
1968	57.6	78.6	37.1	56.5
1969	57.9	78.3	38.1	56.4
1970	57.8	77.8	38.3	56.1
1971	58.1	77.3	39.4	56.7
1972	58.6	77.5	40.2	58.1
1973	59.7	78.2	41.9	60.5
1974	60.5	78.7	43.1	62.5
1975	61.1	78.4	44.4	62.9
1976	61.1	77.6	45.2	62.4
1977	61.6	77.7	46.1	63.2
1978	62.7	78.1	47.9	64.4
1979	63.4	78.5	49.1	66.2
1980	64.1	78.4	50.4	67.2
1981	64.8	78.4	51.7	67.8
1982	64.1	77.1	51.7	65.8
1983	64.4	76.7	52.6	66.1
1984	64.8	76.6	53.6	66.8
1985	65.3	76.6	54.6	67.4
1986	65.7	76.6	55.3	68.4
1987	66.2	76.6	56.4	69.1
1988	66.7	76.6	57.4	69.6
1989	67.1	76.7	57.9	70.2
1990	67.1	75.9	58.4	68.9
1991	66.3	74.8	58.2	67.1
1992	65.5	73.8	57.6	65.1
1993*	65.3	73.7	57.6	64.2

* To March 1993

Source: Canadian Economic Observer, **The Labour Force, 1993, Supply and Services Canada, Cat. No. 11-010.**

In Table 2 note that the participation rates for women have increased steadily from 1966 to 1993. In 1966, 35.4% of the labour force were women compared to 1986 when their participation increased to 55.3%. By 1993, this number was at 57.6%. The increase in dual income families together with the increase in single working mothers are acceptable factors which have contributed to the increases in women's participation in the labour force.

During the same period, 1966-1993, men's participation in the labour force has slowly decreased: from 79.8% in 1966 to 77.6% in 1976 and down to 76.6% in 1986. By 1993, this number dropped to 73.7%. The current recession as well as the recession of the early 80s has contributed to this decrease, as men in this age category (45-65) are retiring earlier.

The participation rates of young workers (15-24 years) increased steadily until about 1989 at which time it has continued to decline. This is illustrated in Table 2. For example, in 1966, it was at 56.2%, compared to 68.4% in 1986. By 1989 it peaked to 70.2%, and by March 1993 it had dropped to 64.2%. This group grew by an average of 3.4% annually from 1969 to peak at 3 million in 1981. Since that time, it has declined an average of 1.7% to 2.7 million in 1989 (Cote, 1990, p. 11).

Education:

The sixties was an exciting period of change and development in Canadian post-secondary education. This decade witnessed the rapid growth and expansion of universities. An increasing number of young people were found in schools and universities (Harvey, 1973). During this period, there were great chances for graduates of entering a lifetime career after completing the process of higher education. As Canadian society continued to industrialize and the economy flourished, the demand for technical competence and higher levels of education continued to increase. Today, this is less true.

As the proportions of the labour force attaining higher levels of education has increased so have the recruitment demands of employers increased. But these developments have also weakened the employment security of those with higher education levels during the last two periods of economic recessions. Supervisory positions and middle management positions were cut back rather seriously. Currently employers are looking for workers who have not only the required "hard skills" but also the "soft skills" - adaptability, ability to work cooperatively with others, readiness to take responsibility and so on. These traits are part of the "socialization" aspects of education and many employers view them as equally important as manual or intellectual skills.

Political Processes:

At the political level, changes in government legislation have contributed to changes in the workforce. Some legislation, by virtue of its content⁴ has forced changes in the composition of the employed labour force. A second factor that affects changes in the composition of the labour force is the increasing rate of participation in the workforce of women with small children. Milliken, Dutton, and Beyer (1990), suggest that cultural values of both individuals and organizations provide important reference points and lenses for interpreting the significance and interconnectedness of this environmental change.

In the case of work and family issues, the values of individuals on the top management team could be crucial in interpreting work-family demands as an organizational rather than a public policy issue, and shared organizational values could strongly affect whether top management views the implementation of work and family policies as likely to affect employee productivity, and other organizational effectiveness criteria. (Milliken, Dutton, and Beyer 1990, p.101)

Reports indicate that by the end of the 1980s, approximately 3,500 U.S. companies were providing some form of child care assistance to their employees (Friedman 1989). Although this is a substantial number, it is clear the larger proportion

⁴ See **Employment Equity: A Guide for Employers**, published by Employment and Immigration Canada, p. 1-10.

of employers are not providing such assistance. It seems that societal values and the institutional environment had not changed sufficiently to demand that they do (Fombrun, 1992).

Cultural Changes:

As single parents and dual-career families proliferate, there may be greater pressure for firms to provide greater assistance in managing the work and family. According to the Conference Board, more than 3500 U.S. companies now provide some form of child care assistance, and the number is rapidly increasing. Paternity leaves which were previously unheard of have become an option of companies like Aetna, 3M, Lotus, AT&T and Eastman Kodak. In 1989, IBM created a \$25 million fund to be distributed over five years, to increase the availability of child care services for its employees (Fombrun, 1992).

The mixing of races, it seems, also affects firms (Fombrun, 1992). In the U.S., the Bureau of Labour Statistics projects increased participation of minorities in the 1990s, with 74 percent growth in the hiring of Hispanics and a 29 percent growth in the hiring of African-Americans. With social attitudes and educational backgrounds different from the prevailing mix, these groups will need training to work in the knowledge-intensive fields that are the most rapidly growing sector of corporate America. To this end, many firms already participate in educational programs, forming public-private partnerships

with local schools to reduce high school dropout rates and promote skill building. As the cost of replacing older employees increase as firms compete in a tighter labour market, former bastions of cultural conformity increasingly realize the merits of accommodating cultural diversity (Fombrun, 1992).

Another cultural factor that has stimulated company involvement is the interests and values of the work force. The business practices that motivated the more homogeneous male breadwinning work force of the past may not motivate today's workers. It is expected that companies increasingly will be faced with a "pyramid squeeze"; that is, increased competition for a small number of top positions from the large number of baby boomers. How does a company compensate an otherwise deserving individual who cannot get the promotion? Family-supportive policies are sometimes used as part of a strategy to keep desired employees. This may hold true for the employee who generally wants more personal or family time. Company surveys done by Families and Work Institute (1990), suggest that workers are willing to trade off the fast track for a life with greater balance between home and work.

The concern with family responsibility in relation to employment responsibilities has led some researchers to draw analogies between the family and the corporation.

Family Structural Changes/Corporate Cultural Changes:

Changes in the family or household unit have produced pressures for change in the deployment of labour within the firm. The increase in single parents with dependents and in the number of dual career families has created a large contingent of employees who are necessarily divided in their commitments and priorities. Many organizations are aware of these divided loyalties and have tried to incorporate them into their "cultures" as a means of minimizing the contradictory orientations of family and organization. Work and Family programs may thus be designed in such a way as to emphasize the commonalities in objectives of both family and organization. This is illustrated in Table 3 which emphasizes possible similarities between family and organization "cultures".

Table 3

Similar Elements of Culture

	Family	Organization
Values	cooperation through family rules	cooperation through policies/procedures
Attitudes	success through encouragement	success through appraisals
Rituals	reunions	company picnics

The argument here is that not only have organizations been under pressure to modify their expectations of their employees commitments but many have also sought to incorporate elements of a "family" culture into their own sense of "culture". They have

done this by emphasizing collective welfare through the enhancement of myths, beliefs and rituals (Beal, 1982; Gunz, 1989). This shift in orientation toward incorporating the family or household unit and away from an image of the autonomous organization has meant a significant shift in the nature of the relationship between family and organization (Sekaran and Leong, 1992).

Attitudes About Work:

In addition to demographic changes, there has been a shift in the attitudes of Canadians toward their work and their employers. As well, there has been a re-definition of what constitutes appropriate roles for men and women both at home and in the workplace. Many women today are either not willing or are financially unable to forego their jobs or careers for homemaking responsibilities. Many men are taking a larger role in the care and nurturing of their children (MacBride-King and Paris, 1993).

Consequently, men are being called upon to provide more support at home. MacBride-King and Paris (1993) suggest that the "organization man" is being replaced by women and men with new sets of values.

In recent years, many organizations have downsized, and in some firms whole layers of the organizational hierarchy have been removed. This has created insecurity, and a situation where employees can no longer assume that they are "lifers" (Fombrun,

1992) in their organizations. With fewer opportunities to advance and faced with plateauing, some employees are reacting by shifting their career goals to family and leisure activities. A Conference Board of Canada study found that in 1985, 35 percent of employed Canadians in the 25 to 44 year old age group would forego some of their salary for more time off. Of those who preferred to work fewer hours, 42 percent of the women and 20 percent of the men cited personal and family responsibilities as the main reason.

Changing Role of Women:

The changing role of women in the company is also prompting business interest in work and family issues. Some companies, such as the Bank of Montreal, that have actively recruited women into their ranks are beginning to realize that very few of them have risen to senior management positions. An examination of the reasons that women have been unable to break through the "glass ceiling" has prompted The Bank of Montreal to offer family supportive policies. Companies have shown that women cannot succeed with rules designed for male breadwinners or in an environment where they are penalized for taking advantage of the company's flexible policies. The plan is to create a more level playing field within the organization by reducing the strain that women experience from providing most of the dependent care and by removing penalties and changing behaviours toward them.

CHAPTER 3

CHILD CARE: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction:

Perhaps no subject regarding family matters has aroused as much public attention as day care services. This is perhaps the most well-known work and family initiative, therefore, it will be discussed at length.

The immense changes in Canadian demographics in the past twenty years have caused an unprecedented shakeup in day care issues. A combination of sociological and economic factors has created a great demand for child care facilities. As the work force gains more women, particularly younger women, there are a growing number of Canadian parents who need help raising their children.

No company can afford to overlook the fact that a significant percentage of its employees are parents. Whether corporate vice-presidents or receptionists, employees have specific family needs which affect their work lives. Changes in company attitudes and changes in the composition of the work force are beginning to shape corporate policy. Women and special interest groups such as the Advisory Council on the Status of Women have begun lobbying to satisfy the work and family need. Their response is in line with the philosophy that employees are the company's greatest asset (Work/Family

Directions, 1986).

A Historical Overview:

The Early Years (1850-1939):

With the advent of industrialization, there were dramatic changes in the social conditions of the country. A mass exodus from the rural areas to the cities took place. Urbanization and a sense of urban consciousness soon emerged. Families with low incomes, average educational attainment, and large numbers of children migrated to the urban areas. There were families where no male head was present, either through death, desertion, or incarceration, families where either parent was chronically, physically, or mentally-ill (Mann, 1970).

These social problems caused family breakdown and poor living conditions. Many women had no alternative but to join the labour force. Their children were often left home alone or cared for by older siblings. Child care was created from the immediate need to provide custodial care for the children of these working mothers.

During the first World War, the necessity for child care arose from that national crisis. This event created an urgent need to recruit women into the labour force. Following the war, during the depression years, the familial status shifted from single parent families to two-parent families on relief. The creation of child care

centres was a response to the needs of those families experiencing economic hardships.

The financial health of these child care centres was supported by good social connections and by fund-raising activities of philanthropic women's organizations. The providers of child care held strong social beliefs in the institution of the family, and upheld their convictions in the preservation of the family unit. For them, child care functioned as a supportive service for families in crisis and was used solely as an emergency relief. Married women were discouraged from working permanently. A mother's role was to stay home and care for her children. For example, it was emphasized that day care should never be used as an alternative to home care. It was criticized and attacked for contributing to the disruption of family life (Schulz, 1978).

World War II ... Child Care Flourishes:

The occurrence of World War II had a dramatic impact on the nation and on the issue of child care. For the first time since its inception child care was recognized as a national need rather than an individual one. The country was in a state of national emergency, and married women with children were recruited to work in the munition factories. Sixty percent of Canadian children now had working mothers. They were known as "latch-key" children whose welfare became a growing concern (Canada Women's Bureau, 1970). There was widespread opinion that the federal government should assume responsibility for the care of these children. The problems of child care

indicated the strong need for government intervention in the provision of child care facilities.

In July 1942, as a scheme to further the war effort, the Federal government passed an Order-In-Council that authorized the Minister of Labour to enter into a cost-sharing agreement with any provincial government interested in establishing child care facilities. Ontario and Quebec were the only provinces to participate. This program brought a rapid increase in the number of subsidized child care centres and family child care homes (Wahlstrom, 1980).

The war also elicited a change in attitudes amongst the users and providers of child care services. Initially it was feared that these services would threaten family unity, and mothers would abandon their responsibilities. But, by the end of the war, the ideology of child care and working mothers was much more acceptable to the providers. As people's attitudes towards female traditional roles were transforming, the use of child care solely as an emergency relief was inadequate. Ideally, child care should have provided ongoing service to assist working mothers. Unfortunately, government officials held different views. Child care centres were established as a result of a national emergency and as a means to further the war effort. Their services were offered in exchange for female labour. When the war ended, it was no longer necessary to operate the centres.

Post War Years ... Child Care Centres Decline:

After the war, the government, anticipating high unemployment among males, embarked on a number of policies designed to ameliorate this problem. Among these policies were those that discouraged women from continued employment. These included ending supports for child care outside the home and providing Family Allowance Benefits.

The Quebec government closed its centres on October 1, 1945. The Ontario government sought to either close the war-time centres or rid themselves of any financial responsibility and for many years after the war, centres were again funded through private charitable organizations. Even so, in Ontario there were attempts by working women to persuade the provincial government to support day care as a social service. In 1946, the Day Nurseries Act was passed. It contained funding provisions and minimum standards for licensed day care operations (Schulz, 1978).

Between the years 1941 and 1951, the percentage of married working women in Canada grew from 4.5 percent to 11.2 percent, and rose to a 20.8 percent in the next decade (Status of Day Care in Canada, 1972). Still, the federal government did not increase its subsidies and indeed reduced them. As a result, the establishment of and

support for child care centres came from the private sector (Wahlstrom, 1980). Schulz states that by 1962 all the war-time public supported child care centres in Quebec disappeared and only a few remained in Ontario.

The Sixties and Onward:

The radicalism of the sixties and especially the birth of the women's movement in the early 1970's advanced the cause of women in the workplace. Meanwhile as part of the emphasis on more adequate welfare programs, the federal government in 1966 became more directly involved in institutionalized child care issues in the form of the Canada Assistance Plan (Wahlstrom, 1980). The plan encouraged the development of more day care facilities and their utilization by those who needed it most. The federal government distributed monies to the provincial departments of welfare in order to share costs of child care services. This legislation, although helpful, actually reinforced a concept developed in the past: day care was a service confined to situations of social pathology and economic need.

In the seventies and eighties, the number of women entering the labour force had increased sharply. In 1971, 39.9 percent of the paid labour force were women. In 1990, over half (58.4%) of all women aged 15 and older were employed or actively looking for work (Statistics Canada, 1992). Currently forecasts suggest that by the year 2000, fully 88 percent of women aged 25-34 will be in the work force. This is particularly

significant since women aged 25-34 years are the group most likely to have young children at home (Statistics Canada, 1992).

This growth can be attributed to several factors. In some cases, women have a sincere desire to further their careers. They are encouraged to enter male-dominated professions and to demonstrate their capabilities. But a factor influencing this trend even more strongly has been the increase in separated and divorced mothers. Most of these women will experience the inevitable decline in family income which accompanies this status. Child support payments can never fully cover all of a child's needs. As a single parent, a woman must also make certain financial contributions. She has little choice but to work when considering expenses such as rent and mortgage payments that perhaps she would not have paid while married. For other single working women, motherhood is becoming a matter of choice. A woman who decides to have and raise a child on her own needs child care arrangements.

Single parenthood is not strictly a women's issue. An increasing number of fathers are faced with custody and child care problems. They too are concerned with attaining proper care for their children. See Table 4 on the next page which illustrates historically (1931-1986) the number of mother/father families and the growing number of single parents.

Table 4
Number ('000) of Families by Type: 1931-1986

Year	Mother-Father Families	Sex of Single Parent	
		Female	Male
1931	1,857.1	-	-
1941	2,202.7	226.3	80.7
1951	2,961.7	250.9	74.8
1961	3,800.0	272.2	75.2
1971	4,591.9	378.1	100.7
1981	5,611.0	589.6	124.2
1986	5,881.3	701.9	151.7

Source: Ram, Bali, March 1990, Current Demographic Analysis - New Trends in the Family, Catalogue 91-535E Occasional, p. 87.

In the table above, it is important to note that the number of single parent families rose from 347,000 in 1961 to 854,000 in 1986. However, eighty-two per cent (82%) of such families were headed by women in 1986.⁵

A final cause of the increased participation rates of women in the labour force has been the rising costs of living expenses relative to household income. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of working wives. This trend is reminiscent of the

⁵ For more details see **Current Demographic Analysis - New Trends in the Family, (1990) - Catalogue 91-535E Occasional.**

depression years when women were also compelled to work because of an economic crisis.

Currently, the types of child care arrangements available for offspring vary. Some children participate in full-day, year round, quality licensed child care centres. However, most receive care in an unlicensed neighbourhood home. Other parents hire individual women to care for their children in their own home. See Table 5 below.

Table 5

**Types of Child Care Arrangements for Pre-School
Aged (0-5 Years) Children, Canada, 1981**

Type of Arrangement	Percentage
Cared for in own home	35.8
By relative	17.0
By non-relative	18.8
Cared for in other private home	35.8
By relative	13.8
By non-relative	22.0
Nursery School or kindergarten	42.7
Day Care Centre	11.2
Total ¹	100.0
Number of Children ('000)	1,113

¹ Since some children are cared for by more

than one type of arrangement each week, the percentages add to more than 100.

Source: Labour Force Survey, August 1982, (Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-001).

Usually these arrangements result in frequent moves from one caregiver to another (Cooke, 1986). What is clear is that the availability of child care establishments can no longer be equated with emergency relief and crisis intervention. The profound changes towards maternal employment have greatly increased the demand for licensed child care services. Canadian families will continue to experience ongoing problems as long as there exists a lack of quality licensed child care in this country. Unless provisions are made to expand available licensed spaces, more and more children will be subjected to care that is unregulated and unsupervised.

The Workplace Teams With Child Care:

In the recent past, the fastest growing group of working women has been mothers with children under three years of age.

By 1984, 52 percent of mothers with a child under three, 57 percent of mothers whose youngest child was 3-5, and 64% of women with school-aged children were in the labour force (Cooke, 1984, p. 8).

These statistics represent increases of 62 percent, 39 percent and 29 percent

respectively in just eight years. An even higher participation rate is estimated for others with children over three years old (Statistics Canada, 1992). Table 6 below illustrates the participation rate of females with children from 1976 to 1990.⁶ See Figure 5 on the next page for a graphic illustration of these relationships.

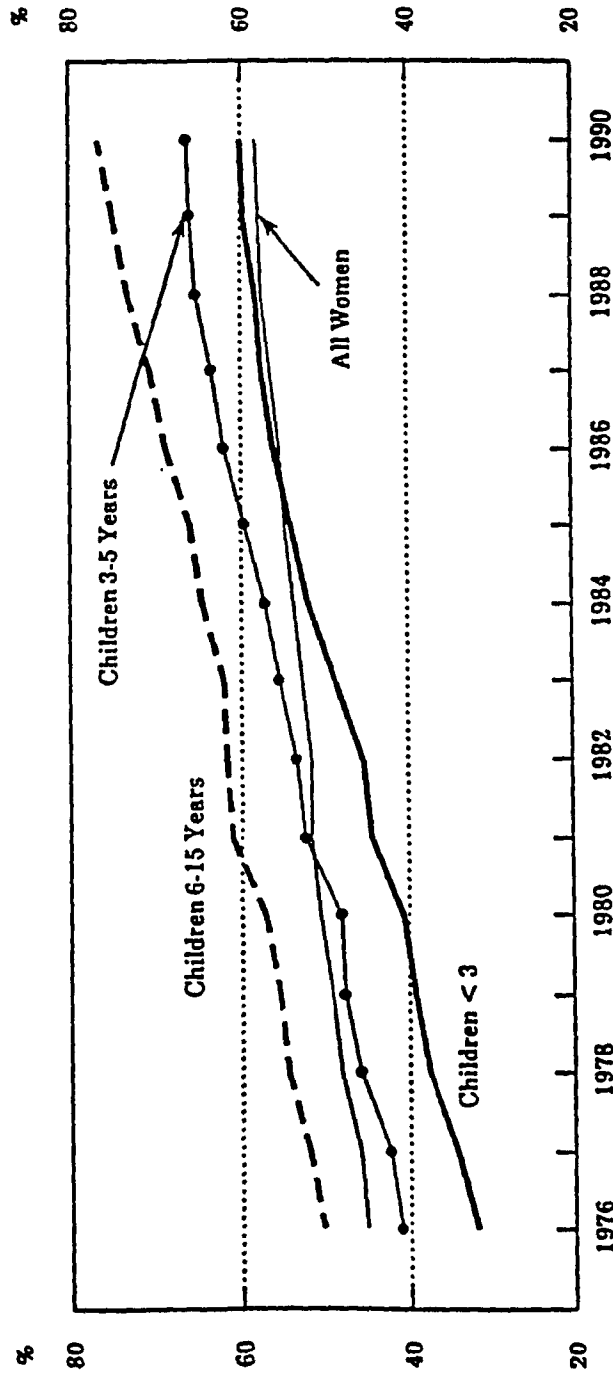
Table 6
Labour Force Participation of Women
by Age of Youngest Child

Age of Youngest	1976	1981	1986	1990
Youngest Child: Less than 3 years	31.7	44.4	56.3	60.1
3-5 years	40.9	52.4	62.1	66.2
6-12 years	49.5	61.1	68.1	--
6-15 years	50.0	61.2	68.6	76.4
Total With Children Under 18 Years	43.0	54.5	63.7	69.5

Source: Statistics Canada, *Women in Canada: A Statistical Report* (1990). Catalogue 89-503E; Statistics Canada, *1990 Labour Force Annual Average*, Catalogue 71-220.

⁶ Table 5 excludes 1984 statistics as discussed by Cooke (1984) on preceding page due to differences in sampling techniques.

**Labour Force Participation Rates Of Women By Age Of Youngest Child,
Canada, Annual Averages, 1976-1990**



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, unpublished data; Statistics Canada, Labour Force Annual Averages, 1981-1988. Catalogue 71-529.

Figure 5

While there has been an overall increase in the participation of women with children in the labour force, (as illustrated in the Table 5) the most impressive increase is in the *less than 3 years* category where the participation rate of women has increased by 90% from 31.7% in 1976 to 60.1% in 1990.

In 1984, the number of children who needed full time child care while their parents worked or studied amounted to 1,950,000. The total includes some 188,000 infants under two years of age and 445,000 pre-school aged children (all requiring full time day care) as well as 1,317,000 6-12 year olds whose child care needs related to school schedules and holidays. In 1984 there were only 171,654 licensed spaces available across Canada to serve 1,950,000 children requiring full time child care arrangements (Cooke, 1986). In Ontario, for example, one of every two mothers of young children is out working. This trend means there are fewer "at-home mothers who can care for their own or other couples' children" (Jamieson, 1987).

Because of the shortage of licensed day care spaces in Canada, the majority of working parents rely on other sources of care for their children, namely relatives, an older sibling, friends, neighbours, babysitters or nannies. If necessary, the child may even be left alone. There are couples who share the parental responsibility by either working part-time or by doing shift work (The Globe And Mail, July 30, 1992). This has huge implications for working parents' child care needs.

Sociologists Martha Friendly and Laura C. Johnson prepared a report for the "Child in the City Program" (1981) at the University of Toronto, in which they stated that as more women who could be providing private family child care join the formal labour market, such informal care will become a scarcer resource (Friendly, 1981). Based on the overall finding, this study ascertains that most parents would prefer a formal day care arrangement with a supervised program, either in the community or at their place of employment. Informal arrangements discourage parents because there are no guarantees of permanency or consistency. Children are subjected to many caretakers and environmental changes. Often, the values and attitudes of the caretakers do not complement family ideologies. Families needing child care will continue to experience serious shortage problems until this major dilemma is solved. Child care is a subject that warrants further investigation by both federal and provincial bureaucrats.

Fortunately, the growing concern for child care provision has lead some employers to become more actively involved in child care arrangements. Although their new-found interest has been slow to develop, it is now gaining momentum. In a 1984 survey conducted by Laura Johnson and Martha Friendly, 69 percent of work-related child care programs in Canada were linked to hospitals, health centres or local community social service centres. The remaining centres are connected to private corporations, the federal government, boards of education, crown corporations, government funded agencies, armed forces, financial institutions, the municipal government and miscellaneous

organizations such as Epiciers Unis Metro Richelieu, Institut Louis Braille and the Winnipeg Horsemen's Association (Johnson, Kleen, Paperny, 1985).

Summary:

Sixty-three percent of women with young children are now employed (Statistics Canada, 1992) and data reveal a significant and continuing rise in labour force participation among this group (Cooke, 1986). Only eleven percent of Canadian children of working parents are in licensed child care facilities, while 72 percent of those who require child care receive it in unlicensed, informal conditions (Ram, Bali., 1990)⁷. Some of these children have suitable day care arrangements with relatives, nannies, or private babysitters as their substitute caregivers. A good many, however, are looked after in unsupervised and perhaps appalling situations where they are subjected to neglect and abuse. This unregulated system is inadequate in meeting the needs of growing numbers of pre-schoolers. Ram (1990), argues that in the future, this informal type of arrangement is less likely to be available because of increased geographic dispersion and labour force participation among the family members, friends and neighbours who provided such informal care in the past. The critical shortage of properly regulated child care programs is a problem that must be addressed and solved.

⁷. See **Current Demographic Analysis - New Trends in the Family**, Catalogue 91-535E Occasional.

There is reason for optimism about the future development of child care needs in Canada. Corporate child care is a part of the spectrum of services that is beginning to flourish enabling those needs to be met. An inevitable conflict between "dollars for profits" and "dollars for child care" is resolved when businesses claim that providing adequate child care is just as important to the growth of a company as providing bricks and mortar (The New York Times, 1986). Responding to the needs of employees by giving decent care to their children is not only morally right, but a means to solve the child care crisis for parent employees.

This new involvement in child care, increasingly visible across the nation and particularly in Quebec (of Canada's 91 work-related centres, 49 are in Quebec) represents a giant step forward in care-giving (Anderson, 1985). It is one alternative solution to the critical shortage of quality child care in this country. Child care is primarily a family responsibility, but with more programs such as Work and Family, the job and difficulty of childrearing can be shared rather than be designated to parents alone.

CHAPTER 4

WORK AND FAMILY

Introduction:

As we have noted, the increasing participation of women in the paid labour force has had a major impact on industrial organizations and society as a whole. Women have always worked. In the pre-industrial society, the family was the basic producing unit. Women were not peripheral, but integral parts of the labour force (Marshall, 1982). Most women spend more time working than they do raising children, and male and female expectations about self-realizations from their jobs may be converging. These changes suggest that the basis for both men's and women's participation in work and family life is changing. Men are no longer the sole economic provider and women are no longer at home full-time to care for their families.

Work and Family - A Consequence of Industrialization:

In moving paid work out of the home, the Industrial Revolution in the West laid the foundation for the separation of work and family and secured a division of labour that mandated domestic work for women and market work for men (Veever, 1991). Today, although married women increasingly hold paid jobs, they are still primarily responsible for domestic tasks. The resulting time pressures are stressful for employed women, especially mothers, although those whose husbands share child care and who have no

difficulty arranging child care fare better on measures of emotional well-being than unemployed women (Borgatta, and Borgatta, 1992). Some ways in which women have adapted are; i) by cutting down on domestic work, ii) by sacrificing leisure time, iii) renegotiating the domestic division of labour with their families, iv) purchasing more services, and v) working part-time. The tendency to purchase more services (e.g. domestic help) has fuelled the growth of service jobs in fast-food chains, day-care centres, and cleaning services and, in turn, the demand for low-wage workers.

As more married women work outside the home, the role overload under which they labour has become a societal problem. European countries have responded with paid parental leave and state-run nurseries (Borgatta and Borgatta, 1992). Working women in North America are increasingly appealing to their employers and policymakers for similar solutions: flextime, parental leave, and assistance with child care. Meanwhile, a growing number of mostly women workers are doing paid work at home in what some see as a return to the cottage industry (Borgatta and Borgatta, 1992).

Literature Review in Brief:

Extensive literature exists on the topic of the balance between work and family (Kanter, 1977; Near, Rice, & Hunt, 1980). Some research indicates that there is a greater interest in quality of life (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) and in linking work, private life, and leisure (Kanter, 1977). If this is valid, then we can no longer envision the

organization and the people who work within it as a separate and autonomous sphere. Some authors argue that there is greater interest in the value for self expression (Nieva, 1984; 1985) and for self-fulfilment (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985) such that career striving may no longer be the measure of individual success (Kanter, 1977). In addition, there appears to be a value shift in our culture toward greater family involvement by men (Pleck, 1985).

But women are consistently placed in situations in which they must constantly juggle their work and family demands. Despite this, the number of active women in the work force keeps rising. In 1951, less than a quarter of all Canadian women (24.1%) were in the paid labour force, by 1971, this figure had risen to 39.9%. In 1990, over half (58.4%) of all women aged 15 and older were employed or actively looking for work (Statistics Canada, 1991).

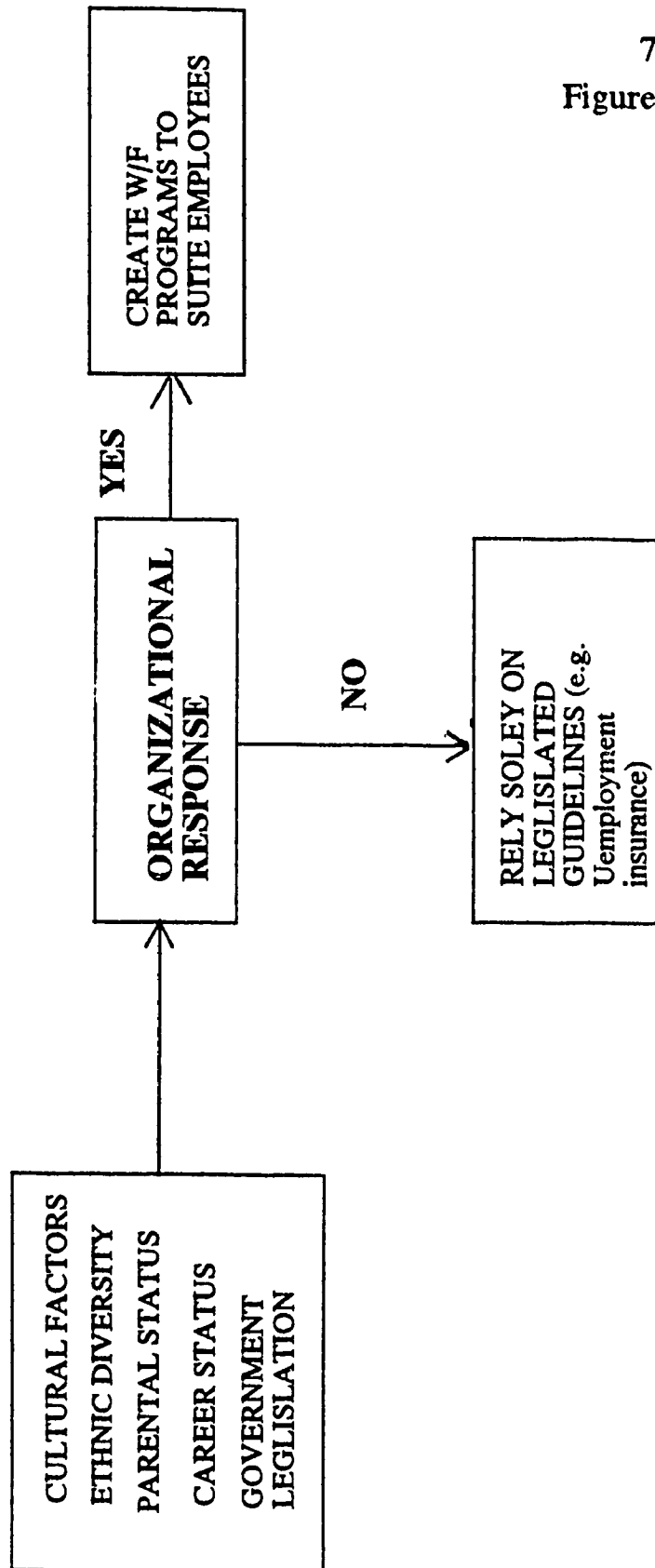
Fernandez (1990), argues that women are made to feel guilty for working and leaving their children behind. But men too are in a Catch-22 predicament. They have been socialized to be the breadwinner, and yet they are increasingly pressured to take on more family responsibilities. The industrial model of regular, full-time work was perfectly suited to the needs of the male head of the household with a family to support and a wife to run the home. Some men have partners who stay home or work part-time thus relieving them of home and family tasks. But they are in the minority.

It seems that regardless of gender, work and family responsibilities can create an impossible overload ... too much to do and little time to do it (Fernandez, 1990). By-products of stress include both physical and emotional problems: overload can lead to less corporate productivity (Fernandez, 1990). Thus, many executives realize that the many changes in the nature of the work force require new models such as job sharing, flexible benefits plans, on-site day care, information and referral services, and elder care. (See Figure 6 on the next page for the Work and Family decision-making process).

Models:

An analysis of the literature shows five models which deal with the relationships between life at work and life at home (see Figure 7); they are i) spillover theory, ii) compensation theory, iii) segmentation theory, iv) instrumental theory, and v) conflict theory (Burke & Bradshaw, 1981; Evans & Bartolome, 1984; Kanter, 1977; Kanungo & Misra, 1984; Rice, Near, & Hunt, 1980; Staines, 1980).

**WORK AND FAMILY:
DECISION- MAKING
PROCESS**



73
Figure 6

SUMMARY OF THEORIES OF ASSIMILATION

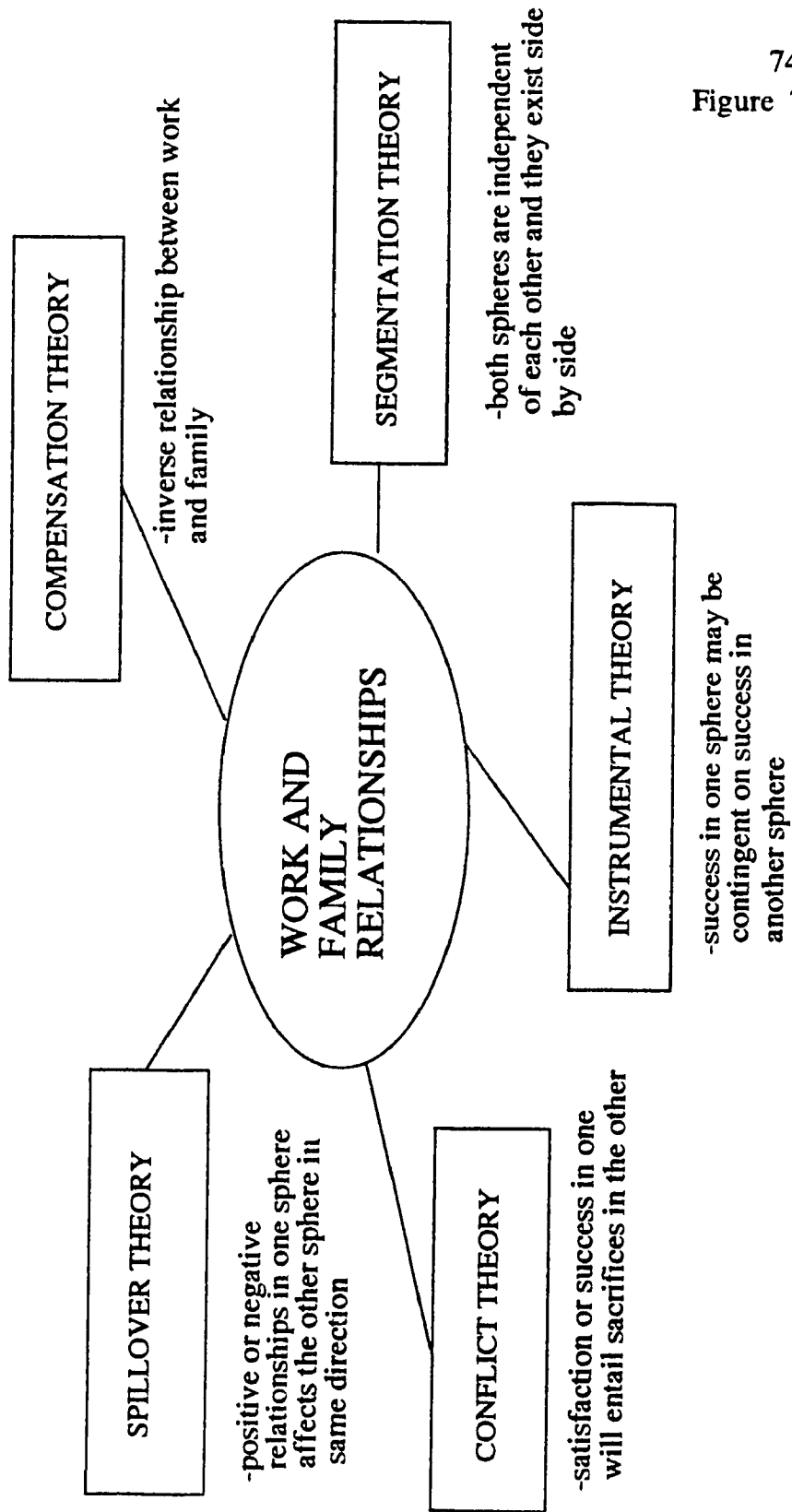


Figure 7

Spillover Theory:

Asserts that there is a similarity between what occurs in the work environment and what occurs in the family environment (Staines, 1980), such that happiness at work leads to happiness at home. In addition, a person's work experiences are assumed to influence what he or she does away from work (Champoux, 1978). It is also assumed that attitudes at work become ingrained and carried over into home life (Kando & Summers, 1971) or that work attitudes affect a basic orientation toward the self, others and children (Mortimer et al., 1986). Each environment induces similar structural patterns in the other environments (Parker, 1967). In other words, there are no boundaries for one's behaviour.

Spillover is generally discussed in terms of positive relationships, but it is also possible to have negative spillover (Piotrkowski, 1978). Job stresses can displace the potential for positive family interactions, while requiring family members to expend their personal resources in assisting the worker to manage the stress.

Compensation Theory:

Proposes that there is an inverse relationship between work and family such that work and nonwork experiences tend to be antithetical (Staines, 1980). Compensation theory has also been discussed in terms of components (Kando & Summers, 1971). Supplemental compensation occurs when desirable experiences, behaviours, and

psychological states that are insufficiently present in the work situation are pursued in family activities (Staines, 1980). Reactive compensation occurs because deprivations experienced in work are made up or compensated for in nonwork activities (Staines, 1980). Resting from fatiguing work or seeking leisure activities after work are examples of this process.

Segmentation Theory:

Speculates that work and family environments are distinct and that an individual can function successfully in one without any influence on the other (Evans & Bartolome, 1984; Payton-Miyazaki & Brayfield, 1976; Piotrkowski, 1978). The two environments exists side by side, and for all practical purposes are divorced from each other. The separation in time, space, and function allows the individual to neatly compartmentalize his or her life. The family is seen as the realm of affectivity, intimacy, and significant ascribed relations, whereas the work world is viewed as impersonal, competitive, and instrumental rather than expressive (Piotrkowski, 1978).

Instrumental Theory:

Suggests that one environment is a means by which things are obtained in another environment. For example, work outcomes lead to good family life and are means by which to get some of the pleasures of life (Evans & Bartolome, 1984; Payton-Miyazaki & Brayfield, 1976).

Conflict Theory:

Suggests that satisfaction or success in one environment entails sacrifices in the other; the two environments are incompatible because they have distinct norms and requirements (Evans & Bartolome, 1984; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Payton-Miyazaki & Brayfield, 1976). Some theorists (e.g. Crosby, 1984) view family responsibilities as the key determinant of work absenteeism, tardiness, and inefficiency. Inter-role conflict (i.e. between work and family roles) and its relationship to stress has been studied by several researchers in the context of family and organization connections (Baruch & Barnett, 1986; Burke, 1986; Burke & Bradshaw, 1981; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986; Jones & Butler, 1980; Suchet & Barling, 1986).

A number of organizations are attempting to design ways to accommodate workers' family obligations. In general, there are few hard data on the relationship between family-sensitive programs and productivity, although most employees desire the programs (Friedman, 1987). Furthermore, organizations that implement such initiatives are touted as "the best" firms to work for (Bernstein, 1986; Moskowitz & Townsend, 1987; Starrett, 1987; Trost, 1987). Currently, some of the trends in employer assistance includes maternity and paternity leaves, dependent care programs and alternative work schedules.

Alternative Work Schedules:

For employees with families, traditional work hours can cause problems because these work hours prevent workers from spending enough time with their families. The work day either starts too early or ends too late, thus not allowing for quality time with the family. In particular, these work hours generally do not allow for time with children. Possible solutions to this problem could be alternative work schedules which include flexible work schedules, job sharing, part-time employment, and the compressed work week. Table 7 on the next page illustrates the costs and benefits of these alternative work schedules for both the employee and the employer.

Table 7
Costs and Benefits of Alternative
Work Schedules

COSTS	Employee	Employer
Flexible work schedules:		
flexible hours		X
part-time	X	
job share	X	
compressed work week		
BENEFITS	Employee	Employer
Flexible work schedules:		
flexible hours	X	
part-time	X	X
job share	X	X
compressed work week	X	

As is illustrated in Table 7, there are costs to the employee associated with alternative work schedules. These are evident in part-time and job sharing arrangements. For the employee these costs are tremendous. For both part-time and job sharing arrangements, the employees salary and benefits are decreased. In the case of job sharing, the individual's salary is decreased by at least 50% and their pension is pro-rated. As well, in some organizations the employees medical and dental plan is also affected. There is a cost to the employer when introducing flexible hours - this comes

mainly in the form of more planning on the part of the managers, and problems with timekeeping.

The employee benefits from all of the alternative work schedules: this is in the form of having more free time and not in a monetary way. The employer benefits from part-time and job sharing arrangements. These arrangements affect the organizations bottom line in a positive way, due in part to the decrease in employees salaries and benefits.

Origins of Flextime:

The first major detachment from the standardized 40-hour, 9-5 work-week was flextime. The concept of allowing employees some individual choice as to starting and quitting times was first introduced in Germany in 1967. At that time, it was seen as a means of relieving transit and commuting time problems. Shortly thereafter, flextime began to gain support in Switzerland as a way to attract women with family responsibilities into the labour force. The Hewlett-Packard Company is generally acknowledged with introducing flextime in the United States, using it in its Waltham, Massachusetts, plant in 1972 after having tried it first in a German division. At the time, Hewlett Packard's rationale was that since employees appeared to like having more choice over their starting and quitting times and flextime appeared to have few or no adverse effects, it would be a low-cost, effective employee benefit.

It seems that the primary reason for flextime's emergence was the growing recognition that a standardized work schedule was not as appropriate as it had once been both because of the changing demographics and attitudes of the work force and because of changing management problems (Olmsted, and Smith, 1985).

Flextime is the generic term for flexible scheduling programs - work schedules that permit flexible starting and quitting times within limits set by management (Olmsted, Smith). Flextime arrangements may offer ways to change the structure of the employee's workweek and, in some cases, may be viable and satisfactory options. It allows employees to work a standard hour work week, with assigned core hours and flexible start and finish times. The hours are within established limits set by management.

One of the major advantages to this arrangement is that the cost to the organization is minimal. Many organizations that have implemented it have found that individual labour productivity is increased, and absenteeism and tardiness are decreased because workers can rearrange work hours to accommodate family responsibilities (Latack & Foster, 1985; Nollen, 1980). Other advantages include less short-term leave taken, longer service hours for the client, and higher employee morale due to more job satisfaction, easier commuting and child care arrangements, and some control of one's own time (Bohen & Viveros-Long 1981).

Flexible work hours is by no means the only solution to balancing work and family. Indeed, flexible work hours may mostly benefit people without primary child care obligations. Also, they make no tangible difference in the job-family conflict for those with more extensive family-related obligations (Bhoen & Viveros-Long, 1981). For women, who often are responsible for most "administrative" work in the home, flextime may help juggle responsibilities a little, but does nothing to alleviate the demands.

For organizations, allowing flexible work hours entails more planning on the part of managers, and administrative problems with timekeeping. Even when flextime is included in personnel policy, it is not necessarily available to all departments or to all employees.

The role of supervisors is affected by the introduction of flextime. As Simcha Ronen describes in his book Flexible Working Hours:

"A critical factor in the success or failure of a flexible work system is the attitude of first-line supervisors toward the program. Flextime, by its nature, requires a supervisory style which focuses on planning and coordination as opposed to monitoring ... With flextime, supervisors should be less concerned with time-keeping functions, and should be willing to spend more time on planning, scheduling, and coordinating functions; they will have to place less emphasis on employee control and develop a more participatory style of supervision. Since this may not be an easy adjustment for some first-line supervisors, the organization must be prepared to facilitate the process

through orientation beginning as soon as the decision is made to implement flextime."⁸

Part-Time Employment:

A term which came into common use between the mid-1970s and 1982 was permanent, or regular part-time. Permanent or regular part-time employment includes job security and all other benefits available to an organization's regular full-time workers. Part-time employment as defined by Statistics Canada (1955-87), is "part-time employment consists of all persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week".⁹

From the mid-1970s until the 1982 recession, voluntary part-time was the fastest growing segment of the labour force. While, according to the Bureau of Labour Statistics, the total number of people employed increased by 27 percent between 1970 and 1982, the number of part-time workers rose by 58 percent.

Use of Regular Part-Time Employment:

Employers tend to view part-time very broadly as far as hours worked are concerned. It is an umbrella term referring to anything less than the standard full-time schedule for a particular profession or industry.

⁸Simcha Ronen, *Flexible working Hours*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982, p.223.

⁹ This definition is from Turcotte, Emile's MA thesis, *Part-Time Labour in Canada from 1955 to 1987 Analysis of Conventional and Modified Definitions and Theoretical Considerations*, April 1989, p. 12.

Until the late 1970s, anyone on a part-time schedule was regarded as belonging to a peripheral work force rather than the regular work force. As the economy has shifted from a production to a service orientation, however, the way in which work is scheduled, from both a service delivery and a human resources management perspective, has become increasingly important. The conventional 9-5 schedule is not necessarily the most efficient format for either one, and various new kinds of part-time schedules have begun to surface, initially as a response to employee pressures, but more recently because of organizational ones.

Management's attitudes about part-time employees has been a major barrier to learning how to use less than full-time schedules efficiently. Dr. Stanley Nollen - a professor at the Georgetown University School of Business Administration commented:

"about part-time employment: We have here a cultural or attitudinal stereotype situation as to how managers think about part-time employment. It is not that part-time employees are less productive; no, they are probably more productive. It is not that they are less committed, less loyal; you have heard reports stating the opposite is true. Employers do not doubt those kinds of reports; you do not get any argument from employers about loyalty, commitment, dedication, quality of work, all of that is okay. The difference is that part-time employees are different ... employers believe that part-time employees are not career-oriented. They are not going to be there forever. They are not looking forward to the same kind of future in the company as full-time employees are looking forward to."

Three of the reasons why part-time employment has begun to move into the mainstream are:

Changes in Work Force Demographics:

Women have entered the work force in unprecedented numbers since the late 1970s. It is estimated that by the year 2000, approximately 47 percent of the work force will be composed of women and they will account for almost two-thirds of the labour force growth for the previous decade.¹⁰ As I noted previously, many female workers have small children, and must work for economic reasons, regardless of their marital status. This change in women's employment needs and expectations has been the driving force behind the change in the dynamic of the part-time labour force and the expanded use of flexible and permanent part-time schedules. It affords these women the chance to pursue a career and use professional skills, and still have sufficient time with their family. In fact, part-time work has been shown to result in less stress for mothers than either full time jobs or no outside jobs (Meier, 1978).

The Shift from a Production-Based to a Service-Based Economy:

Part-time schedules are much more prevalent in service industries than they are in production-oriented industries (Cote, 1992).

¹⁰ Workforce 2000, Washington, D.C.: Department of Labour, Employment and Training Administration, May 1987, p. 4).

These two factors, particularly in terms of the interface between work and family responsibilities, have combined to make alternative work time, or the lack of it, a bottom-line issue for many employers, one that relates to efficient scheduling of both tasks and employees. Part-time workers have been in the work force for a long time, but only recently has permanent, part-time employment been seriously considered as an alternative for working parents. Company policies differ in the way they treat part-time workers. Many offer no opportunities for career advancement and fringe benefits. A few, however, do offer career advancement and provide at least some fringe benefits.

Greater Management Flexibility:

For organizations, permanent part-time employment may be a solution to particular scheduling difficulties, such as providing sufficient coverage for peak periods. This could also be a very creative way for an organization to introduce phased or early retirement. Part-time employment has also been related to higher productivity and to lower absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover (Bureau of National Affairs, 1986, Nollen, 1980). Many permanent part-time employees are working mothers, and for them, this option is a welcome alternative to either working full time or leaving the workforce. While many employees continue to feel the shock of the recession and are trying to absorb it, organizations are using Work and Family programs to their benefit. Encouraging employees to work part-time or job share is just another management strategy to cut-back. In 1985, 19% of married women worked part-time (Perspectives,

Spring 1991), either because of personal or family responsibilities. This number will continue to increase as more employers offer flexible work schedules. This flexibility could be attributed to the fact that organizations are streamlining, restructuring and this could be an answer to a particular difficult task.

Job Sharing:

Job sharing is a voluntary work arrangement in which two people share responsibility for one full-time position (Kahne, 1985; Olmsted, 1977) with salary and benefits prorated. Job sharing combines the advantages of full-time and part-time employment, in that the job is continuously staffed and the organization has access to the resources of two workers rather than one. Job sharing also allows employers to avoid hiring temporary employees to cover for vacations and leaves.

Origins of Job Sharing:

The term job sharing was first introduced in the mid-1960s. This option was devised as a way to create more part-time opportunities in career-oriented job categories in which the positions could not be reduced in hours or split into two part-time jobs. It represents an attempt to bring regular part-time into parity with regular full-time employment. When a position is defined as a full-time job that is, temporarily, being filled by two people instead of one, it is assumed that the conditions of employment (such as rate of pay, fringe benefits, and seniority) remain the same as for other positions in

the same classification. As more employees express an interest in reducing work time at some point in their careers and as employers become interested in offering reduced work time as an employee option or benefit, the issue of improving the conditions of part-time employment has assumed increasing importance. Job sharing has played a significant role in making part-time work more equitable by emphasizing that it is the employees who are part-time and not the job. Job sharing, like other forms of reduced work time, permits an organization to retain valued employees.

Retention of Valued Employees:

One of job sharing's unique characteristic is that it is a means of allowing employees to work part-time in positions that cannot be either reduced in hours or split into two discrete part-time jobs. This is especially true in higher level positions. By offering the job sharing option, the organization can retain the services of good workers in these types of positions who might otherwise leave in search of an employer who can offer a suitable part-time schedule.

Improving Scheduling and Continuity:

Having a position covered by two employees rather than one permits the employees and their supervisors to develop a variety of creative work schedules tailor-made to satisfy the requirements of both the workers and the work. Since job sharers usually cover for each other, the organization gains continuity while the employees gain

a substitute at times - both planned and unplanned - when they must be away from their jobs.

Increasing the Scope of Skills and Experience:

This feature of job sharing reflects the old saying "two heads are better than one." The skills and experience of two employees usually increases the range of capabilities that can be applied to the work.

Part-time and job sharing also have drawbacks. Many jobs cannot be shared or performed on a part-time basis. Most high-level positions involve a full-time commitment; thus, the upward mobility of part-time workers may be limited. Organizations may not be willing to have an additional person on the payroll or may be worried that "everyone will want to do it" if job sharing is offered as an option (Olmsted, 1977).

There is evidence that alternative work schedules have reduced absenteeism and turnover (Kim & Campagna, 1981; Narayanan & Nath, 1982; Olmsted, 1977; Pierce & Newstrom, 1983) and have increased productivity (Kim & Campagna, 1981; Olmsted, 1977). Part-time employment, however, still has somewhat of a negative image for both men and women. For men, especially, part-time employment may carry a stigma because it is typically associated with inability to fulfil the traditional male obligation of full-time

employment (Eagley & Steffen, 1986).

Compressed Workweek:

Compressed workweek refers to a workweek (usually 40 hours long) that is condensed into fewer than five days. The first type of compressed schedule to be introduced was the four-day workweek and it continues to be the most widely used (Smith, 1986).

Origins of Compressed Workweek:

Introduced in early 1970's, the compressed workweek was an effort to create an alternative to the standard five-day, 40-hour workweek by reallocating the same number of hours to fewer days.

From the employer's perspective, this allows plant facilities to be used for longer periods with fewer start-ups and shut-downs, while it gave employees longer blocks of personal time.

The compressed workweek is probably the most controversial forms of alternative work scheduling. Its popularity has peaked on several occasions since the mid-1970s. For example, between 1979 and 1985, the use of compressed workweek grew four times as fast as overall employment growth (opt. cit.).

Perhaps one of the most visible advantage of compressed workweek is increased family time (Gadon and Cohen, 1978). Those employees who do like the compressed workweek often cite the opportunity for more family time as one of the reasons. On the other hand, there are working parents who cite fatigue as a shortcoming. Nollen (1982), cites a related issue to fatigue is the issue of productivity. The impact of compressed workweek on productivity is not at all clear. Some employers report gains while some report losses in productivity, especially towards the end of long shifts.

Employers using a compressed workweek report improved recruitment as a result of employee interest in having more and longer blocks of personal time. On the other hand, there are legal considerations that must be addressed. In some states, wage and hours legislation creates a barrier to the use of the compressed schedules. In several states, the law requires that overtime premiums be paid for hours worked in excess of eight a day, unless an industry or group of employees has been exempted in some way or unless an organization has established a compressed workweek under specified conditions. In some cases, compressed schedules of 40 hours a week are authorized if an organization's employees have been polled and two thirds are in favour of such a change and if the affected employees receive two consecutive days off within each workweek. Compensatory time in lieu of overtime is also allowed in some cases if it is used during the same period.

It should be noted that the compressed workweek has had the highest failure rate of all the alternative work schedules. Research done by Nollen and Martin cited in Nollen's *New Work Schedules in Practice*, indicated that "28 percent of one time users had abandoned it."¹¹ According to Nollen, "these failures occurred quite quickly when they happened and were usually caused by trouble with fatigue, coverage, scheduling, productivity and supervision. They were also caused in some cases by employee discontent."¹² On the other hand, many long-term users have reported no difficulty with the arrangement and acknowledge the benefits that the compressed workweek has afforded them.

Benefit programs can only satisfy workers and make them happy; they cannot make people more productive. According to Frederick Herzberg's (1968) theories of motivation, benefits are extrinsic to work and cannot motivate people to perform better. However, his research was conducted on male workers in the 1950s. It is conceivable that different things motivate the workers of today.

We have briefly discussed some of the benefits and costs that accompany the implementation of the various work and family programs - from both the employer and

¹¹ Nollen, S. D., *New Work Schedules in Practice*, Work in America Institute Series, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1982, p. 68.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

employee's point of view. In the next chapter, we will turn our attention to a case study of a financial organization which has implemented some of these programs. Several of the cost and benefits, as outlined in the literature, are in fact present at the Canadian Bank.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY

The purpose of this research was to explore the usage and availability of the Work and Family program within a Canadian Bank.¹³ However, before we discuss the methodology in greater detail, some industry and company information is necessary to set the stage for the case study analysis.

Industry Background:

The Canadian Bank is visibly linked to its operating environments in many ways. These links in turn, directly affect the products and services that the Canadian Bank offers. For example, slight changes in the Bank of Canada's interest rates have profound affects on the modes of delivery and types of product services that are offered. Also, changes in real estate markets, the international finance community (stock markets) and government policies all directly affect the products and services that the Canadian Bank delivers. Aside from these environmental factors, there is increasing competition from the Private Banking sector.

¹³ *Canadian Bank* is a fictitious name for the bank where the interviewing took place. In order to protect the confidentiality of the Bank, the name has been altered.

The banking industry has evolved from a traditional banking industry to one that increasingly requires a much broader offering of financial services and products, for example, from personal loans and deposits to professional funds management and investment counselling services. Consumer spending was particularly soft holding back the overall pace of economic recovery.

The Bank believes Canada's business environment should improve as lower interest rates stimulate economic growth. However, the pace of recovery will likely be weak by historical standards, as both consumers and businesses remain constrained by relatively heavy debt burdens.

Occupational Distribution:¹⁴

In the banking industry, there is quite extreme occupational segregation by sex. Women are highly concentrated in clerical occupations and men are highly concentrated in managerial and professional occupations.

¹⁴ The data in this section was extracted from **Women in Banking, The First Year of Employment Equality, 1989**, by Poole, Phebe-Jane, for The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. The statistics in this section are representative of the banking industry, I suspect that the statistics at the Canadian Bank are similar. It was not possible to secure such statistics from the Canadian Bank.

Women in the banking industry were 12 times more likely to be in clerical jobs than were men. Men were 33 times more likely to be upper-level managers than were women. In 1987, 69.4% of the female bank employees worked in the clerical workers' group, 12.9% were reported in middle and other managers' occupations, and 8.2% were in the professional occupations.¹⁵ In comparison, 15.8% of all men were in the clerical workers' group, nearly 20% were in the professional occupations and more than one-half of all men held middle and other managers' positions.¹⁶

In the banking industry, women had a 2.9% share of upper-level management jobs, 38.3% of middle and other managers' jobs, 54.2% of professional positions and 92% of all clerical positions.¹⁷

In the next section we will discuss the corporate objectives of the Canadian Bank.

Company Background:

The Canadian Bank is Canada's leading financial services institution. It ranks first among all financial institutions in Canada in terms of assets, capital and stock market value. Nationally, this bank provides a full range of banking services (e.g. loans and

¹⁵ From *Employment Equity Act Annual Report to Parliament 1988*, p. 33.

¹⁶ *opt. cit.*, p. 33.

¹⁷ *opt. cit.*, p. 33.

financial planning services) to more than eight million consumers, independent businesses and corporate clients. These services are delivered by one of the largest banking networks in the world - over 1,500 branches and special business units, roughly 4,000 banking machines, nearly 200 self-serve account updaters and approximately 23,000 point-of-sale merchant terminals. Internationally, the Canadian Bank operates in over 25 countries through more than 80 business units.

The Canadian Bank's business strategy is driven by four corporate objectives: i) to be the best financial institution in Canada with sustainable quality earnings, ii) to provide quality and value to the customers, better than the competition, iii) to be the leading Canadian financial institution best positioned globally and, iv) to be the leading employer committed to excellence.

More specifically, the Canadian Bank's key corporate objective is to attract and retain the best people in the banking industry - *quality people*. The Canadian Bank takes pride in being rated by external surveys as one of the best employers in the country.

The number of employees at the Canadian Bank exceeds 50,000, with 70% of the population female. Eighty-six percent of eligible employees are shareholders through the Employee Savings and Share Ownership Plan.

Apart from compensation, benefits and rewards programs, there are other ways in which the Canadian Bank supports their employees. With the rise of dual income families and more single parents, the bank has implemented ways to help employees balance growing demands at home and at work. The Canadian Bank has a Work and Family program in place which is relatively new, with its beginnings in 1990. This program supports people with a wide range of flexible work options. Until this time, the organization had what was referred to as "Family Responsibility Leave".¹⁸

"Decentralization" Through Empowerment:

The Canadian Bank is decentralizing its operations and is very much into streamlining and *empowering* its employees. A Human Resource Manager stated that, "giving managers more responsibility, making them more accountable for their actions ... giving managers a sense of belonging to an organization, that is how we are empowering our employees".

The term empowerment is a buzz word that is currently used within management circles, therefore, a brief discussion of this term is in order. As it is known today in the circles of innovative management techniques empowerment is, in fact, just a new face for the old concept of "worker control". Whatever the name, the chronological development

¹⁸ Family Responsibility Leave included: Maternity Leave, Child Care Responsibility Leave, Bereavement Leave, Spousal Employment Assistance and Access (Employee Assistance Program).

of industrialization, the core assumptions of the concept as defined by Vogt, and Murrell are:

i) that the quality of output of goods/services produced is usually higher when the workers assume more ownership for their efforts.

ii) by providing workers with the appropriate skills/knowledge they will bring about positive changes in their work, e.g. training, interpretation of business information relative to their work.

Empowerment "facilitates" or "elicits" more employee participation either directly through innovative work designs suggestions or indirectly by releasing managers from more traditional roles (e.g. scheduling, quality control) thus enabling them to become facilitators/teachers. This in turn provides them with increased time to spend on policy initiatives and "boundary maintenance" towards reaching the long term goals of the organization.

It is assumed that empowered individuals know that their jobs belong to them and that they are given a say in how things are done. It is further assumed (Robbins, 1984) that employees feel more responsible for their work outcomes and may enjoy their work. Consequently, they may show more initiative in their work. While an organization may empower its employees to take on more responsibility and to make use of what they know

and can learn (Wellins, Byham, Wilson, 1991) there is no guarantee workers will perform for the benefit of the company.

While empowerment is reported to have benefits for workers, for example, in the form of greater autonomy on the job (Gandz, 1990), it is essentially a management tool that happens to have favourable "side-benefits" for workers (Vogt, 1990). Essentially empowerment can be thought of as a cost-cutting measure utilized by management in response to the changing business environment. Technological advancements along with rapid expansion of our service sectors has created jobs which are more cognitively demanding (e.g. software development). Consequently, workers need to be competent in a variety of different functions and simultaneously have some degree of power to deal with the changing demands of their jobs. The alternative is for management to have one worker per function - as in an assembly line set-up. The latter alternative does not represent the most efficient use of resources and may result in increased labour costs since the ratio of worker/function becomes smaller. Also, given the high levels of competition in business today, the concept of "value-added" is of paramount necessity to management. Essentially, the goal of most firms today is, i) to build a high-quality product, ii) to meet or exceed customer satisfaction and to build this product, iii) in the shortest duration of time possible to remain competitive. Consequently, it is in the best interest of management needs to tap into the knowledge and experience of workers towards achieving all of the components of this goal within a given timeframe.

At a glance, the benefits to be had by an organization which supports empowerment, seem endless. However, there are necessary and realistic restrictions which should accompany such an initiative. For example, in the case of an organization which "empowers" the workers in the form of work teams, it may be necessary for the optimal functioning of the team, to give the workers the power/authority to fire and hire its members. Such a scenario, while seeming to have "total" power - is still obligated to abide by internal as well as external policies (e.g. seniority provisions, Human Rights Legislation, respectively). Also, there needs to be some working values to guide the team (which should be created by team members). For example, will the team characteristics perpetuate themselves - will a team of white males "unfairly" assess a black female candidate? Clearly, empowerment does not give employees the unqualified privilege to do whatever they want with the blessings of management, certain formal and informal norms, (e.g. laws), have to be adhered to.

The next section will outline the various programs which are available to employees. In this sense, these initiatives "empower" workers with the flexibility needed to handle work and family issues simultaneously.

Work and Family Initiative:

Under the umbrella of Work and Family, the Bank has consolidated many existing policies and benefits and has introduced other components such as i) dependent care

information services, ii) flexible work arrangements, iii) management training¹⁹ and iv) resource libraries.

The "*founder*" (a female senior manager), of this program stated that, "this program is a result of a restructuring that has occurred in the business world; a re-focus of business priorities". She continued with a discussion on the change in corporate culture:

"what has changed is our corporate culture; it reflects societal culture. We mirror certain elements of our clients, therefore, you have a socio-cultural change. The culture in our organization reflects the changes in society, for example, the change in the structure of the family, the increased number of women in the workplace and global competition."

Authorities in work and family issues (Friedman and Galinsky, 1990) assert that, "the most profound changes is in the proportion of available workers who are female".

The dramatic increase in women's participation at all levels in the work force was the

¹⁹ This training program, which is compulsory attendance for management, was designed to help managers respond more effectively to issues related to work and family. A Human Resource Manager stated, "we emphasize that, more specifically, this program will help managers understand the strategic importance of creating a family sensitive work environment, and provide awareness of related policies and practices". She continued, "this program will grow and evolve in response to the changing needs and concerns of its employees. This organization is committed to supporting its quality people, the driving force behind the delivery of quality service to its customers."

impetus for the Work and Family program. Females and selected organizations are continually assessing the woman's place within the family and the organization - by that I mean how do their children survive without mother at home. How does an employer survive with its female employees on maternity leave or job sharing, or working part-time? A strategy might be that females, males and organizations should stop emphasizing this fact and should start examining the male's place in the family. A study on dual-income couples for the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health, which was reported in *The Globe and Mail*, (July 27, 1993, p. B18), concluded that the major stress for men is *not jobs* but concerns about their children. The study found that men worry a lot about their children's safety, choice of friends, values and performance in school. They also worry about arguments with their children. Such concerns result in physical problems, including insomnia, fatigue and lower back pain. Perhaps, it is time we stop assuming that women's place is in the home and that the male is the breadwinner.

What Precipitated the Work and Family Program?:

There are a number of events which led the Canadian Bank to implement the Work and Family program. First of all, the Canadian Bank participated in the Corporate Child Care Study which was administered in 1990 by The Montreal Board of Trade. Before I briefly discuss the findings of this study and the implications for the Canadian Bank, a brief discussion on the evolution of The Montreal Board of Trade is in order.

The Montreal Board of Trade was founded as the Committee of Trade in 1822. Twenty years later, Montreal's first commercial association was incorporated and renamed The Montreal Board of Trade. For over a century and a half, The Montreal Board of Trade has shared in and contributed to the commercial growth of Montreal. The membership today is comprised of over 2,600 firms represented by some 6,000 decision-makers from all sectors of commerce and industry.

The Montreal Board of Trade makes representations to governments at all levels on matters affecting the operation of business in Montreal; it produces publications to help business people in their daily work; it maintains an Information Centre providing access to human and material resources; it circulates a monthly newsletter to members, arranges conferences, seminars, affords networking opportunities, conducts surveys and establishes insurances and member benefits programs. Also, it provides the necessary leadership to bring the community's partners together to deal with current questions, to share resources and to develop a common vision of the future.

In 1988, the President stated that The Montreal Board of Trade,

"proposes to become heavily involved in promoting social issues. Playing a leadership role in developing child care programmes which will take into account the realities of modern day business life ... with its longer hours, its

travel, its dual careers and all the pressures which life places on modern families." (Pepper, 1990)²⁰.

The Child Care Study was an example of the leadership role which The Montreal Board of Trade traditionally renders.

The Montreal Board of Trade, with the support of Health and Welfare Canada through its Child Care Initiative Fund began the project with the following objective. The study was designed to identify among others; i) employee child care needs, ii) to determine whether employees have unmet child care needs, iii) to determine at which level of the organizational hierarchy employees are most affected by unmet child care needs, iv) to identify employee's problems caused by work and family conflicts, and v) to identify management problems caused by work and family conflicts.

Corporate participation in the study included 15 small companies, 100 employees or less; 20 medium sized companies, 101 to 500 employees, and 8 large companies, over 500 employees. Among others, one of the most consistent finding was the suggestion to implement *flexible work schedules*.

²⁰ The information on The Montreal Board of Trade was extracted from **The Corporate Child Care Study, 1990**, which was administered by The Montreal Board of Trade.

The results were made public and participating companies were provided with a copy of the report. As a result of this study, management at the Canadian Bank decided that it was time for them to study the needs of their own labour pool. The Canadian Bank wanted to identify what, if anything, were the needs of its employees. Were their employee's needs consistent with the results of The Montreal Board of Trade's study. Indeed the results identified similar areas of concern. These will be discussed in the next section.

Demand for Work and Family:

The decision to introduce the Work and Family program was based on the following: 1) an internal feedback²¹ from a survey which indicated that the labour force preferred a more flexible work schedule, thus, giving their employees more control over their work and work schedule, 2) staff suggestions, 3) a study of current social trends, and 4) a study of changing demographics, such as the ageing population (e.g. caring for parents), dual-income families, and the increase in single mothers.

²¹ When the author asked for a copy of the survey, staff suggestions, and the study of current social trends, the request was refused. The manager, human resources said "these reports and results *are not* made available to the public, they are for internal usage, only." However, she reminded me that much time and energy went into both the design and the analysis of the reports and that employees were notified of the results.

With respect to changing demographics, the Bank is concerned with the possibility of labour shortages,²² as the "baby boomers", those born between 1947 and 1966 will be replaced by the "baby bust". Indeed, members of this group have contributed to the lower birth rates. In 1960, the average Canadian woman had 3.9 children. By contrast, by 1986, this had changed to 1.7 children per woman. There is a decline in the number of 18 to 24 year olds and almost 30% to 35% of present day Canadian youth never finish high school.²³

After a careful review of all the above-mentioned studies and the results of the Child Care Study provided by The Montreal Board of Trade, a task force at the Canadian Bank developed a program that was designed to make the balancing act between work and family easier. The organization wasn't acting out of benevolence alone. It has concluded that helping employees cope is good business in the short and long term (The Gazette, May 11, 1992, C15).

Human Resources recognized that it is one thing to have a family-supportive policy, but it is quite another to make sure that employees know that it exists and that

²² This argument does not seem as credible given the fact that unemployment figures have fluctuated between 9% to 12% for the last three years (Canadian Economic Observer, Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 11-010). The implication here, of course, is that there is no shortage of labour, instead, there is a surplus of available labour.

²³ This data was provided by the organization where interviewing took place.

supervisors support it. As a result, handbooks that provide information on all of the company's Work and Family programs were prepared and distributed across the Bank. As part of its commitment to providing a family-sensitive work environment, the Canadian Bank's human resources personnel developed a Work and Family Policy statement which is included as Appendix A.

In addition, they developed a training program for managers to sensitize them to the changing nature of the work force, to familiarize them with the programs, and to guide them with the various types of work/family problems that arise. The project directors focused on an "*internal culture change*" as a way to ensure that programs and policies are understood and used.

A Human Resource Manager said, "we realized that in the short-term stressed out employees are not productive. In the long-term, Canada is expected to face a shortage of skilled labour, and the bank wants to be able to retain these employees and attract new people". Making a workplace sympathetic to family needs requires a change in both attitudes and perceptions shared by both genders as well as by the employer.

In the next section, we outline the various options that are available within the Work and Family program. They are, i) dependent care, ii) information and referral models, and, iii) flexible work arrangements.

Dependent Care:

Working parents are sometimes faced with difficulties and frustrations in searching for quality child care. As caregivers to aged parents or spouses, finding appropriate eldercare can also present special challenges. In fact, it is not uncommon for some employees to find themselves faced with the dual responsibility of having to provide care for both ageing family members and young children. This is commonly known as the "*sandwich generation*".

To assist these employees with dependent care issues, the following information services and resource materials were made available.

Information and Referral Models:

Some firms offer suggestions to parents in identifying and selecting high quality care. Referrals are made to available local child care resources. Some parent education programs deal with broader issues that relate to parenting, child care, discipline, or interviewing a child care worker. Seminars are frequently given on the company's premises during noontime brown-bag lunches (e.g., Government of Ontario Day Care Counsellor Employee Advisory Service, Toronto. The Working Parents Day Care Assurance Plan is being marketed to employers as an employee benefit program).

Other forms of employer based family support are evident in scattered work sites across Canada and the United States. Often these additional programs are negotiated by unions such as "The United Auto Workers Union Canada (U.A.W.)" and "The Canadian Union of Public Employees" (C.U.P.E.). Settlements include maternity and paternity leaves, alternative work schedules, plus flexible vacation leave which can be used for sick child care, job sharing, work done at home, permanent part-time work with benefits, and sick leave for parents whose children are ill. Some companies reduce employees' salaries to establish spending accounts for child care (Canadian Fabricated Products Ltd. of Stratford, Ontario). Other employers hire "Industrial Family Care Workers" to occasionally babysit in the employee's home for work-related reasons, or to care for the child when ill.

Such support mechanisms represent the numerous ways that a company can become involved with child care responsibilities of working parents.

Special purpose grants for conferences, publications, research, community education and emergency needs act as alternative forms of subsidies. (The Bank of Montreal has recently introduced their program "People Care Days", The Globe and Mail, June 29, 1992). This program gives the employees the opportunity to take time off to participate in community events.

A company may be interested in exploring one of these options since child care is instrumental in solving major management problems: such as recruitment, and absenteeism, to name a few (Nollen, 1982; Galinsky, 1988).

Much like child care information service, the eldercare information service is an information and counselling service which can assist employees caring for elderly family members. It provides referral information on available eldercare services as well as support counselling for the employee/caregiver.

Flexible Work Arrangements:

Where flexible work arrangements are possible, they can offer employees an opportunity to organize work and family responsibilities more effectively.

The following are short descriptions of various flexible work arrangements:

Part-Time:

Under a part-time arrangement, an employee works less than 37 1/2 hours per week on a regularly scheduled basis with pro-rated salary and pro-rated pension benefits. Most part-time work opportunities have been at the clerical and customer service representative levels. However, part-time work arrangements have also been established for management and non-management levels.

Job Sharing:

Job sharing permits two people to share the responsibilities and salary of one job. Job sharing can create regular part-time employment where there is a need for a full-time position. It is particularly useful in providing part-time opportunities for professional or managerial positions where the workload cannot be cut back or where responsibilities cannot be subdivided. See Figure 8 on the next page for Job Sharing Arrangements and Agreements.

Changing to a job sharing arrangement involves a reduction in income. It also means a change in your benefits. You have to carefully consider whether these changes will still provide you with income and benefits to meet your needs. Another area that must be addressed prior to your decision to share a job is your *career*. The decision to job share may offer you different career opportunities from those you had originally planned. As new opportunities present themselves, the literature at the Canadian Bank suggests that you'll want to re-evaluate how they fit into your goals and aspirations.

Figure 8

JOB SHARING ARRANGEMENTS AND AGREEMENTS

JOB SHARE AGREEMENT	
Name: _____	Level: _____
Title: _____	Position No: _____ Status: Regular Part-Time
Work Schedule: _____ _____	
Division of Responsibilities: <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to attached mandate <input type="checkbox"/> Jointly responsible for all duties <input type="checkbox"/> Solely responsible for the following duties _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Jointly & solely responsible for duties as specified: Joint: _____ Sole: _____ _____ _____	
Coverage for vacations and absences _____ _____	
Discontinuation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should one partner leave the arrangement, the remaining partner agrees to assume the full position until an alternate partner suitable to the Bank is found. • It is primarily the employees responsibility to find a suitable partner. • If the remaining partner is offered and declines to assume the full position, the Bank agrees to make reasonable efforts to locate a suitable alternate permanent position and efforts will also be made for interim accommodations i.e. temporary assignments and/or leave of absence of up to three months without salary. However, should no suitable alternate permanent position become available, then the employee will be deemed to have voluntarily resigned his/her position. • If both partners decide to end the arrangement and both are interested in assuming the full position, the Bank shall determine, based on performance, which partner should be offered the position. Where performance is relatively equal the partner with the most continuous service will be offered the position. For the remaining partner, the Bank agrees to make reasonable efforts to locate a suitable alternate permanent position and efforts will also be made for interim accommodations i.e. temporary assignments and/or leave of absence of up to three months without salary. However, should no suitable alternate permanent position become available, then the employee will be deemed to have voluntarily resigned his/her position. 	
I agree to the above terms and conditions: Employees _____ Manager _____ _____ Dated at _____ this _____ day of _____ 19____	

Requesting a Reduced Work Schedule:

When requesting a reduction in working hours, several options may be available to an employee. He/she may request a transfer to an existing part-time position or assess with their manager the feasibility of reducing work hours and work volumes on the existing position, in effect creating a part-time opportunity. Another option is to examine the possibility of job sharing on the actual position held or elsewhere or propose the creation of a new part-time position in response to a recognized increase in business volume.

Because the options vary significantly good communication between managers and interested employees is essential in identifying the appropriate alternative. Interested employees, particularly management level employees, are required to submit their request or proposal in writing. Management assumes that a written proposal helps ensure that the employee has given it careful thought, and it gives the manager a concrete proposal from which to work with and provides a common ground for discussion. Employees are responsible for developing a rationale for the arrangement and presenting a written proposal to their manager. As well they must ensure that the Bank's policies and standards are maintained.

Flexitime:

Under flexitime, an employee works a standard 37 1/2 hour workweek with

assigned core hours and flexible start/finish times.

Compressed Workweek:

The compressed workweek is a standard 37 1/2 workweek which is condensed into fewer than five days. The most common form of compressed work is the four-day week. The advantages, opportunities, roles and responsibilities are the same as those for part-time and job sharing which were discussed above.²⁴

How to Manage Flexibility:

Flexible work schedules and policies such as the ones discussed above are designed to provide a solution for employees who need more time or flexibility to meet changing family responsibilities. Although there is evidence that these programs have positive effects on employee morale and productivity, many managers believe that "flexibility is impossible" because it is difficult to implement (Johnson, 1989). Although these policies are in place, many supervisors and managers simply resist implementing them (Johnson, 1989).

²⁴ The sections on dependent care, part-time, job sharing, flextime, flexible and compressed work week have been extracted from literature provided by the Canadian Bank.

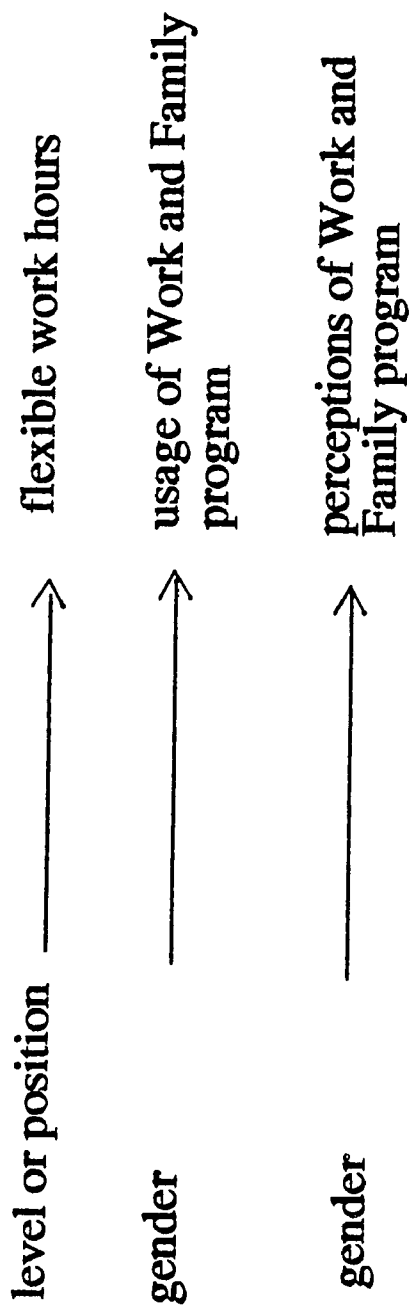
Research Statement:

The purpose of this research was to explore the usage and availability of the Work and Family program within a Canadian Bank. More specifically, I was interested in the number of employees who had access to and utilized the various options within the Work and Family program. For example, were senior management employees more likely than low level management employees to work an alternative work schedule. As well, were females more likely than males to work flexible work hours. I was also interested in whether there was a difference in the perceptions of males and females regarding the Work and Family program. (See Figure 9 on the next page). And lastly, I was interested in *why* the Work and Family was introduced at this bank. For example, was it implemented in response to initiatives by the bank's competitors; an attempt to enhance its corporate image; or, simply an attempt at accommodating the family needs of its employees.

Methodology:

This is a descriptive case study which provides insights on an increasingly prominent workplace issue by collecting and analysing data from management, and non-management employees. Employees from four branches of the Canadian Bank in the Montreal area as well as those employed in Corporate Headquarters, (Montreal) participated in the study. While the sample size is small (23), subjects were chosen to represent a broad array of job classifications (e.g. Vice-President, Lawyer, Clerk). The

**Relationship of Variables in
Case Study at the Level of
the Employee**



method used in selecting respondents was *snowball sampling*.²⁵ The only delimiting criteria used for the sample was that the respondents were representative of the various job classifications within the corporate hierarchy of the Canadian Bank. The *total* working population within the Canadian Bank is predominantly female; representing 70% of the workforce within the Canadian Bank. Thirteen (13) of the 23 respondents were employed in Corporate Headquarters while the others (10) worked in the branches.

Formal face-to-face interviews were conducted following a set of open-ended questions²⁶. (See Appendix B for Interview Guide). Although, the majority of the interviews were held outside office hours; usually during lunch hour, after work, or on the week-end, some took place during office hours. These were usually interviews with senior managers. Each individual was told the purpose of the interview and was assured that the information collected would be held in confidence.

²⁵ In this method you develop an ever-increasing set of sample observations. You ask one participant in the event under study to recommend others for interviewing, and each of the subsequently interviewed participants is asked for further recommendations. My goal was to interview 25 individuals; but given the hesitancy of employees to participate in the research, I interviewed 23 individuals. This method of data gathering was not the author's choice. Given the lack of support for the research from the Canadian Bank, snowball sampling was used. As a former employee of the Canadian Bank, established contacts made the research possible.

²⁶ The construction of the questions in the interview guide were derived from discussions with bank personnel prior to data collection; during the time I was trying to establish a relationship with them. A pilot study was also conducted and the interview guide was modified accordingly. Also, some questions were borrowed from the literature especially those that pertain to the conceptual elements in the theory of organizations.

Sample Population:

In total the sample consists of 23 employees; 5 males and 18 females. Again, this is a limited sample due in part to the hesitancy by employees within the Canadian Bank to participate in the research. I believe that one reason for this hesitancy is that the Canadian Bank had conducted their own research on the work and family needs of their employees.

The average age of the females is 41 years, while that of males is 45 years. Although all the men interviewed live with permanent partners, 15 of the 18 females live with permanent partners and have at least one child under sixteen. Three single mothers were interviewed. See Table 8 on the next page for the demographics of sample population.

In terms of position, the sample consists of: three females from Human Resources; a Senior Manager known as the "founder" of the Work and Family Program, a Human Resource Manager who introduced and implemented the program and the Employment Equity Manager. The other fifteen females' background vary from customer service representatives,²⁷ clerk, and lawyer to senior managers. As for the males, one is a Vice-

²⁷ Note that the term *customer service representative* is a new term for an old position which was commonly known as *teller*. Respondents in management positions were asked to classify their position into either, i) executive, ii) senior, iii) middle or, iv) low manager. All other respondents' titles were obvious: lawyer, customer service representative, or clerk.

TABLE 8
DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE POPULATION

Respondents	FEMALE N=18	MALE N=5
Age of respondents:		
25-35	6	1
36-45	9	2
46-55	3	2
Number living with permanent partners	15	5
Number of single parents	3	-
Number of children:		
none	2	-
1-2	15	3
3-5	1	2
Ages of children:		
less than three years of age	3	1
between 3 and 6 years of age	5	-
between 7 and 12 years of age	8	-
between 13 and 16 years of age	-	4
Positions of Respondents:		
Vice-President: Corporate Headquarters	1	1
Senior Manager: Corporate Headquarters	3	1
Senior Manager: Branch	-	1
Middle Manager: Corporate Headquarters	3	-
Middle Manager: Branch	-	1
Low Manager: Corporate Headquarters	2	1
Low Manager: Branch	4	-
Lawyer: Corporate Headquarters	1	-
Clerk: Branch	2	-
Customer Service Representative: Branch	2	-
Education level completed:		
Graduate/Professional Degree	12	1
Undergraduate Degree	-	3
College (CEGEP)	2	-
High School	2	1
Education in progress:		
Undergraduate Degree (part-time)	2	0

President in Corporate Headquarters, one is a senior manager in a branch. The remaining three males are from Corporate Headquarters employed as senior, middle, and low level managers. The large number of females generally reflects the fact that the overwhelming majority of employees are female, although they are in the small minority at senior and executive levels. But in addition, males were far more resistant to being interviewed for this study.

All respondents have at least high school education; one male has high school, one has a graduate degree, while the remaining three have post-secondary degrees. Of the females, two completed high school, two completed college, two are currently continuing their university education on a part-time basis, while the remaining 12 have graduate degrees or a professional degree.²⁸

All of the male respondents are employed full-time, while 11 of the 18 females work full-time. Of the 18 females, seven are working an alternative work schedule. See Table 9 on the next page for respondents employment status.

²⁸ Professional degree for the purposes of this study is defined as either a law degree, a professional designation such as a C.A. (Chartered Accountant), or an MBA (Master of Business Administration) or MA (Master of Arts).

Table 9
Employment Status of Respondents

Schedule	Position	Female N=18	Male N=5
Part-time: 4 days/week	Senior Manager	1	-
3 days/week	Lawyer	1	-
	Senior Manager	1	-
	Middle Manager	1	-
Job Share	Senior Manager	1	-
Flexible Hours: (core hours)	Low Manager	1	-
	Senior Manager	1	-
Full Time	All other females	11	-
	All male respondents	-	5

Initially, the intent of the study was to deal with only professional women and men. Specifically, men and women who had achieved a senior management position or executive position. After reviewing figures as of January 1992, which indicate that 7 percent of this financial organizations' 186 executives are women, I soon came to realize that it would be more feasible to interview males and females at different levels within the organization, particularly when looking at the needs of the family.

Findings:

My analysis indicates that there are conflicting views and perceptions about the Work and Family program. Responses varied according to the employee's level in the

corporate hierarchy. The most dramatic difference in response was between clerical employees and managers. Clerical employees were more burdened with economic problems in contrast to administrative and professional personnel. These observations suggested that I compare respondents on the following dimensions: i) needs of the family, ii) differences in family responsibilities, iii) differences between males and females perceptions, and iv) management's views versus non-management views. In addition I sought the views of, v) professional women, and vi) men with employed wives.

The literature indicates that reactions to initiatives such as the Work and Family program are mixed. For example, Cockburn (1990), suggests that on the one hand men felt it was fair, women should be helped to handle their double load. On the other hand, they felt annoyed at the inconvenience that these programs were creating for them as managers by absent women staff. This seems to imply that very few men would themselves seriously consider taking work leave in order to devote more time to raise children. A human resource female manager indicated that "the issue of balancing work and family doesn't just concern working mothers. It's leading both men and women to shift more emphasis to the family".

Currently, the Canadian Bank has four teams which are comprised of men who are job sharing. Although this is an indication that men are getting involved with child

rearing, I question²⁹ whether it was ultimately the individual's choice to job share or whether it was a management decision to decrease its operating expenses and retain trained employees.

While the Canadian Bank suggests that males are getting involved, the Bank of Montreal which has a comparable program³⁰ under a different name states that to date, 40% of their 2000 employees who are working alternative work schedules are *males*, (The Gazette, July 19, 1993, F4). My curiosity peaked when I read this. A discussion with the Vice-President of this program explained that "yes" these percentages are quite high. However, she continued,

" ... this number includes many systems employees: such as programmers, and systems analysts who are mostly males and we have set them up to work from the home. These people, she stressed get brainstorming at very odd hours of the day ... therefore, it makes good business sense to set them up at home ... some work through the night while others work during the day. The location of their work does not matter, but rather the fact that they are probably working more than they would be if they were at the office is certainly evident."

²⁹ ²⁹ This rationale applies to female employees as well. I was not able to interview the males in question for a number of reasons. These include either because; i) they were reluctant to be interviewed, or ii) because of distance, or iii) could not identify them.

³⁰ The objectives of the Work and Family program are generic to all companies. However, each company may differ in terms of the emphasis they place on specific work and family initiatives. For example, while the Canadian Bank may focus on family responsibilities, the other is designed to enhance the productivity of "knowledge workers".

Compared to previous times when a closed structure³¹ existed, Corporate Headquarters now solely provides policies, which are strictly guidelines. These policies are distributed throughout the bank. However, there are *regional* differences in how policies are implemented. This exemplifies the formal and informal component of the social structure. Formal to the extent that the work and family program, (i.e. the policies and procedures that govern their use are representative of the formal component of the social structure). However, informal social relations are exemplified more specifically in the relationship between the manager and the employee. For example, the application of the program is left to the discretion of the manager.

The bank is operating its organization within the rules of an open structure: allowing the managers to get feedback from their subordinates. "Taking into consideration both your employee and your customer needs can only serve to enhance the quality of output from the employee and at the same time satisfy the customer," states a Human Resource Manager. Policies provide the context of how the Bank expects its employees to be managed.

³¹ Organizations that operate within a closed structured approach are not as dependent on their environments for their continued survival or success. For example, utility companies provide a stable product which is not as sensitive to fluctuations in its external environment (Pondy and Mitroff, 1979).

Consequently, having policies in place does not necessarily imply that all employees qualify and are able to take advantage of them. With decentralization and empowerment at this organization, initiatives require the approval of the unit manager. If the manager is in agreement with an employee's proposal, then it will be granted. If he/she disagrees, then the employee does not qualify. As mentioned above, the onus is placed completely on the individual seeking an alternative work schedule. The manager merely grants approval. At this level, Human Resources is not involved at all. Therefore, it appears that the word empowerment is used "figuratively" within the Canadian Bank. The level of worker empowerment does not change (i.e. workers do not have any more control over work related activities). Instead, they are simply "empowered" to find new ways of performing work activities. The only individuals who are actually empowered are the managers, since they "control" worker activities.

Management expert and author Tom Peters in Thriving on Chaos (1988), discusses achieving flexibility by empowering people. One aspect of this is recognizing and supporting employees' needs for flexibility. Policies that do this seem to build employee commitment to the organization. For example, the interest in flexible work schedules stemmed from employees' needs for more control over their work time so they could balance work and family. Employers can also achieve some of their own objectives, such as financial flexibility as well as skill expansion by accommodating these needs.

A Human Resource manager mentioned the following:

"we wanted to be a leader, we recognized the need for a pro-active posture and program to provide employees with an opportunity for a flexible balance between work and family over a lifetime. With this in mind, management submitted a Business Case to executives and positioned the case as a *Long-Term Human Resource Issue* and not a women's issue."

A female senior manager, rated the program as being "quite good". But she added, "just because they wrote a brochure doesn't mean "culture" has changed. It is a special dispensation to prevent good performers from leaving."

Not all managers are very responsive to their employees needs. Some managers seem to think it is impossible not to have their employees at their desk all day long. They feel it is unthinkable to have their secretary or manager working from the home.

The findings in this study also vary by gender and position. For example, males' views are very different from females' views. While all the males' views were somewhat similar, females' differed, based on position held, level of education, length of employment, age, and marital status. For example, a senior female manager, (also a mother) said, "it's about time they address such an important issue". By comparison, a female vice-president, who is also a mother suggested: "it would be better to have

something done on an individual basis rather than on a policy basis"³². She continued, "it's nice to have the policy but you also need the flexibility as well". Suggesting that many managers do not approve of their employees working part-time or job sharing. Another consideration is the financial aspect that allows an individual to take advantage of these initiatives. On this note, a single mother who is employed as a clerk in a branch said, "this program is no good for me, I can't afford it. It's not like the bank compensates us while we are away". This response illustrates a perpetuation of class differences. For example, it seems that while the Work and Family program is equally accessible to all levels of personnel, it is more frequently utilized by middle or upper management employees.

The above statements are suggestive of a *formal policy versus an informal policy* of providing assistance. An informal policy does reduce stress, according to the Conference Board of Canada, (The Gazette, August 16, 1993, F16), but it also has some drawbacks. The board suggests that for the employee, an informal policy offers no guarantees ... an understanding boss may be replaced by one less-willing to make accommodations. And for the employer, informal policies can be subject to costly abuses.

As for the formal policy the drawback includes the fact that for the employees who don't

³² However, this contradicts some of the literature. For example, according to a study done by Lee, Duxbury, Higgins and Mills (1991), they found that many of the women interviewed said they were uncomfortable with situations in which no policy existed and supervisory discretion was used to determine the amount of flexibility allowed. They noted that this led to feelings of uncontrollability and fuelled frustrations when inequities were perceived.

have children they may resent the dollars being spent on a program they have no use for.

Initiative Awareness:

It seems that most of the respondents found out about the Work and Family program haphazardly. Although the bank has written policies and brochures explaining the program, 15 of the 23 respondents were not aware of it. The others (8) knowledge of the program was minimal.

Partially to blame are the employees themselves, they did not read the notices and brochures sent to them. Also, managers did not take the time to set-up a meeting and explain the program and the various options. Despite all the publicity from the Human Resources Department to train managers to become more sensitive to the needs of their employees, it seems, that this is a myth rather than reality. It appears that the program does not have the support from upper management.

Respondents within the branches, suggested that the amount of paper and brochures that Corporate Headquarters sends out is overwhelming. A pregnant clerk in a branch offered the following: "We just don't have the time to read everything. Our manager did not inform us of the program, despite the fact that we had five pregnant women in our branch."

A male Vice-President, responded as follows:

"My knowledge of the program is minimal. The way I found out about the program was through the brochures that were sent to me. But even then, I did not make a big effort to read them in detail. As a matter of a fact, I did not inform my staff about the program."

This response was quite typical and reveals the problems in coping with too many messages. Ironically, it is this kind of response to the Work and Family program that Human Resources is trying to eliminate. It seems that commitment from the top is lacking. In order to effectively and successfully implement such a program, direction and support must emanate from the top and not solely from human resources.

A female senior manager within Corporate Headquarters who was a pioneer as a *job sharer* said that,

"the problem emanates from the top - yes, males are usually at the helm, and we have a tendency to blame males. However, I was under the wings of a female manager who joined my department during my term as a job sharer. She was *not at all supportive* of my work schedule. As a matter of a fact, she always said that, 'woman nowadays have it easy, they should toughen up.'"

The respondent labelled her the "Cathy Model"³³ ... and continued the discussion suggesting that perhaps that attitude is the result of her being a single mom in the early '70s when the women's movement began. As a result, you not only have the males to deal with but as well women who fit into the "Cathy Model".

"This woman was the reason I asked for a transfer. The end results for me, was I had to drop my job sharing project and take up a full-time position, which was *not* what I wanted."

Needs of the Family:

I expected that women would find the work and family topic to be a very important issue because women see themselves as the primary caregivers. However, I did not expect the extent of traditional views from males. Males felt they could not offer much to the study, indicating either they did not support the program or did not see themselves as caregivers. Said one manager,

"I would be viewed as a *fluff-ball* by my colleagues and family if I decided to exercise my option and take advantage of the Work and Family program. Then there is the *traditional* part of me that wouldn't accept me working part-time. I prefer that my wife does that."

³³ Cathy is a fictitious name for the manager. In order to protect the confidentiality of the respondents, the names have been altered.

Eagle & Steffen (1986), refer to this as the inability to fulfil the traditional male obligations of full-time employment. The above-mentioned examples illustrate the presence of specific male-oriented cultural values which may affect the usage of the Work and Family program. While there has been a cultural change, such as the acceptance of single fathers, there seems to be a cultural lag in terms of gender equality in the workplace. These issues refer to external factors which influence behaviours within organizations (Davis, 1949).

In the course of my research I found a number of males who mentioned that "females are being given a free ride: once again". When asked to elaborate, they stated, "first it was, and still is Employment Equity, now it's Work and Family; this organization is trying to correct it's past injustices and we, the males, are paying for it ... this is creating reverse discrimination".

The needs of the family are varied. High status positions pay well enough to allow women to obtain privately funded day-care (Jacobs, 1991, p. 194). These women will continue with their career and have minimal interruptions. However, it is the individuals who are at the other end of the spectrum: the low level management and clerical positions that usually pay the price. A female, low level manager stated the following:

"executive women have nannies. Lower management and clerical workers are having problems. We can't afford to hire a nanny or take time off to job share, or work part-time. It's economically, impossible."

By contrast, a female Vice-President offered the following:

"my coping mechanism is a housekeeper who works 30 hours per week. She does the washing, ironing, picks up my child, buys birthday gifts, goes grocery shopping and anything else that needs to be taken care of."

It is the women in less attractive work roles that will continue to confront the trying trade-offs between work and family. These women may increasingly be the victims of discrimination. Since the example of the high-status women may serve as proof that women need not take time off, those women who do interrupt their careers to raise a family may be viewed as voluntarily giving up careers (Jacobs, 1991, p. 141). A consequence to the employer could be increased training costs, increased absenteeism and decreased productivity (Sekaran-Leong, 1992).

Perceptions - Males Versus Females:

What is really interesting about the males is their perceptions of how females have reacted to the program. Note the following:

"Women themselves in management positions aren't aware of the program. They are more sympathetic about the problems more than men because they can relate to them more than the traditionalist male. I think that females feel it is a program developed for clerical people and not for management. With the increased number of women in upper management positions, they (women) have shot down the theory that the boardroom belongs to the male. Not in numbers though, they are still low, but in perception; it is accepted. In terms of *management* and family, females don't see it as a mix. They see it as a program for field workers, such as customer service representatives, clerical workers, administrative assistants, etc. and not for management."

(Male, Manager, low level)

Female perceptions of how males have reacted to the program vary as follows:

"They have never talked about it, it is a very silent issue."

(Female, Senior Manager)

"They don't react, they pretend it does not exist."

(Female, Middle Manager)

"They avoid the issue/s. Males are not very approachable."

(Female, Clerk)

This organization is run predominantly by males. These are the individuals who are making policies and being influential. Many of these traditional males have stay-at-

home wives who have not yet mastered the problem of balancing work and family. The Wall Street Journal (Hymowitz, 1984), reported that,

"many male executives persist in believing that working mothers, now a majority of women in the workforce, are only working temporarily and that women in management positions who decide to have children aren't really committed to their career" (p. 35).

These are the men that are making management decisions and setting human resource policy for a work force with a completely different lifestyle and set of job and home responsibilities than theirs (Burden & Googins, 1987).

A senior female manager in the study suggested that the bank will only really and truly change when there are individuals in top positions who have experienced the trying times of balancing work and family obligations. Until then, the females that are facilitated by these programs will continue to work in *secrecy*, as suggested by a female lawyer. She elaborated on this point and added that she does not want her clients to know that she works three days per week, "if they find out they may not want me to represent them. They will probably feel that I am not as good as a male lawyer or I am not as *committed* as the other full-time lawyers". On another level, this employee commented that she does not tell her friends that she works part-time because they automatically assume that she is not committed to her employer and "she has it easy

because she works less than full-time". This seems to suggest that these women want to remain "anonymous" until such time that males and females accept the fact that they are just as committed as those employees who work full-time.

The concern of this respondent is well-documented in the literature. For example, Nollen (1982), states that we have a cultural stereotypical attitude which suggests that part-time employees are less committed than full-time employees.

Non-Management's Views:

In total, four customer service representatives and bank clerks were interviewed. Two completed high school while the other two completed college (CEGEP). All of these respondents discussed the economic burden that accompanies work and family. Whichever way they analyzed their own situation, both in the short-term and long-term, economically it didn't make sense to job share or work part-time or work compressed workweek. "The child care expenses associated with compressed workweek does not justify using this option and with the 50% reduction in salary as a job sharer, that option is out of the question," they continued.

In terms of long-term - these respondents are concerned with their progression in their career. They want to become part of the management team at the bank. They feel that by participating in the Work and Family program, this will interfere and delay their

development and advancement into management ranks.

They are leery of the program and seem to feel that it is merely publicity for the bank. Note the following:

"Economically impossible. I'm too worried about the stigma that would be attached to me if I worked part-time."
(Female, Clerk)

"My career would be put on hold, they'd forget I existed. It's good publicity for the organization, but they make sure to hide the fact that financially they don't give us anything. My salary would decrease and my pension would be prorated ... it seems to me that the bank has a hidden agenda, I don't trust them."
(Female, Manager, Branch)

"The bank is always cutting positions ... introducing technology ... I'm too worried about my position."
(Female, Customer Service Representative)

The above statements are all very symbolic of how non-management employees view the organization. The lack of security and trust they feel is overwhelmingly obvious.

Professional Women:

Kanter (1981), suggested that, "a conflict between the demands of work and the demands of family still exists, and there is evidence that women's career ambitions begin to taper off when women enter their thirties and express a desire for children." The management employees interviewed view job sharing and part-time employment as a bonus and are taking time off to be with their family.

These women tend to be in their mid-thirties³⁴, have completed professional degrees and have been employed by the employer for a number of years. Their attitude is expressed as follows: "I am well-educated, I have given my employer a number of years. I have put off having children to establish my career. Now, it's my turn, I want more time with my family."

These women are willing to interrupt their career, re-evaluate goals and aspirations in order to take time off to be with their families and feel they have "the best of both worlds". Contrary to what Kanter suggests, "... the careers women have been educated to want, do not accommodate less than fully committed people", these women see themselves as committed employees and seem to feel that this sense of accommodation

³⁴ An increasing number of couples marry and start having children later in life. In 1972, 12 percent of all women in their thirties who gave birth to a child were first-time mothers. This figure increased to 26 percent in 1986. See **Current Demographic Analysis - New Trends in the Family**, (1990) for more details. Catalogue 91-535E Occasional.

is "owed" to them.

Senior management employees do not see working part-time or job sharing as being less committed, but rather describe it as, "restructuring the career to include family" . These same women emphasized the fact that the position is not part-time, but rather the employee is paid less than 100%, although they give 120% as a part-timer.

"It is simply the attitude you have that counts. Obviously as a part-timer you have to believe in yourself, believe that this is temporary and you still have credibility within the organization. I want respect for what I bring to the organization, regardless of whether I'm a woman or a *mother*."

(Female, Senior Manager)

Since the early '80s, this organization has developed management programs which help individuals advance in their career. It only recently addressed the work and family concern. These management programs usually pushed for longer working hours emphasizing the "fast track". Work and Family programs allow employees to work fewer hours creating a "mommy track".³⁵ Friedman and Galinsky referred to the mommy track as "...where women are seen as less committed than men and unworthy

³⁵ Felice Schwartz, founder of Catalyst suggested in a *Harvard Business Review* article that companies think of female employees in two categories: "career primary" women, who put work first, and "career and family" women, who, for a prolonged period would need extra consideration from employers to balance their lives. It was not flattering and has caused much controversy. Schwartz never used the phrase "mommy track", this is a term used by the media.

of promotion".

While discussing career paths with the Manager of the Work and Family program, in light of Schwartz's article, she replied, "our employees career is not put on hold and they are not treated any differently than other employees. They are still considered for promotions, and they are given the opportunity to attend training courses." However, she continued, "we do ask employees to reevaluate their goals and aspirations when they are considering job sharing or part-time or any other option that falls under the Work and Family program." On the other hand, a female Vice-President proposed that young women have to be realistic. She continued, "if you're married and have or want children you must be realistic. Of course, you're put on a certain path, but it all works out in the end. Unless of course, you want a nanny for your child or children."

Most women management employees interviewed found that it's easier to cut back if they have at least achieved some of their goals. These women realize that these programs offer maximum time to the employee but seldom a route to more powerful organizational positions. However, they did suggest that there is a limited number of positions available at the upper echelons of the organization and taking time off simply perpetuates and reinforces stereotypical consequences as suggested by Parkin ... "the chance of being discriminated against may be increased".

Men with Employed Wives:

Although women still perform most family chores even though they are employed full-time, it seems that men have begun taking some responsibility for family tasks. Although these are viewed as minor, most women expressed "it's a start". Research by Burden & Googins, (1987); and Galinsky, (1988) suggests that when men take on family responsibilities, they experience work-family conflicts similar to those of women .

By positioning the Work and Family Program as a Human Resource Issue, the bank is, 1) inviting and responding not only to women's concerns about work and family conflicts but as well, 2) to the increasing number of males that have working wives with children and who must share in a greater range of family responsibilities.

The women studied generally felt that males were disinterested with the conflicts that family life creates but felt confident that within time, at least another 15 years, there would be a turnaround.

"Males are human beings, they deal with emotional problems differently. They don't have a superior coping mechanism. I think that in about 15 years you will have the reality that is talked about on paper. At that time, males will take paternity leave, job-share or work flexible hours."

(Female, Senior Manager)

"As more males with professional working women enter the workforce the culture of the organization will change accordingly."

(Female, Senior Manager)

The cover story in **Business Week's** March 20, 1989 issue was on the "Mommy Track". The story concluded with the following quote which seems appropriate for summing up this chapter:

"As the baby boomers age, more men as well as women may trade the next rung on the ladder for other rewards ... The challenge for companies is to provide flexibility and a rainbow of options so both men and women can raise their families as they see fit and still contribute."

CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Employer Benefits:

Employers are realizing that the benefits are many when addressing the needs of the working parent and implementing policies to support them. A corporation becomes more enthusiastic and willing to involve its members with the needs of the family when the overall effects prove beneficial to both the employer and the employee (Work/Family Directions, 1986). Table 10 below illustrates some of the perceived employer benefits which are discussed in the text.

Table 10

**Perceived Employer Benefits to
Work and Family Program**

	Agree N=23	Disagree N=23
Favourable Publicity	21	2
Decreased Absenteeism	16	7
Increased Productivity	19	4
Increased Loyalty	18	5

When an organization launches an innovative program that addresses the needs of

the working parent, this event may be featured in a number of magazines, newspapers or receive television and radio coverage. These "media mechanisms" elicit favourable publicity for the company, and highlights its progressive image.

An employer's involvement in Work and Family programs is viewed highly in the public eye. A Montreal study done by Child Care Consultants Alquin (1990), indicated that 99% of the respondents approved of companies responding to the needs of working families. As well, 75% felt it to be an employer's social responsibility to provide adequate facilities or flexible policies for their employees.

In this study, 21 or (90%) of the respondents suggested that the bank has received favourable publicity regarding the Work and Family program. They further suggested that this program was launched for competitive reasons. A senior female manager stated,

"the bank is concerned with its *corporate image*. Given that the bank's working population is roughly 70% female, this program will enhance its image, despite the fact that only a selected few can take advantage of it; either because of, i) lack of support from the manager or, ii) because of lack of financial support from the employer."

Although data suggest that if more suitable programs were made available, even more mothers with young children would be able to work, and in fact, work longer hours (Presser, 1980), this is only supported in this research by employees that can afford to

change their work schedule, (e.g. professional women).

Improved Recruitment:

An organization that is committed to work and family has a positive effect on recruitment (Nollen, 1982). The employers who offer such initiatives will attract and retain a loyal and valuable work force. Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979), suggest that commitment is loyalty to the organization. A loyal employee identifies with an organization and is involved in being an employee of that organization. In this study, 18 of the 23 respondents agreed. Of interest, all of the male respondents (5) were in agreement with this statement. One male manager suggested that it is easier to attract females if a company offers a Work and Family program.

A male vice-president employed in Corporate Headquarters cited an example whereby a mother of two children who was employed full-time was now working a three-day workweek.

"She was either going to resign or work part-time at the bank. Due to budget cuts, I was able to keep her as a part-timer and at peak periods she comes in full-time. This arrangement has allowed me to retain an excellent employee and has afforded her the possibility of being with her family. At the same time it has had a positive impact on the department's profit and loss statement. I have reduced my complement and operating expenses as a result ... and I don't have to replace her."

This supports the argument discussed by Nollen (1980), that for organizations this type of work schedule is a solution to scheduling difficulties, such as peak periods.

Child care availability or assistance, it seems, is an incentive to recruit employees. Jamieson (1981) suggests that such assistance rates as an equal motivational factor where car allowances and subsidized housing for middle and top management people are offered. The Human Resource Manager suggested that if a potential employee was given a choice between; 1) an employer who has a supportive Work and Family program, and 2) one that is not set-up to deal with such an issue, he/she would choose option one, all other things being equal.

Vizar (1982) states that employers believe a commitment to family issues can be a definite plus when it comes to recruiting and retaining skilled workers. Certainly, the employees responsible for the implementation of the Work and Family program at the Canadian Bank agree with this. However, the author knows of no empirical research indicating that such an initiative has been used as a recruitment tool.

Reduced Absenteeism and Turnover:

Coates (1991) cites that absenteeism affects the productivity and efficiency of the organization and is costly. In work situations with Work and Family programs, it has been found that there is a reduction in absenteeism, tardiness and job turnover (Galinsky

and Stein, 1991). Gallinsky (1987) reported in a *Fortune*-commissioned survey of 400 men and women with children under 12: "Our major finding is that problems with child care are the most significant predictors of absenteeism and unproductive time at home."³⁶

While 16 of the 23 respondents agreed with the decreasing rate of absenteeism and tardiness that these programs create, job turnover was difficult to measure. "Having flexibility in your work schedule decreases absenteeism," said a female lawyer.

In general, respondents felt that due to the economic recession, many employees may be hesitant to leave their current employer for another. Currently, the turnover rate at the Canadian Bank is approximately 5% compared to 10% during booming economic times. A female Human Resource Manager agreed that the current low turnover could be a combination of both the recession and the success of the Work and Family program.

It seems that corporations are beginning to realize that they are not only responding to a social need or enhancing their public image, but as well the organization is gaining financial benefits from lower turnover rates; and this is also an added advantage. As well, training costs are significantly decreased because employers are able to keep their employees.

³⁶ See Chapman, F.S., Executive Guilt: Who's Taking Care of the Children? *Fortune*, February 16, 1987, p. 30-37.

Increased Productivity:

Indications are that: offering a Work and Family program has a positive effect on worker productivity (Anderson, 1985; Latack & Foster, 1985, Galinsky and Stein 1990). A study done at AT&T, found that 77% of women and 73% of men surveyed take time away from work to handle family issues on the job - making phone calls or leaving the office to take care of child-related problems.³⁷ Paris (1990) observed that the productivity and efficiency of organizations can be affected when employees are absent from work or when employees spend time at work dealing with family matters. Paris further suggested that, "the combination of caring for dependents and engaging in paid employment may result in lower productivity and increased absenteeism".

This study did not specifically examine the impact of the Work and Family program on productivity. However, there is a perceived relationship between these two variables by female workers. In my research all of the female respondents agreed that family problems have an effect on productivity. "If you are happy at home you're productive at work and vice-versa," stated a female manager. This supports the spillover theory which suggests that work and family can affect each other in either a positive or negative way; such that pain or happiness in one leads to the same in the other. Most of the female non-management respondents suggested that the ideal solution would be to

³⁷ Fernandez, J.F., **Child Care and Corporate Productivity**, Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1986.

have a day care on premise. This would certainly increase productivity and worker morale they suggested. "Having the Work and Family program in place does not do much for the employees unless you are one of the few that can afford to work part-time or job share," suggested a clerk. A senior male manager agrees that family problems affect productivity at work. "Productivity decreases," he said. Furthermore, he stated, "I have to admit that men would not be able to handle what women do." Another male manager (low level) commented that he feels there is some sort of resentment from lower-end positions ... they don't have a choice. He continued, "senior managers and executives have always had a choice." Suggesting the economic burden associated with the lower status positions.

Perceived Support for Alternative Work Schedules:

Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1-6 whether their respective superiors were supportive of the alternative work schedules available through the Work and Family program³⁴. The majority of the responses are clustered around the *somewhat supportive* and *not supportive* categories for both males and females. See Table 11 on the next page.

³⁴ The scale was as follows: 1 = extremely supportive, 2 = very supportive, 3 = supportive, 4 = somewhat supportive, 5 = not supportive, 6 = not relevant.

Table 11
Perceived Support from Superiors for
Alternative Work Schedules

	Job Sharing		Compressed Work-Week		Flexible Hours	
	Female (N=18)	Male (N=5)	Female (N=18)	Male (N=5)	Female (N=18)	Male (N=5)
Very Supportive	-	1	-	-	-	-
Supportive	5	-	2	-	-	-
Somewhat Supportive	5	1	3	2	7	3
Not Supportive	9	3	13	3	11	2

Of significance is the fact that 13 of the female respondents perceived that their superiors were not supportive of compressed workweek. This is followed by 11 of the female respondents who perceived that their superiors were not supportive of flexible hours. The most striking is the fact that 1 or (20%) of the males suggested that their superiors were *very supportive* of job sharing. I can only conclude that these males are the ones that are employed in an environment where job sharing is prevalent. On the other hand, none of the females reported *very supportive* in the job sharing category, but rather 5 of the females reported that they perceived their superiors were *supportive* of job sharing. Three (3) of the males report that their superiors do not support either the job sharing or compressed work-week alternative.

These results are not surprising given the manner in which employees discussed the Work and Family program. For example, most of the respondents were either not well informed themselves about the program and this was the case for their superiors as well. It is clear that support for alternative work schedules is minimal. This could be due to the lack of training received with regards to making the workplace more family sensitive.

How do you Cope?:

Responses to the question "*How do you cope with the conflicting demands of work and family*" are presented in Table 12 on the following page.³⁹

³⁹ Unfortunately, a similar analysis on the males was not possible due to the fact that 4 out of the 5 male respondents have grown children (e.g. 16-25 year olds) and this coping mechanism was not an issue. The other male respondent has an infant son and his wife takes care of all home responsibilities (private sphere) while his responsibility is the public sphere of his life: work.

Table 12
How do you Cope with the Conflicting Demands of
Work and Family?

Mothers	Management	Non- Management	Married	Single
Set Priorities	10	3	10	3
Divide responsibilities	8	1	8	1
Pay for domestic help	10	3	9	1
Support from extended family	-	4	2	2
By being more organized	12	6	15	3

In coping with the conflicting demands of work and family, the most common strategies for employed parents were, i) by being more organized, ii) set priorities, and iii) to pay for domestic help. Most of the mothers reported that they could not hope to accomplish everything at home and that it was necessary to set priorities to determine which tasks could be postponed or hired out. Half of the respondents acknowledged that they could not realistically expect to accomplish everything themselves and that successful coping required that other family members (spouse and children) also take responsibility for household and child care tasks. Married mothers more than single mothers reported that they coped by dividing responsibilities within the family.

A large proportion of the respondents reported that one of the most helpful strategies is to hire domestic help. This was mentioned more frequently by married women than by single mothers, and more frequently by mothers in management or professional positions than by mothers in non-management positions. This is more than likely explained by the higher income available to married women and to women in management and professional positions. Also, some mothers, all in non-management positions reported that support from extended family helped them to cope. And finally, most important, the majority of the females described their organizational skills as being of primary importance to successful coping.

Career Goals and Aspirations:

The responses to the question: *What are your career goals and aspirations?* can be grouped into two main categories; 1) moving into higher management positions, and 2) anticipating retirement and enjoying more leisure time.

All but one of the non-management and low level managers aspire to higher management positions. In the age category, these respondents range between 27 and 33 years, and none of them have post-secondary education. A female clerk said, "... higher management position ... but because of economic recession, I know the bank is not hiring or promoting so I am just waiting for better economic times and I will start pushing."

A male low level manager suggested that "for the time being I will learn as much as I can here, later on I want to have my own company".

While most of the middle and senior managers aspire to even higher levels of management, they did not appear to be as concerned with the thought of promotion as did the non-management employees. The former were somewhat older, had post-secondary education and had been an employee at the bank for at least three years.

A Conference Board of Canada study found that in 1985, 35 percent of employed Canadians in the 25 to 44 year old age group would forego some of their salary for more time off. Of those who preferred to work fewer hours, 42 percent of the women cited personal and family responsibilities as the main reason. One female middle manager replied, "this is not a priority anymore, I realize there's more to life than the bank, I want more time for my family". A male senior branch manager stated, "I will retire in about five years - I want to enjoy what's left of my life!" Therefore, it seems that age, level of education, and level within the corporate hierarchy contribute to people's goals and aspirations.

Factors which Hinder your Career Development:

Respondents were asked in question 33: *Are there any factors, which you feel hinder your career development.* Most of the non-management women responded that

the fact they have a family and cannot give to their employer more than they already give hinders their career development. A minority of women suggested that their impediment was the fact that they were not as educated as some of their colleagues. By contrast, a senior female manager reported, "that women have the luxury of choice. You hinder your own career. Your attitude counts - you make the choice."

Another woman, a low level manager commented that the *recession* has hindered her career development. She elaborated, "the bank is cutting positions, there is less movement upwards, the only way to go nowadays (if you want to change jobs, that is), is with a lateral movement.

A female lawyer who is employed three days per week offered the following:

"myself, my family problems have hindered my career. Working part-time certainly doesn't help. You have to be confident that you will get there anyway ... the steps of the ladder will be somewhat different. You have to get into the professional attitude."

As for the males, one male, a low level manager said,

"the timing of my employment. I'm sure that I'm not going anywhere (meaning a promotion) for at least the next five years. With employment equity ... and the influx of

women with graduate degrees, I'll be on the waiting list for the next five years!"

This respondent was suggesting that this strategy creates *reverse discrimination* and generates low morale among the males. He discussed a concern of his: "a department in Corporate Headquarters is now represented by 99% females; there is only 1 male in the whole department." Kanter (1975), discussed this concept as "*tokenism*", that is women or perhaps members of visible minorities being represented in relatively small numbers compared to dominant male and or white cultural groups and levels of achievement. Although Kanter discussed this concept and used the expression "token woman", this respondent was suggesting not only reverse discrimination but as well the concept of the "token male".

Conclusions:

This research has attempted to address issues related to parents' work experience including workplace support and flexibility. More specifically, this research dealt with issues such as who benefits from the Work and Family program, and the perception of managers: males versus females and management versus non-management. As previously discussed, the position of the employee within the corporate hierarchy is one of the determining factors as to whether an employee utilizes a flexible work schedule.

Secondly, while empowerment is discussed in relation to worker involvement, it

seems that empowerment at the Canadian Bank is restricted to one group of employees. Managers, it seems, have been empowered to either accept or reject proposals from subordinates for alternative work schedules. While this increases the involvement of management to a certain degree, it does nothing towards the empowerment of subordinates. For example, workers do not get greater control over work activities only increased control over when they perform these activities. Another observation stems from the fact that during my data gathering process, I came across a double standard. For example, employees in middle to senior management positions requested that the interview take place during working hours. However, non-management employees, particularly in the branches, were interviewed during their own time; never during working hours. A customer service representative brought this to my attention ... she remarked, "we'd be wasting valuable work time, if we did this interview during working hours". The level of resentment towards managers was evident.

Thirdly, the perceptions of respondents regarding the Work and Family program varied. Most notable was the difference in perception among females. For example, non-management female employees seemed more suspicious of the program. They are concerned with progression into management ranks. At the Canadian Bank, upward career mobility is based on merit. Its internal labour market is well-defined. As a matter of a fact, most managers have been "groomed" in-house. This internal labour market creates a level of uncertainty among employees. They become suspicious at statements

such as "your career will not be tracked differently if you job share". In defence of the bank, not all positions at the Canadian Bank can be part-time or part of the job sharing team. Therefore, if you are job sharing and a position is open, the individual in an alternative work schedule may be overlooked simply because of his/her current employment status, (i.e. as a job sharer). Perhaps the employer wants his/her employees full-time.

Finally, the Canadian Bank exemplifies the open systems model. For example, according to most respondents the bank has initiated the Work and Family program primarily in response to similar programs initiated by its competitors. In this sense, the actions of the bank are being influenced by external factors such as the actions of its competitors. Also, relevant jobs (e.g. Manager, Work and Family Program), have been created to monitor similar programs and ensure a level of compatibility between the bank, relevant government legislation and those of other competitors.

It seems that helping employees balance their worlds of work and family through the Work and Family program has offered a certain degree of flexibility in the workforce. Employees that use these initiatives indicated that they feel less stressed and more productive. Simply knowing that a policy is in place is somewhat comforting. On the other hand, we find that non-management employees find that economically it is impossible to use the Work and Family program as a means to balance the different

spheres of their life.

Initiatives such as the Work and Family program raise a number of questions that require further analysis. Such an initiative seems to perpetuate class differences. For example, while management employees continue to be attracted to these initiatives simply because economically it makes sense, non-management employees will continue to express their resentment towards them. This translates into class divisions between management and non-management employees and into specific policies as they affect the work force.

A word of caution.⁴⁰ Given the very nature of the banking industry, one must keep in mind, that there are more clerical and administrative assistants positions (particularly within the branches) available than there are management and executive positions. Currently, the Canadian Bank's working population is approximately 70% female and the majority of the part-time positions are occupied by females. Lowe (1987) reminds us that by 1930 the financial sector was a major employer of female clerks.

⁴⁰ I am not suggesting that alternative work schedules which are available through the Work and Family program, such as part-time or job sharing are exclusively for management employees. But rather, the number of employees who actually benefit from these is limited.

Although I have noticed some changes (e.g. male receptionists in branches as well as male customer service representatives and clerks), in light of Employment Equity legislation, these positions are primarily occupied by females.⁴¹ The point is that there are many part-time positions in the bank which have always existed and will continue to exist. This was not the focus of my research, but rather, I was specifically examining what the Work and Family program has achieved in terms of employer and employee flexibility. Given that the program is in place: which employees use it, and which initiatives are they more likely to use. It is the alternative work schedules which have been created as a *direct* result of the Work and Family program that I am interested in. To think that part-time employment is limited at the Canadian Bank would be erroneous.

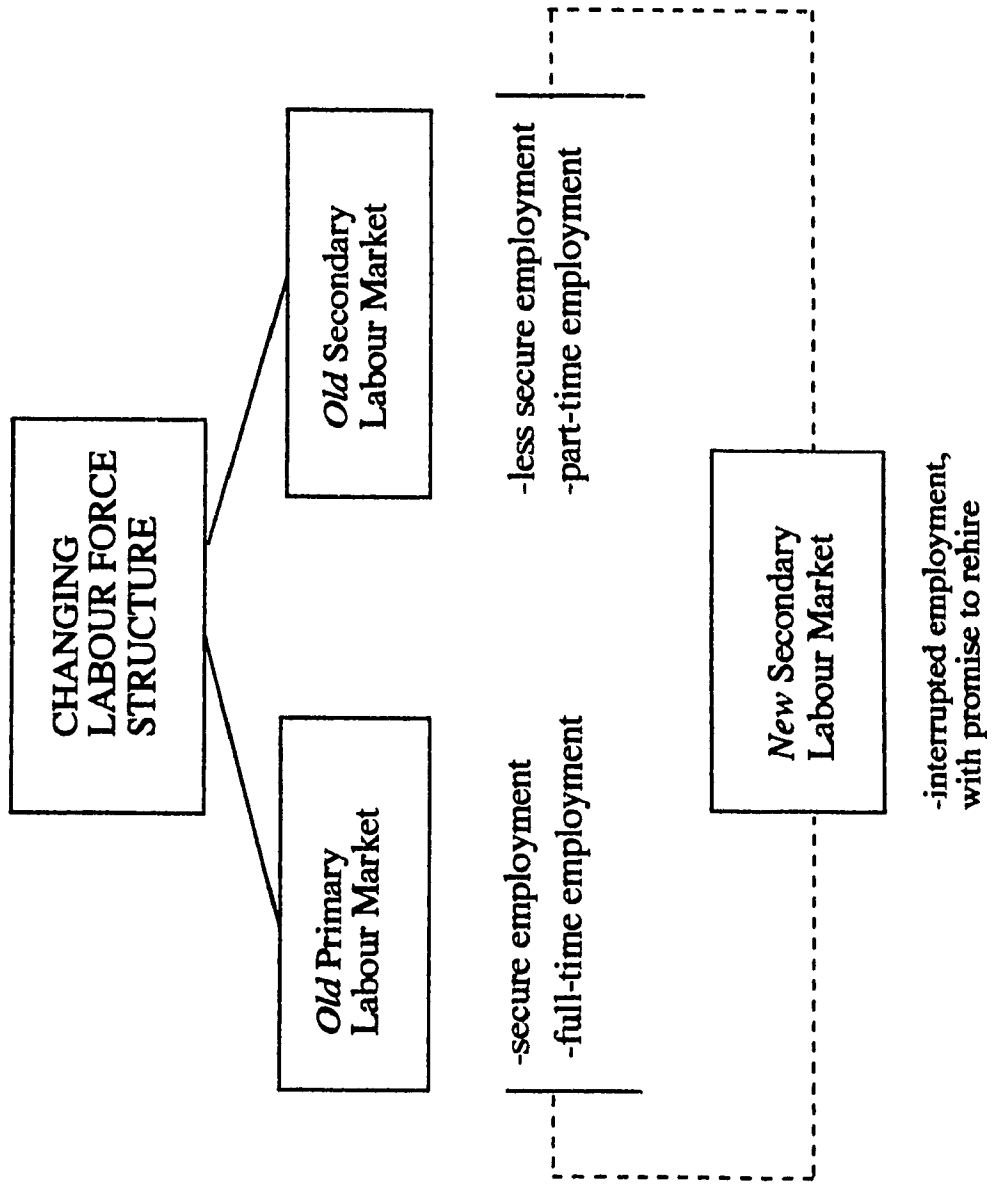
In terms of employer flexibility, we have observed that some managers use these programs to accommodate peak period workloads. For example, during these periods, an employee may work full-time, while during low periods he/she will be employed part-time. As has been discussed, employee flexibility is determined either by economic necessity and/or by the availability of alternative work schedules by unit manager.

⁴¹ During a discussion with a male employee of the Canadian Bank, (a non-participant of the study), he suggested that because of employee equity, nowadays, you walk into a branch and you are likely to find male receptionists and male customer service representatives and female branch managers. A reversal of roles. I suggested that these kinds of changes have probably increased the salary of these positions. As cited by Touhey (1974), when males occupy positions that were traditionally held by women, the prestige, salary, and desirability of the position is increased. On the other hand when a female occupies a position that was traditionally dominated by males, the prestige, salary, and desirability of the position is decreased.

A second area that requires further research is the implications of the growth of the secondary labour market. The secondary labour market is primarily characterized by jobs without security. Authors such as, Ehrenberg, Rosenberg, and Li (1988), stated that part-time workers earn lower mean hourly wages than full-timers and are less likely to receive most varieties of fringe benefits. The average part-time job is characterized by short duration and little opportunity for promotion (Rebitzer and Taylor, 1991; Nollen, Eddy, and Martin, 1978). This segment of the labour market will continue to grow with the increased and continued use of flexible work arrangements; particularly with alternatives such as job sharing and part-time employment. See Figure 10 on the next page where I suggest that the current dual labour market will be further split into two categories: the *new secondary* and the *old secondary*.

During a follow-up discussion with the Director of Human Resources regarding the future of the part-time employment: she suggested that "this is one of the strategies that is currently being implemented in order to keep costs at a minimum. We avoid the creation of full-time positions as much as possible, but rather we try and bring in consultants on a project basis, either as part-timers or full-time." With decreased benefits and no long-term commitment to its employees, the organization's bottom line will be affected in a positive manner, while the employees bottom line and job security will continue to be adversely affected.

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Figure 10

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CANADIAN BANK POLICY STATEMENT

The Bank recognizes that Quality People is one of the five pillars of its strategic plan. Having Quality People supports the Bank in its efforts to achieve each of its other strategic goals: Quality Service, Quality Leadership, Quality Assets and Quality Earnings.

In today's work environment, both the Bank and its employees face a number of new challenges: advancing technology, rapid change within the financial services industry and shifting customer needs. Moreover, shortages of skilled labour and the advent of the dual-income family have brought new pressures to bear on the Bank's ability to **recruit and retain key personnel**. Female labour force participation, in particular, has had a significant impact on the family unit, both in terms of shared responsibilities among family members, and in terms of family support mechanisms which have in the past provided support for work responsibilities.

The Bank recognizes the need for a **pro-active posture** and program to provide employees with an opportunity for a **flexible balance between work and family over a lifetime**. In this regard, the Canadian Bank's Work and Family Program has been formally established.

Under the umbrella of this program, **the Bank has consolidated existing policies, has introduced dependent care information services, and will be open to flexible work options** where it is in the interest of clients, the individual, and the Bank. In this regard, Bank management will openly maintain a positive posture in developing and accommodating requests. Even more importantly, the Bank will provide continued professional development and career opportunities to those employees who choose to pursue flexible work option.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Age:

2. Gender: 1. Female
2. Male

3. You are:

- 1. single
- 2. divorced
- 3. two adults with no children
- 4. two adults with children
- 5. widow/widower
- 6. Other: (describe) _____

4. Are you are planning to have a child within the next five years?

Yes No

5. If you are married or living conjointly, does your spouse or partner work?

- Full time
- part- time
- Not working

6. Do you have children?

Yes No

7. The ages of the children living with you are ...

- 1. oldest child _____
- 2. second oldest child _____
- 3. third oldest child _____
- 4. fourth oldest child _____
- 5. fifth oldest child _____
- 6. none _____

8. How would you describe your work (e.g. *clerical, administrative assistant, manager: (low level, middle manager, senior manager, executive, professional: lawyer, engineer)*)
9. Do you work:
1. full time
 2. part time
 3. flexible hours
 4. job share
 5. other (describe) _____
10. How many hours do you usually work per week.
11. The number of years you have worked for your current employer is.
12. Have you occupied other positions? If so, in what capacity?
13. Do you feel that the Bank is sympathetic to the needs of the working parent? If so, how?

14. What are your current arrangements for dependent care? (Child care and/or elderly care or other dependents)

15. Are you aware of the bank's *Work/Family Program*? If yes, how did you find out about it?

16. Do you think this program might be helpful for you? If yes, in what way?

17. If no, explain why not.

18. If uncertain, explain your uncertainty.

19. Would you ever consider using any of the options that are available through this program? If yes, which one(s).

20. If no, why not? (Probe: try to find out how he/she feels about: *job sharing, flexible working hours, r/r service, etc.*)

21. I support the Work and Family program, but would not consider any options because of economic reasons. (Explain.)

Yes

No

22. Overall, do you think the program is beneficial? If so, whom does it benefit most.

23. Are superiors generally supportive of the different options available to their employees? Specifically job sharing, flexible hours, flexiplace.

Please use the following scale to describe how supportive he/she is for each option available.

Job Sharing

extremely supportive	1
very supportive	2
supportive	3
somewhat supportive	4
not supportive	5
not relevant	6

Flexiplace

extremely supportive	1
very supportive	2
supportive	3
somewhat supportive	4
not supportive	5
not relevant	6

Flexible Hours

extremely supportive	1
very supportive	2
supportive	3
somewhat supportive	4
not supportive	5
not relevant	6

Compressed Workweek

extremely supportive	1
very supportive	2
supportive	3
somewhat supportive	4
not supportive	5
not relevant	6

24. The demands of the workplace and household responsibilities can come into conflict. How do you manage?

25. Do you think that family problems have an effect on *productivity*? Explain why or why not.

26. How many times has one of the following problems happened to you in the last 12 months because of family problems.

1. Missed work _____
2. been late for work _____
3. left early _____
4. had to deal with dependent care
related issues during working hours _____
5. made mistakes because of being preoccupied with
dependent care problems _____
6. needed to work lunches, evenings, etc. to
make up for time lost due to dependent care problems. _____

27. Every company has benefits which help to attract employees to work there and to keep good employees on staff. Please use the following scale to indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

strongly agree	1
agree	2
more or less agree	3
disagree	4
strongly disagree	5
not relevant	6

If my company were to implement one or more child care solutions, I would:

- .be more likely to stay with the company and not seek work elsewhere _____
- .recommend my company to others as a good place to work _____
- .feel less stress and distraction on the job _____
- .think that absenteeism and tardiness would be reduced _____
- .believe that employees would feel a greater loyalty to the company _____
- .imagine that my company's image would be enhanced _____
- .think that it would be easier for my company to attract the best people _____
- .be more productive in my work _____

28. What is your income level?

1. \$20,000-\$30,000
2. \$30,000-\$40,000
3. \$40,000-\$50,000
4. \$50,000-\$75,000
5. > \$75,000

29. How do you think males perceive the Work and Family program?

30. How do you think females perceive the Work and Family program?
31. Do you feel that your partner contributes equally to the workload in the home?
Explain.
32. What are your career goals and aspirations?
33. Are there any factors which you feel *hinder* your career development?
34. Are there any factors which you feel *assisted* you in career development?