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# A Multiple Stakeholder Perspective: Implications for Measuring Work-Family Outcomes

MaryAnne Hyland Adelphi University

Susan E. Jackson Rutgers University

This chapter addresses various outcomes related to work/family research. Our objectives are to describe several general categories of outcomes, identify specific outcomes that have been or should be measured in work/family research, and encourage work/family researchers to adopt a framework that recognizes the need to consider outcomes of interest to multiple stakeholders and multiple disciplines. Unlike other chapters in this section, this chapter does not focus on a specific research method, such as experimental interventions or case studies. Instead, we describe several measures that can be used in a variety of research designs.

We begin by considering the perspectives of several groups of organizational stakeholders. Stakeholders are individuals or groups that have legitimate rights and interests in the organization. Their concerns provide a backdrop for our subsequent summary of organization research relevant to evaluating work/family initiatives. After describing the concerns of multiple stakeholders, we present a simple framework that we used to organize this review. Our framework reflects the fact that the concerns of a few stakeholders tend to dominate the organizational literature—not all stakeholders' concerns have been considered.

Next, we tackle the task of summarizing research that illustrates the variety of criteria that organizational researchers have used to assess the effectiveness of work/family initiatives. Throughout this discussion, we address the nature of the various measures, the appropriate level(s) of analysis, and the challenges associated with various measurement approaches. We also provide examples of measures used in past studies.

Finally, we conclude with a discussion of possible future directions for organizational research that evaluates the effectiveness of work/family initiatives. This section addresses some additional methodological issues and describes three specific suggestions for future research: paying more attention to the multiple stakeholder approach, studying work/family practices in the context of an organization's total system for managing human resources, and adopting a multi-disciplinary perspective.

# UNDERSTANDING THE PERSPECTIVES OF MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

A complete assessment of the effectiveness of an organization's human resource management policies and practices—including work/family policies and practices—should consider their impact on all of an organization's primary stakeholders (see Jackson & Schuler, 2006, for a detailed discussion). Typically, the primary stakeholders of an organization include the "owners" (e.g., founders, investors), customers, top-level executives and managers, the organization's employees, and society in general. Here, we describe briefly the concerns of these various stakeholders. Our goal is to illustrate the many possible perspectives that *could* (and, we believe, *should*) be adopted when evaluating the effectiveness of work/family initiatives (see also Mirvis, 1999).

#### Owners and Investors

Owners and investors are among the most important stakeholders because without their capital, the business could not continue. Regardless of whether an organization operates on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis, the concerns of owners must be satisfied in order for the organization to be assured of long-term survival. When owners evaluate the effectiveness of management practices, they consider whether the practices contribute to the organization's ability to achieve its goals. Thus, for example, workforce management practices are considered effective to the degree that they support the achievement of objectives such as improving productivity, improving profitability, and ensuring the organization's long-term survival. Studies that adopt the perspective of owners often use cost-benefit ratios, financial accounting measures, and stock prices to assess the effectiveness of management practices (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Becker & Huselid, 1998; Gerhart, 1999).

#### Customers

The effectiveness of workforce management practices also can be assessed against their effects on customers. Ultimately, customers are satisfied when an organization's management practices serve to improve the quality and variety of products available to customers, the price at which those products can be purchased, the service received, and so on. As the U.S. economy has evolved toward services, the voices of customers have begun to influence numerous management practices. For example, their input is sought to design the jobs of employees, their preferences shape the criteria used to select new employees, and their evaluations may be used to assess employee performance (Schneider & White, 2004). We found no published research that evaluated the effectiveness of work/family practices against criteria that reflected the customer perspective. However, it is reasonable to assume that managers would not be eager to support work/family initiatives that they believe are likely to adversely affect customers. Thus, when Ernst & Young introduced work/family initiatives designed to improve employee retention, they made an effort to ensure that the firm's clients understood why Ernst & Young was changing aspects of how employees worked with clients and how clients were likely to benefit from the firm's new practices (Friedman, Thompson, Carpenter, & Marcel, 2000).

## Top Management

Top-level managers and executives are another distinct group of stakeholders whose concerns must be satisfied. The concerns of top-level executives and managers are (ideally) aligned and

somewhat redundant with those of owners and customers. In addition, their evaluations of management practices typically include assessments of how much they contribute to achieving strategic goals. Managing the workforce strategically involves developing a comprehensive understanding of the organization's goals and objectives, and then finding ways to help the organization achieve those goals and objectives through the effective management of human resources (Jackson & Schuler, 2003). Generally, workforce management practices are recognized as having strategic value when they help differentiate the organization as an employer of choice, create changes in employee behaviors that add increased value to the organization, and/or reduce labor-related expenses. Long-term HR practices that accomplish these three objectives can be assumed to contribute to improved organizational performance.

## Employees and Their Families

Employees and their families also are legitimate stakeholders whose concerns must be addressed. Increasingly, employers recognize that organizational strategies that depend on total quality management, innovation, and/or customer service cannot be met unless employees are dedicated to achieving the goals of the organization. Thus, "soft" indicators of employees' feelings about the organization (e.g., how attractive it is to job applicants, how committed employees feel) are recognized as relevant indicators of effectiveness that are worthy of top management's attention (Schneider & Bowen, 1995). Family considerations, in turn, are often assumed to partially determine these employee attitudes.

#### Society

Finally, the effects of an organization's management practices on the local community and the broader society should be considered when assessing their effectiveness. The work-family agenda should be considered from a corporate social responsibility view (Pitt-Catsouphes & Googins, 2005). Unfortunately, few for-profit organizations in the United States give much weight to the societal perspective when evaluating management practices, except to the extent that these concerns are embodied in laws and regulations. Nevertheless, proponents of employer initiatives that support work-family balance have argued that such initiatives are consistent with the social responsibilities of employers.

Some types of work/family practices can provide clear benefits to a community. When employers build and manage day-care centers, for example, they provide a service that may decrease the incidence of child neglect and perhaps improve early childhood social and cognitive development. To the extent that such services make it possible for some members of the community to maintain their employment, welfare costs should be lower and tax revenues should be higher.

Ideally, a complete evaluation of work/family initiatives would include assessments of their consequences for all of an organization's primary stakeholders. Our review of the existing organizational literature reveals an incomplete picture, however. To date, most researchers have evaluated work/family practices using criteria that reflect the perspectives of top management and employees and their families. This does not mean that the concerns of all other stakeholders have been completely ignored. Undoubtedly, cost considerations and the potential impact on an organization's customers are routinely taken into account when organizations decide whether or not to adopt a particular work/family initiative. Human resource practitioners and top-level managers often refer to the presumed benefits to society when they describe their organizations' more progressive work/family practices. Nevertheless, we found very little research that documented the many presumed effects of work/family initiatives on outcomes that reflect the concerns of owners, customers, or society in general.

TABLE 25.1
Criteria Used in Organizational Research Relevant to Evaluating Work-Family Initiatives

Degree of Concern for Stakeholder Group (High, Med, Low)				
Owners	Top Mgt	Customer	Employees and Families	Society
	<u> </u>			
M	Н	М	Н	M
Н	Н	H	M	L
L	M	Н	M	Ĺ
Н	Н	M	L	L
L	L	M	н	М
L	L	L	н	H
L	M	L	н	L.
M	M	M	Н	М
L	L	M	Н	Н
	M H L H	Owners Top Mgt  M H H H L M H H L L L L L	Owners Top Mgt Customer  M H M H H H L M H H H L L L L L L L M L M M M	(High. Med. Low)  Owners Top Mg1 Customer Employees and Families  M H M H H M L M H M H H M L L L L H L L H M L H M H

Note: The ratings in this table reflect the opinions of the authors. They were not derived empirically. A high rating indicates that members of the stakeholder group are likely to recognize that outcome is directly related to their primary interests. A medium rating indicates our judgment that the outcome has a clear but indirect influence on outcomes that are of primary interest to this stakeholder group. A low rating indicates that we believe members of this stakeholder group would consider this outcome to be, at best, weakly related to their primary concerns.

# FRAMEWORK USED TO ORGANIZE OUR REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH

Table 25.1 provides a summary of the criteria that have been used by organizational researchers interested in work and family issues. The criteria are listed in the order they are discussed in this chapter: work outcomes, family outcomes, and career outcomes. For each category of criterion, we also indicate our assessment of the stakeholder perspectives that are most closely related to use of the criterion.

## Work Outcomes

We begin by describing studies that focus on work outcomes. Studies of work outcomes best reflect the concerns of top management and owners. By extension, the concerns of customers also are reflected in these studies. However, the views of customers are seldom directly solicited.

## Family Outcomes

Next, we consider studies of family outcomes. Studies of family outcomes usually include the perspectives of employees and they sometimes also directly assess the attitudes and experiences of family members. What distinguishes studies in this category is that the criteria of interest reflect consequences that are realized at home rather than at work.

#### Career Outcomes

Finally, we consider several outcomes that span the categories of work and family and do not fit neatly into either of these categories. The notion of a career spans the boundaries of work and family since employers are concerned with their employees' careers and the employees themselves also have a personal interest in their career success.

In presenting this review, our primary objective is to summarize the relevant research that has been conducted and published to date. We do not provide a full critique of this work.

#### WORK-FAMILY INITIATIVES AND WORK OUTCOMES

We have organized work outcomes into four categories: employee attraction and retention, work performance, work behavior, and cost-related measures. Within each of these categories, we have provided what we believe are the primary constructs of interest. However, we recognize that there are other constructs that may be of interest; our list is not exhaustive.

#### Employee Attraction and Retention

Organizations offering family-friendly policies have been recognized by publications such as *Fortune* and *Working Mother*. These organizations have publicized their placement on popular magazine lists as a recruiting tool. As the composition of the workforce has changed to include more dual-career couples and single parents, attracting such individuals to an organization has become increasingly important. Person–organization fit (Chatman, 1991) may result in applicants choosing organizations that offer family-friendly policies. Subsequently, satisfaction with work/family balance may influence employees' decisions about whether to remain with the organization.

Attracting Employees. We are aware of only two studies that have examined attraction of potential employees as an outcome related to offering family-friendly policies. This is surprising because it implies that many organizations are offering family-friendly policies without having evidence that suggests that such polices do indeed improve the organization's reputation as an employer and thereby increase applicant attraction. Honeycutt and Rosen (1997) found that individuals were attracted to an organization with flexible career paths and policies, but that differences in attraction existed with regard to individuals' salient identities (career primary or family primary). Rau and Hyland (2002) found that attraction to organizations offering flexible work arrangements varied according to level of role conflict and the type of work arrangement offered.

Both Honeycutt and Rosen (1997) and Rau and Hyland (2002) created their own measures of attraction to the organization. Other measures exist in the more general recruitment literature (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1994; Schwoerer & Rosen, 1989). Measures of organizational reputation may be of particular value for understanding how work/family practices influence the perceptions and employment choices of actual and potential job applicants (for a discussion of these and other measures that can be used to assess recruitment activities, see Harris & Lasson, 2003). As applicant attraction is an individual level construct, existing measures use self-reported, individual level data. Clearly, measures of applicant attraction assess the effects of recruitment efforts early in the recruitment and selection process. However, applicant attraction is important to understanding early recruitment efforts (Barber, 1998) and it has been found to be related to applicant beliefs later in the hiring process as well as performance and turnover (Barber, 1998; Cable, Aiman-Smith, Mulvey, & Edwards, 2000).

Retaining Employees. Many employers offer or have considered offering family-friendly policies as a retention strategy (Batt & Valcour, 2003). However, relatively few studies have specifically examined employee retention (or its opposite—turnover) as an outcome of work-family conflict (Boyar, Maertz, Pearson, & Keough, 2003). Recent research on turnover in relation to work/family polices also is quite limited. Batt and Valcour (2003) found that access to flexible scheduling predicted lower turnover intentions; yet, as predicted, dependent care benefits were not related to turnover intentions. Early research on flexible work arrangements found mixed results (e.g., Golembiewski & Proehl, 1978; Nollen & Martin, 1978; Ramsower, 1985), while early research on dependent care benefits generally found that turnover was reduced when such benefits were available or used (Milkovich & Gomez, 1976; Youngblood & Chambers-Cook, 1984).

Although a vast and long-standing literature on turnover exists outside of the work-family arena, there still is no consensus on how to best measure turnover. First, there is the difficulty of measuring actual turnover because individuals who have already quit will not be available to complete interviews or questionnaires. Second, there are challenges related to measuring turnover intentions, because even though most research finds a positive relationship between turnover intentions and actual turnover (e.g., Prestholdt, Lane, & Matthews, 1987; Steel & Ovalle, 1984), the two are not perfectly correlated. Third, despite the fact that turnover models have been developed and tested for over 20 years, a recent reconceptualization of the turnover decision process suggests that past models have not accurately captured the decision of an individual to leave an organization (Steel, 2002).

Turnover is an individual-level construct. Although actual turnover data are most readily garnered from organizational records, managerial reports and individual self-report data can be used to measure turnover. At the most basic level, turnover is measured as a dichotomous variable. However, richer measures may include whether the turnover was voluntary or involuntary as well as more detailed reasons for the separation (e.g., found another job, spouse's job relocated, poor performance, position eliminated).

Lyness and Judiesch (2001) used archival organizational data to measure turnover as voluntary or involuntary, with family-related reasons considered to be voluntary. Two recent studies from the work/family literature measured turnover intentions rather than actual turnover. Batt and Valcour (2003) used an additive scale that consisted of five items. Each item received a score of 0 to 4, with lower scores indicating a serious intention to quit. Boyar, Maertz, Pearson, and Keough (2003) used four items to create a turnover intentions scale. The coefficient alpha was .90. Other studies have used previously existing measures (e.g., Mobley, Homer, & Hollingsworth, 1978).

Although all turnover and turnover intentions measures must begin at the individual level, departmental or organizational turnover rates can be calculated by aggregating individual-level turnover data. These rates are generally computed as the percentage of employees who leave within a 1-year period; however, other time frames could be used.

## Work Performance

Traditionally, researchers interested in measuring the performance of employees assessed how well they accomplished the core tasks that comprised an employee's "job." As the nature of work has changed, managers and researchers alike have gradually adopted a broader view of effective work performance (Arvey & Murphy, 1998; Ilgen & Pulakos, 1999; Murphy & Jackson, 1999). In addition to performing core tasks, the best employees are able to adapt to continuously changing organizational conditions and are willing to accept a broad array of responsibilities associated with being good organizational citizens. In other words, total work

performance includes task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance (also referred to as organizational citizenship).

Task Performance. Task performance focuses on core tasks, rather than organizational citizenship that may fall beyond basic performance of one's job duties. Although understanding the distinction between task performance and organizational citizenship is important for all disciplines that study performance, it is especially important for work/family research. Employees participating in certain work/family programs, such as flexible work arrangements, may have difficulty engaging in citizenship behavior due to time restrictions related to their work arrangement, yet they still are able to excel in their task performance. Therefore, using a measure that combines task performance with citizenship behavior may underestimate benefits or overestimate problems associated with a work/family program. For example, if one studied the effect of flextime on overall performance, results may suggest that the effect on overall performance is small. However, if performance is dissected into task performance and organizational citizenship, it may be discovered that flextime has a positive effect on task performance but a negative effect on organizational citizenship, which results in a small effect on overall performance.

Task performance can also be distinguished from productivity, which is the ratio of production divided by the time required for that production (Calvasina & Boxx, 1975), yet not all studies have made this distinction (e.g., Kim & Campagna, 1981). Some organizations have taken the more straightforward approach of measuring sales per employee as a measure of performance (O'Connell, 1996). For many organizations, behavioral measures such as absenteeism and lateness are relevant. Absence and lateness can be highly disruptive for organizations when jobs are designed around teams of employees who are highly interdependent. For employees in jobs that involve providing customer service, absence and lateness interfere with rapid and reliable customer response times. Task performance can be studied at the individual or group level. Employees would be the target of individual-level analysis and work groups would be the target of group level-analysis. We were unable to identify any studies that examined the effects of work-family practices on group-level performance. However, research on individual performance is plentiful. (Although researchers have not always stated that they measured task performance as such, readers can often determine whether the performance measure focused on the task and/or encompassed citizenship behavior.)

Work/family research that studied task performance as an outcome variable has found mixed results. A meta-analysis by Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, and Neuman (1999) found differing effects of various flexible work arrangements on performance or productivity. For example, flextime was found to have positive effects, whereas compressed work weeks had a negative effect on productivity. Supporting earlier work by Milkovich and Gomez (1976), Kossek and Nichol (1992) found no direct effect for using onsite child care on performance.

To measure task performance, many organizations rely on the subjective performance ratings of supervisors and peers. One of the greatest methodological challenges of measuring task performance is obtaining ratings that are reliable, unbiased, and valid. The challenges associated with measuring performance are not solely methodological, however—defining the appropriate domain to be measured can also be a challenge (Arvey & Murphy, 1998). Indeed, entire books have been written about the difficulties associated with measuring employee performance (e.g., Coens & Jenkins, 2000; Ilgen & Pulakos, 1999; Murphy & Cleveland, 1991; Smither, 1998). Because no approach to measuring task performance (or any type of performance) is problem-free, researchers may find it useful to use multiple approaches. For example, an estimated 5% use the employees' own self-ratings of performance (for a full

discussion, see Atwater, 1998). However, such self-ratings often differ from ratings by others (e.g., Atkins & Wood, 2002). In addition to subjective ratings, organizational researchers have also measured performance using behavioral measures such as absenteeism and lateness as well as objective indicators of productivity (see Baltes et al., 1999). Adopting this approach, Kossek and Nichol (1992) measured performance using both supervisor-rated performance and absenteeism. Ultimately, the choice of measures should depend on the research objective. At times, theoretical considerations may dictate the decision of how to measure performance. When the objective includes influencing how an organization manages its employees, however, researchers may find it most effective to use the performance measures that the organization has adopted for use in its own internal decision making.

Contextual Performance. Several terms have been used to describe the notion of good organizational citizenship, including extra-role performance, pro-social behavior, and contextual performance. Regardless of which term is used, the focus is the beneficial things that people do at work that are beyond the scope of their required work. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) suggest that individuals feel obligated to reciprocate when they receive something from another individual or entity. If workers feel the need to reciprocate for the organization offering them work-family benefits, discretionary contextual performance may be the preferred form of reciprocal payment (Lambert, 2000; see also Lambert, 1999).

Contextual performance has traditionally been measured at the individual level (e.g., Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Although some studies have tried to measure the contextual performance of work groups (e.g., Bachrach, Bendoly, & Podskaoff, 2001; Bommer, Miles, & Grover, 2003), we are unaware of any work-family studies that have considered contextual performance at any level other than the individual level. Even research on individual-level contextual performance is rare in the work-family arena. Lambert (2000) found that workers' perceptions of the usefulness of work-family benefits were positively related to organizational citizenship behaviors. Her study used three measures: a four-item index of helping behaviors, a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not an individual had submitted any suggestions as part of a company suggestion system during a 2-year period, and attendance at lunch hour quality meetings. Again, the dearth of work-family research in this area may be due to the fact that many individuals believe that work-family benefits and contextual performance should not have a positive relationship; yet according to Lambert's (2000) study, this is not the case.

Adaptive Performance. Unlike task performance and contextual performance, both of which have been studied a great deal, adaptive performance has only recently been proposed as an important dimension of work performance (Campbell, 1999; Hesketh & Neal, 1999; Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, & Plamondon, 2000). Adaptive performance can be loosely defined as the ability to manage new experiences by adapting or being flexible. However, recent research suggests that this construct is more complex than implied by this simple definition. Pulakos et al. (2000) developed a taxonomy of adaptive performance that takes into account multiple dimensions, such as handling emergencies or crisis situations and handling work stress. These researchers also developed a psychometrically sound measure of this outcome, called the Job Adaptability Inventory (JAI).

Although to our knowledge no work-family studies have examined adaptive performance, we think it is an important outcome to consider, given that work-family benefits often result from workplaces experiencing changes in the composition of the workforce (e.g., an increased percentage of women) and that work-family benefits may be related to a worker's ability to adapt to a changing environment if such benefits improve the employee's flexibility.

#### Work Behaviors

Although many consider performance to be the ultimate work outcome, work behaviors also are important to measure, either because they are known to be antecedents to performance or because they are considered valued outcomes in and of themselves. Absenteeism and tardiness are two work behaviors often discussed in the work-family literature. Presumably, work-family benefits have the potential to alleviate otherwise incompatible role pressures that may result in high rates of absenteeism or lateness (see Katz & Kahn. 1978, for a detailed discussion of role theory.) Some work-family benefits, such as flexible work arrangements, may even alter the relevance of absenteeism and lateness as they are traditionally measured if such arrangements do not require employees to be working at specified times or on specified days. Cooperativeness is another potentially important work behavior; employees may be more cooperative at work if stress in their home life is reduced by work-family benefits.

Absenteeism. On a typical day in the United States, 2 to 3% of employees fail to show up for work, costing employers millions of dollars in lost productivity. A long tradition of research has shown that having children is positively related to absenteeism, and more recent research has shown that having elder care responsibilities also is positively related to absenteeism (Boise & Neal, 1996).

Although measuring absenteeism may seem straightforward, there are different approaches to doing so. One decision that researchers must make is whether they want to measure all absenteeism or only absenteeism related to family matters. For example, Anderson, Coffey, and Byerly (2002) used the measure designed for the National Study of the Changing Workforce (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998), which asked respondents about the frequency of their absenteeism due to (a) the need to care for a sick child, (b) because their usual child care was not available, or (c) for other family reasons. Hammer, Bauer, and Grandey (2003) used a one-item measure that asked respondents how many days they have missed work due to family/personal-related issues. Both of these examples point out another important component of an absenteeism measure: One must determine the relevant period of time to be included. For the previous examples. Bond et al. (1998) asked respondents to base their response on their experience in the previous 3 months, and Hammer et al. (2003) asked respondents to consider the previous 4 months. Another possibility for measuring absenteeism is to use organizational records. This approach has the advantage of being more objective than the self-reported measures. However, unless the organization collects data on the reason for an employee's absence, such organizational data cannot serve as a measure of family-related absenteeism, but rather must serve as an overall measure of absenteeism. Interestingly, in a meta-analysis on personality and absenteeism (not specific to the work-family literature), only non-self-report measures of absenteeism were included (Ones, Viswesvaran, & Schmidt, 2003). Most were from organizational records and a few were from supervisory records. Although supervisory reports could yield richer data than organizational records, this would require that the supervisors know whether or not an employee's absence was due to family reasons. Kossek and Nichol (1992) used such a measure by having supervisors report their perception of the degree to which child care affected employee attendance, including partial absences such as lateness. The authors stated that they chose this measure because organizational records did not permit the distinction between absence related to child care and other causes.

As one of the goals of this review is to address levels of analysis, we would be remiss to only acknowledge absenteeism at the individual level. Like other individual behaviors, absence behaviors can be aggregated to study group-level phenomena. It is possible that the true effects on absence of work-family initiatives would be more accurately captured by studying absence rates for work units. As many organizations have learned, programs that reward and recognize

employees with outstanding attendance records are one effective approach to minimizing absenteeism. When work-family initiatives make it possible for more employees to maintain better attendance records, organizations may find that they can raise the criteria used in such programs (e.g., require longer records of perfect attendance or lower the number of allowed absences in order to receive recognition or a reward). If the criteria for excellence are raised for the work unit, it is likely that absenteeism for the unit will decline.

Lateness. Like absenteeism, lateness is a type of work withdrawal behavior (Hammer, Bauer, & Grandey, 2003). Some researchers have identified lateness as a form of partial absence (e.g., Hepburn & Barling, 1996). Other aspects of partial absence include leaving work early and nonwork telephone conversations. Studies have found that work-eldercare conflict is related to partial absenteeism (Barling, MacEwen, Kelloway, & Higginbottom, 1994; Hepburn & Barling, 1996). In a study of dual-earner couples, Hammer and colleagues (2003) found that work-family conflict is related to wife lateness but not husband lateness. Blau (1995) pointed out that in the management literature, lateness has experienced "empirical neglect" compared to other withdrawal behaviors, such as absenteeism and turnover (p. 1483).

Lateness can be measured from self-report data, managerial report data or organizational records, although for upper-level employees, the organization may not track lateness. One early study on lateness (Adler & Golan, 1981) used time clock records to obtain an objective measure of lateness. Lateness was defined by organizational policy (which was being more than 7 minutes late in the sample organization). As with absenteeism, the authors needed to determine the relevant time frame over which to examine lateness. They chose a 1-year period. Another study (Blau, 1995) used a 9-month period. Both Adler and Golan (1981) and Blau (1995) used frequency (the number of times an individual was late) and duration (the total number of minutes the individual was late) measures for lateness. However, Adler and Golan (1981) measured duration as the number of minutes late per incident, whereas Blau (1995) measured the total number of minutes late for the 9-month period. Following his earlier work (Blau, 1994), Blau calculated an overall lateness score by multiplying frequency by duration. As with absenteeism, there does not seem to be a readily apparent way to calculate group-level lateness.

Cooperativeness. Although we were unable to find any work-family studies that considered cooperativeness as an outcome of interest, we feel that this construct is worthy of a brief discussion as a work behavior. Both the academic and practitioner literatures address many employers' desire to be recognized as a "great place to work." Such places are characterized by positive relationships between employees and their managers and coworkers (Great Place to Work Institute, 2004). Establishing a culture in which people cooperate is beneficial for employers, who can invest less in managing conflict and the problems that arise when employees fail to work as an integrated team or work unit. We feel that this construct could be informative for work-family research because cooperativeness is possible even when employees have flexible work arrangements or dependent care arrangements that result in rigid schedules. Including measures of cooperativeness in future research would be relatively easy, as several measures of this construct have already been developed and used in psychological research (e.g., Ross, Rausch, & Canada, 2003).

# Cost-Related Measures

During the past decade, human resource managers have experienced increasing pressure to document the effects of HR practices on "the bottom line." Among researchers who study HR practices, the most well-developed approaches to estimating the cost-effectiveness of

specific HR practices are utility analysis (e.g., Schmidt, Hunter, MacKenzie, & Muldrow, 1979; Boudreau, 1991; Boudreau, 2003; Boudreau & Ramstad, 2003) and cost accounting (see Cascio, 2000; Flamholtz, 1999). The goal of both approaches is to determine whether the dollar value of the benefits associated with introducing a new practice (e.g., a work-life initiative) is greater than the total dollar value of all costs associated with the new practices. Essential to both utility analysis and cost accounting is the ability to accurately determine the true costs and all benefits of both current practices and the new initiatives being considered.

Regardless of the technical merits of utility analysis and cost accounting and their potential usefulness, these methods for assessing the effectiveness of HR practices—including work-family initiatives—have not been widely adopted by organizations. Instead, most firms continue to rely on subjective estimates and intuition when assessing the effectiveness of their HR practices (Becker, Huselid, & Ulrich, 2001). Undoubtedly, there are many explanations for the slow adoption rate of utility analysis and cost accounting methods, including the fact that these measures may not reflect fundamental strategic objectives or the concerns of a broader set of important stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jayne & Rauschenberger, 2000).

Recently, however, there has been renewed interest in developing cost-related metrics for evaluating workforce management practices. HR consultants now offer a broader variety of more sophisticated measures intended to assess HR effectiveness, including measures that estimate the economic value added or return-on-investment for a variety of activities (e.g., see Becker et al., 2001; Fitz-Enz, 2002). Much of this work adopts the perspective of human capital theory. The crux of this theory is that people are of value to the organization to the extent they make it productive (Becker, 1964; Becker & Huselid, 1998; Lepak & Snell, 1999). Thus, organizations make decisions about investing in people just as they make decisions about investing in machinery, viewing them as a form of capital. Costs related to attracting, training, retraining, motivating, and monitoring the organization's workforce are viewed as investments in the human capital of the firm, just as maintenance of machinery would constitute an investment in the capital of the firm (Flamholtz, 1999; Wright et al., 1994; Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001). This reasoning suggests that the value of human resource management practices can be estimated using macro-level financial indicators of firm performance, such as stock price or the ratio of the market-to-book valuation.

A recent study illustrates the type of research associated with this more macro-level approach to evaluating HR practices (see Arthur, 2003). The investigator focused on firms that appeared in the annual list of Fortune 500 companies for the years 1971 through 1996. For these firms, the investigator used public announcements of work-family initiatives as predictors of the firm's performance in the stock market. The results showed that shareholder returns increased significantly on the day a work-family initiative was announced. Furthermore, this effect remained over the subsequent 3-day trading period. The effect was somewhat stronger for high-tech firms and those that employed more women. Presumably, these stronger effects were found because attracting and retaining talent was more challenging for these firms and being successful was more likely to lead to improved firm performance over time. A similar methodology was used by Cascio (2004) in a study that found that the Working Mother Best 100 companies had superior stock performance to the S&P 500 companies. Hannon and Milkovich (1996) also studied firms identified as one of "the best" companies for working mothers and found that being on this list resulted in stock price gains of .69%.

Research strategies such as those just described are quite new and interpreting the results of such studies is fraught with many challenges. Nevertheless, such findings may help to shift researchers away from a narrow focus on estimating the costs and benefits associated with work/family initiatives and toward understanding the more interesting question of why investors are willing to pay a premium to own stock in family-friendly firms.

## WORK-FAMILY INITIATIVES AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

We turn next to research that provides insights into how the family lives of employees can be affected by employers' work-family policies and practices. To organize the research relevant to the family domain, we have grouped studies into two major categories: employees' psychological reactions and outcomes that more directly reflect an employee's family role performance.

#### Psychological Outcomes

Employees' psychological reactions to issues that arise from involvement in work and family roles are too numerous to list. However, those that have drawn the most attention from researchers can be easily categorized into three types: the experience of conflict, strain, and relationship/marital satisfaction.

Role Conflict. Although early research on work/family conflict did not distinguish between conflict that emanates from work and affects family and conflict that originates at home and affects work, the bi-directional nature of such role conflict is now widely accepted. Thus, work/family research includes measures of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict, even though the subject of the research may only specify work/family conflict. For purposes of this discussion, we refer to work/family role conflict as the general construct related to conflict flowing either into or out of work and we refer to work-to-family and family-to work conflict as the directional measures related to the construct.

A great deal of the existing literature on work/family conflict has examined such conflict as a predictor of various outcomes. A meta-analytic review of 34 sample groups examined the relationship of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict on the outcomes of job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Other recent studies have also considered work/family conflict as a predictor (e.g., Boles, Howard, & Donofrio, 2001, O'Driscoll et al., 2003). However, work/family conflict also is an important outcome itself. A recent study examined the effects of telecommuting on work/family conflict (Madsen, 2003). Another study examined the effects of a supportive work-family culture on work-family conflict (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999).

Work/family conflict is an individual level construct that is generally measured using self-reported data. Many reliable, valid scales have been developed and used by organizational researchers. For example, Neterneyer, Boles, and McMurrian (1996) developed and validated work-to-family and family-to-work measures. In addition to addressing the bi-directional nature of work/family conflict, Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000) took a multi-dimensional approach to the development of a work/family conflict measure by identifying three forms of work-family conflict: time, strain, and behavior-based. The lack of consistency among measures of work/family conflict may be responsible for differences in research results (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Avoiding measurement variation was the purpose of Carlson et al.'s (2000) development of a comprehensive measure that followed Kossek and Ozeki's (1998) suggestion to distinguish between attitudinal and activity-based measures of work-family conflict.

Strain. Psychological strain and self-reported symptoms of related health problems have been studied as work/family outcomes for many years. For example, Cooke and Rousseau (1984) examined the effects of holding work and family roles on role strain, psychological distress, and somatic complaints. Today, research on the effects of work/family conflict on psychological strain and stress continues, but with various mediating and moderating factors taken into account. For example, like earlier researchers, O'Driscoll et al. (2003) found an

overall correlation between work/family conflict and psychological strain, but they did not find that family-supportive organizational policies mediated this relationship.

Psychological strain is measured at the individual level. Most researchers have used preexisting scales to measure such strain. For example, O'Driscoll et al. (2003) used a 13-item measure developed by Caplan, Cobb. French, Harrison, and Pinneau (1980). In the marketing literature, Boles, Johnston, and Hair (1997) used an adaptation of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) to measure emotional exhaustion in relation to work/family conflict. A study by Hammer, Saksvik, Nytro, Torvatn, and Bayazit (2004) measured job stress by using Cooper's Job Stress Scale (Cooper, 1981). This study also included subjective health symptoms, which were measured using a scale from the European Foundation (1997). Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1997) also studied physical manifestations of stress, including overall health and hypertension.

Relationship/Marital Satisfaction. This psychological outcome has traditionally been thought of as marital satisfaction; however, as organizations increasingly recognize domestic partnerships, more inclusive measures of relationship satisfaction may become commonplace. Unlike most work/family measures, marital satisfaction is most useful when considered in studies of couples. Those studies in which marital satisfaction is not a focal construct are most likely to measure only one partner's level of marital satisfaction (e.g., Chiu, Man, & Thayer, 1998). Studies that focus on marital satisfaction more often include data from both partners. For example, Schulz, Cowan, Cowan, and Brennan (2004) used the validated Marital Adjustment Test (MAT: Locke & Wallace, 1959) to measure husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction in their study of the impact of workday experiences on couples' interactions. Although Roehling and Bultman (2002) also focused on couples, their measure of marital satisfaction was much simpler. They used a single item that asked respondents to rate on a scale from 0 (not satisfied at all) to 100 (absolutely satisfied) how satisfied they were with their current relationship. Such single-item measures generally are not recommended because it is impossible to separate the different sources of variability in the indicator (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991).

#### Family Performance

Although family performance includes the ability of individuals to fulfill all of their family roles, the work and family literature focuses primarily on outcomes related to children. This is largely due to debates on the effects of parental employment, specifically maternal employment, on children. Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) developed a model to explain how work affects the ability of parents to care for their children. The outcomes in this model are parental performance, parental satisfaction with child care, children's health, and children's school performance. We focus our discussion on child-related outcomes and collapse other outcomes into a category labeled "accountability to family."

Child General Health. The physical and mental health of children can be affected by parental employment. General health may be improved as a result of the income produced from a parent's employment due to improved access to medical care (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). However, most research on child health focuses on mental health and development.

Child Adjustment. Behavioral functioning of children also has been shown to be related to parental employment. Much of the research on such child adjustment comes from the psychology literature. Studies often rely on national samples, such as the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), and the measures that such studies include. For example, past research using the NLSY for samples have included measures of short-term memory and attentiveness.

compliance, behavior problems, and self-esteem (Harvey, 1999; Vandell & Ramanan, 1992). These measures are individual level self-report scales, scales that are completed by the child's mother, or child assessment scores. The child's mother completes the Behavior Problems Index (BPI; Peterson & Zill, 1986). It assesses peer conflicts, hyperactivity, and anxiety, along with other behavior problems (Vandell & Ramanan, 1992). Self-esteem is measured with the Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985), which is a self-report questionnaire for children ages 8 and older. Compliance is reported by the mother using a temperament scale developed specifically for the NLSY (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics). The NLSY also includes many other measures of child adjustment.

Child Cognitive Development. Studies on early maternal employment have found negative effects of maternal employment on child cognitive development, although these effects generally are not universal and are sometimes offset by positive effects of later maternal employment (e.g., Blau & Grossberg, 1992; Harvey, 1999; Waldfogel, Han, & Brooks-Gunn, 2002). Most of the research on the effects of parental employment rely on achievement test scores to measure cognitive development or intellectual ability. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and Peabody Individual Achievement Tests (PIAT) for math and reading are commonly reported in the literature. These and other assessments of cognitive development are included in the NLSY child surveys.

Accountability to Family. In addition to child health, adjustment, and development, work/ family balance can affect other outcomes in the family domain. The availability for various household chores is one potential outcome. Creating a supportive home environment is another. The NLSY has included the Home Observation Measurement of the Environment (HOME) for one cohort that it tracks. This inventory assesses the quality of a child's home environment, as measured by such factors as the ways in which parents spend time with their children, emotional support, and access to educational materials (Earle, 2001). Other studies have used questionnaires to measure outcomes such as paternal contribution to child care, housework, and percentage of overall family income (Almeida, Maggs, & Galambos, 1993; Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993). For example, husband's contribution to housework was measured with a sevenitem scale and husband's contribution to child care was measured by a five-item scale, both of which were completed by both husbands and wives in a study that focused on paternal participation in child care and housework as the outcomes of interest (Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993).

# WORK-FAMILY INITIATIVES AND CAREER OUTCOMES

As mentioned previously, the career outcomes of employees are of concern to employers and employees alike. Many employees consider advancement to be an important reward for doing well, and employers understand that frustration over lack of advancement is one of the primary reasons for turnover among top performers. Thus, both have a common interest in work practices that facilitate the ability of employees to advance at an acceptable rate over time. Similarly, maintaining high levels of employee satisfaction serves both employees, who benefit directly, and employers, who benefit from the improved work performance and reduced costs associated with work behaviors that are associated with dissatisfaction.

### Advancement

Advancement is a well-known issue in the work-family literature, largely because of "glass ceiling" and "mommy track" research. Unfortunately, there has been little effort among researchers

to develop valid and reliable measures of career advancement. One reason for the lack of development of such measures may be the fact that advancement can be measured objectively with organization data. If an organization tracks job titles or uses a tier system that classifies jobs by level, researchers can easily compute a measure of advancement by looking at changes in individuals' jobs (see Dreher & Bretz, 1991, or Lyness & Judiesch, 2001, for examples). Tharenou (1999) used a three-item measure that was the average of managerial level, salary and managerial promotions, with each of the three measured on a six-point scale. However, some researchers try to measure advancement using surveys. Such research often asks respondents for information regarding their advancement intentions (e.g., Cutler & Jackson, 2002). The Power and Fast Track Job (PFTJ) scale was developed to address job advancement potential and was found to be valid and reliable by its authors (Kelly & Marin, 1998). Although such measures of behavioral intentions are important, research also should examine the relationship between advancement intentions and actual advancement.

#### Satisfaction

There are several forms of satisfaction that are relevant to work/family research. Job satisfaction is most closely related to work, whereas career satisfaction and life satisfaction are outcomes associated with the personal domain.

Job Satisfaction. Although job satisfaction can be classified as a work-related outcome, we have categorized it as a career outcome because of the potential impact of such satisfaction on an individual's career. It is an individual-level construct that has generally been measured by self-report surveys. Kossek and Ozeki's (1998) meta-analysis found that the studies included in the analysis used preexisting measures of job satisfaction, but unlike life satisfaction, there was no consistency in the measures of job satisfaction that were used.

Career Satisfaction. Work/family conflict has been suggested to have important effects on individuals' career satisfaction (Powell & Mainiero, 1992). As an individual-level attitude, such satisfaction has been measured using self-reported survey instruments. Martins, Eddleston, and Veiga (2002) used a three-item measure that drew from earlier measures of career satisfaction. Burke (2002) also relied on a previously developed measure.

Life Satisfaction. One of the advantages of studying life satisfaction as an outcome is it comprehensiveness, as it relates to all life domains. It is an individual-level construct and has traditionally been measured by self-report surveys. In Kossek and Ozeki's (1998) meta-analysis on job and life satisfaction in relation to work-family conflict, almost all of the included studies used Quinn and Staines' (1978) measure of life satisfaction. Other studies have examined quality of work life, which includes an assessment of life satisfaction (e.g., Greenhaus, Bedeian, & Mossholder, 1987).

#### Income

Another outcome with both work and family implications is income. Surprisingly, work/family research often excludes this construct, despite debates in the literature about whether it is possible to "have it all" in terms of work or family, or whether sacrifices must be made in one realm or the other. Two notable exceptions to the dearth in the literature are studies by Schneer and Reitman (1990, 1993), which tracked the income of MBA couples and examined differences in the couples' working patterns. Income can be measured at the individual level or the family level. Self-reports or organizational records are straightforward approaches to collecting income data.

## DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

### Methodological Challenges

As is true for any body of work, the studies that we have referred to throughout this chapter vary greatly in terms of methodological rigor and statistical sophistication. Generally, however, organizational research on work/family initiatives is conducted using cross-sectional designs that prevent researchers from ruling out reverse causality. Many studies are conducted using only self-report data, which often is biased, and may not yield conclusions that are as valid as studies that gather data from multiple sources. In addition, most studies examine outcomes in either the work or the family domain, but not both. Due to the difficulty of conducting true field experiments, even the conclusions that flow from the most rigorous research available should be accepted with caution. The problem of reverse causality is created by the fact that observed relationships between work/family initiatives and so-called outcomes may be due to cause-and-effect relationships other than the one of interest to researchers. For example, if a study shows that organizations that invest more heavily in work/family initiatives are more profitable, what can one conclude? One possibility is that investments in work/family initiatives lead to greater profitability. Alternatively, perhaps profitable organizations are more likely to invest in work/family initiatives. Rigorous study designs can be used to greatly reduce this problem, but such designs are seldom used because the time and expense required makes them less feasible.

Spillover theory (Crouter, 1984) proposes that what happens at work "spills over" into the home realm and what happens at home "spills over" into the work realm. That is, according to spillover theory, "work" outcomes such as attendance and productivity are likely to also have consequences for family life. Some of these outcomes may be positive (e.g., more pay) while others may be negative (e.g., more fatigue). Conversely, "family" outcomes may spill into work. It follows that research on the effects of work/family initiatives can most accurately assess the full range of outcomes when it includes assessments of outcomes in both domains. Unfortunately, very few studies achieve this goal. Instead, most studies assess only work-related outcomes or family-related outcomes. Thus, most research does not permit conclusions to be drawn about the total effectiveness of work/family initiatives.

As is true for the field of management in general, there is a great need for more research that employs rigorous methods to evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches to managing work/family issues. Excellent scholarly resources are available to guide anyone interested in conducting such research (e.g., see Edwards, Scott, & Raju, 2003). What is less certain is whether organizations are willing to devote the time and effort that is needed to adequately assess the full range of outcomes that could be influenced by their work/family initiatives.

# Multiple Stakeholders Approach

We began this chapter by briefly describing the concerns of several primary stakeholder groups that must be satisfied in order for an organization to be assured of long-term prosperity. These stakeholders include investors/owners, top management, customers, employees and their families, and society. To date, research relevant to establishing the effectiveness of work/family practices has typically adopted the perspective of only one group of stakeholders. For example, a study might consider outcomes of interest primarily to employees and their families while ignoring consequences of more direct concern to top management (e.g., job performance). Of course, studies that do the opposite also are prevalent.

Going forward, research that adopts the perspective of multiple stakeholders would be valuable. The principle that effective management requires attending to all relevant stakeholders

is as true for work/family initiatives as it is of other management practices. Work-family practices cannot be designed solely to meet the needs of employees and their families. Nor can they be designed by considering only their consequences for customer service or the bottom line. To the extent that researchers can establish that progressive work/family practices can improve the satisfaction of multiple stakeholders simultaneously, such practices are more likely to be adopted by employers and retained even in the face of difficult economic conditions. We acknowledge that in many cases, individual studies will focus on one or a few stakeholders. This is often necessary due to the constructs that are being studied or the samples that are available. However, the work/family literature as a whole must adapt a multiple stakeholder approach that uses a variety of measures for examining work/family practices and issues.

#### Work/Family Initiatives and Integrated Human Resources Systems

Recent theoretical developments in the management literature provide compelling reasons to include the views of multiple stakeholders in future research on work/family initiatives. Recently, research in the general field of human resource management has been significantly influenced by the resource-based view of organizations. The resource-based view emphasizes the need for resources as being primary in the determination of policies and procedures (Wernerfelt, 1984). Organizations are viewed as being able to succeed by gaining and retaining control over scarce, valuable, and inimitable resources (Barney, 1990; Porter, 1980).

In larger organizations, the HR department can be viewed as controlling scarce resources to the extent that it controls access to the skills necessary for the achievement of strategic goals (Lepak & Snell, 2003). Thus, for example, an appealing approach to work/family balance should be valuable to firms that face stiff competition in their efforts to lure and retain top talent. Furthermore, the resource-based view emphasizes the importance of ensuring that a firm's work/family practices are integrated elements of a coherent HR system. Whereas it may be relatively easy for competitors to copy or imitate any single HR practice, it is more difficult to copy an entire system of practices that are aligned with each other and that serve the specific needs of the organization (Wright et al., 1994; Lado & Wilson, 1994).

The resource-based view highlights the importance of understanding how all the elements of an HR system work in concert with each other. For example, it suggests that specific work/family initiatives are more likely to be effective when they are aligned with all of the other elements of the organization's HR system. This idea is consistent with some of the assumptions that seem to be prevalent in organizations. For example, it is widely believed that work/family initiatives are ineffective in retaining top talent when employees believe that the criteria used to make promotion decisions penalize employees who make use of those initiatives. Another common belief is that progressive work/family practices can be used to counterbalance the otherwise negative effects of offering pay that is somewhat below the market average.

Research that attempts to shed light on the issue of how the elements of an HR system work in concert to influence the reactions of employees and the performance of organizations is in its infancy, emerging only during the last decade. Much of this research has sought to identify the so-called best practices and high-performance work systems (e.g., Becker & Huselid, 1998; Cappelli & Neumark, 2001). The logic underlying this research is that properly aligned HR practices are mutually reinforcing, which bolster their overall effectiveness; when mismatched, HR practices may work against each other and their effectiveness is diminished (Delery, 1998; Lawler, 1992; Lawler, Mohrman, & Ledford, 1992).

Several empirical studies have shown that firms that have an entire set of so-called highperformance HR practices outperform firms with none or only a few of these practices. However, as critics have pointed out, there has been some inconsistency in the specific practices that various authors consider to be among the preferred practices, making it difficult to draw general conclusions about which practices qualify as "best practices" (e.g., see Becker & Gerhart, 1996). Perhaps most disturbing for those interested in work/family initiatives, researchers in this area almost never include work/family initiatives in their measures of "best practices." Thus, there is clearly an opportunity for new research that adopts the perspective of the emerging field of strategic HRM and also incorporates measures of work/family practices as components of a total HR system.

#### Multi-Discipline Research

We have attempted to draw from several disciplines when compiling this chapter. Human resource management, psychology, and sociology are heavily drawn on in this review. However, more accounting, economics, and marketing information would help to inform the business case for work/family initiatives. Likewise, education and health care information would improve the understanding of the family outcomes of work/family initiatives. Given the dual outcome realms of work and home associated with this line of research, more multi-discipline research could change the pattern of business scholars focusing more on business outcomes and family specialists focusing more on family outcomes. Teams of researchers from different disciplines working together could provide broader perspectives that improve the quality of work/family research.

#### CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to clarify how measures from work/family research can be classified as well as to provide an overview of specific measures and the advantages and disadvantages of several possible measures. We hope that the information provided here is useful for individuals who are trying to choose a measurement approach for their work. We also hope that our discussion in this chapter may spark ideas about how to better measure outcomes in work/family research. With improved research attention on measures related to work/family practices, we hope that the quality and cohesiveness of this body of research will result in significant advances in our shared understanding of the phenomena related to the worlds of work and family.

Due to space constraints, we were not able to describe specific steps for measuring all of the constructs we discussed. For more details about measures, we encourage readers to study the original sources cited throughout this chapter. In addition, readers may wish to consult the Center for Work and Family's *Metrics Manual* (1999), which includes specific items that can be used to assess many of the constructs we have referred to as potential measures for assessing how work/family initiatives influence various outcomes.

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