WORK-LIFE BALANCE PROGRAMS IN CANADIAN WORKPLACES:
FACTORS AFFECTING AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION

by

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ABSTRACT

The thesis explores the factors affecting the availability and utilization of work-life balance programs in Canadian workplaces and how employee involvement and participation programs can help employees balance their work and life.

The introductory chapter provides background information on the importance of balancing work and life. It outlines chapters two, three, and four and reveals the overarching theme that unites them.

Chapter Two explores how business strategy affects the availability of work-life balance programs. This chapter uses the 2003 and 2004 Canadian Workplace and Employee Survey to demonstrate that product leadership business strategy is positively related to the likelihood of adopting work-life balance programs (i.e. employee assistance programs, fitness and recreation centers). Cost leadership strategy is shown to be negatively correlated to the adoption of these programs. This study also finds that high performance work
systems mediate the relationship between business strategy and employer responsiveness to work-life balance issues.

Chapter Three investigates how a company’s family-friendly culture affects the likelihood of an employee’s use of parental leave. Using a national representative and linked employer and employee survey, this study finds that a long-hour organizational culture, which is revealed through managers’ work hours, discourages new parents from taking parental leave. This study also finds that when managers work long hours, it has a greater negative effect on the probability of male employees taking parental leave than female employees.

Chapter Four discusses how participation in decision making (PDM) can help employees balance the demands from work and life. Using Karasek’s (1979) job demand-job control model, this study finds that PDM can reduce work-life conflict, but the reduction only works for employees who work long hours. For those employees who work short hours, PDM increases their work-life conflict.

Chapter Five summarizes the empirical results. Implications for employers, labour unions, and policy makers are discussed.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, the issue of work-life balance has received extensive publicity and has inspired an enormous amount of research (Eby et al., 2005). Concerns about work-life balance have become important for a number of reasons. Demographic and social changes have resulted in more women entering the workforce\(^1\), while women with young children are remaining in the workforce or re-entering the workforce soon after childbirth. As well, a rapidly aging population has increased the pressure of eldercare responsibilities for both male and female workers. Technical advancements (e.g. internet, cell phones, video conferencing) have made it possible for some work to be performed 24/7 from virtually anywhere (Kalleberg & Esstein, 2001). Furthermore, globalization and the rise of the service industry have increased the pressure on employers and employees to be more flexible and to work non-standard business hours. Over the past few decades, there has been an increase in many industrialized countries in the proportion of employees who work long hours (Kodz et al., 2002). Higgins and Duxbury (2002), in their study of work-life balance in Canada, found that the percentage of employees working more than 50 hours a week increased from 10% to 40% between 1991 and 2001.

Long work hours and family responsibilities have placed an increasing burden on employees in their attempts to balance work and life demands. The inability to balance work and life is “everyone’s problem”. From the employer’s perspective, this inability links

\(^1\) The participation rate for Canadian women in the labour force reached a record high level of 62.3% in September 2009 (Statistics Canada 2009).
to reduced work performance and productivity, increased absenteeism, high turnover rate, and low commitment (Duxbury, et al.2000). In their study, Duxbury, et al. (2000) estimated the direct cost of absenteeism in Canadian firms due to work-life conflict to be near $3 billion per year. From the employee’s perspective, work-life conflict leads to marital problems, reduced family and life satisfaction, burnout, depression and stress-related illnesses (Higgins & Duxbury, 2002). Society also suffers from an individual employee’s work and life conflict. Research suggests that society will benefit if employees are able to devote more time out of their workplace to their roles of parent, spouse, neighbour and volunteer. As the Vanier Institute (2000, p. 84) stated:

“Each person in the labour force, when considered as a family member, is a vital strand in the web of relationships that sustain not just the economy but also our families, our communities and our nation.”

Both employers and government have started to respond to this challenge of helping employees to balance their work and life. In January 2001, the Canadian Federal Government extended shareable parental leave benefits to one year under the Employment Insurance Legislation. However, employers have responded in different ways to this increasing demand. Some employers have adopted work-life balance programs (WLBP), such as on-site childcare, eldercare service, flexible work time, compressed week and job sharing, while other employers have not. Even among those who do adopt WLBP, there is a great deal of variation as to the type of programs adopted. For those workplaces where work-life balance programs are adopted, Eby et al. (2005) warned that simply offering these
practices may not be useful, because employees may in fact choose not to use them. For example, a study of the 1999 Workplace and Employee Survey in Canada found that 12% of employees reported that some form of WLBP was available to them, but only 2% of the employees participated in the programs (Comfort et al., 2004). Many factors will ultimately influence an employee’s decision on whether to utilize work-life balance practices or not. These factors may include scenarios wherein some employees might not be able to find suitable coworkers with whom to share a job, or where others might not be able to afford part-time work, or in which others may fear negative career consequences if they take a family leave (Budd & Mumford 2006).

Inspired by Budd & Mumford’s (2006) three levels of research on work-life balance programs (i.e., availability, perceived accessibility and utilization), this thesis will answer the following three questions:

(1) Why is there a great deal of variance in the availability of work-life balance programs in Canadian workplaces?

(2) Why do employees not want to utilize work-life balance programs when these programs are available to them?

(3) Can employers help employees to balance work and life by increasing workers’ job control?

The Workplace and Employee Survey (WES) developed and administered by Statistics Canada, is the source of the data for this study. The WES is an ideal dataset to investigate the three questions for the following reasons:

(1) The design of the survey represents all workplaces operating in Canada;
(2) Sampling incorporates a subset of workers from each workplace, to represent all workers in Canada;

(3) The survey generates linked employer-employee information, which makes it possible to obtain dependent and independent variables from different sources. This helps to reduce the problem of common method variance due to the use of self-reported measures from a single source (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986);

(4) The linked nature of the survey also allows the inclusion of controls at both the firm level and the level of the individual employee. The current literature only includes controls from either the employer or the employee part of the survey.

(5) The survey incorporates longitudinal rather than purely cross-sectional data. This facilitates examination of how the relationship evolves over time as well as controlling for the effect of unobserved but fixed factors within each individual.

The thesis is structured as three self-contained chapters (Chapters Two, Three and Four). The writing of each chapter allows the reading of each chapter on its own. Each begins with an introduction that includes background information and that poses the research questions examined in the chapter. Each chapter then continues with theories and hypotheses, data and method, results and discussion. A brief summary of the individual chapters follows below.

Chapter Two is entitled ‘Explaining Organizational Responsiveness to Work-Life Balance Issues: The Role of Business Strategy and High Performance Work System’. This chapter investigates whether business strategy affects the availability of work-life balance program and how a high performance work system can mediate the relationship between
business strategy and the adoption of work-life balance programs. Using the Workplace and Employee Survey 2003 and 2004, this study obtained the dependent variable (the adoption of work-life balance program) and independent variables (business strategy, high performance work system) from different resources and different years. Hierarchical multiple regression results indicate that product leadership business strategy is positively related to the likelihood of adopting work-life balance programs (i.e. employee assistance programs, fitness and recreation centers). Cost leadership strategy is negatively related to the adoption of these programs. This study also finds that high performance work systems mediate the relationship between business strategy and employers’ responsiveness to work-life balance issues. Results and discussion also include other important independent variables such as percentage of females in the workplace, industries, union status, and non-wage benefits. A summary of the definitions and coding of key variables is presented in Appendix 1.

Chapter Three is entitled ‘The Impact of Managers’ Work Hours on Employees’ Use of Parental Leave’. This research explores the relationship between managers’ work hours and the likelihood of employees taking parental leave. Included in the theory and hypotheses part of the chapter is a discussion of how managers, through their “deliberate role modeling” of working long hours (Schien, 1992), embed and reinforce a long hour workplace culture, which then deters employees from taking family leave. The theory and hypotheses part also predicts that the effect of managers’ work hours is different for men and women due to gender role expectations and sex stereotypes. Using the Workplace and Employee Survey 1999 and 2000, probit analysis results find that a long-hour organizational culture, revealed through managers’ work hours, discourages new parents
from taking parental leave. This study also finds that the negative effect of managers’ work hours on the probability of taking parental leave is stronger for male than for female employees. Results and discussion also include other important independent variables such as number of work-life balance programs, gender, and family income. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the definitions and coding of key variables used in the chapter.

Chapter Four is entitled ‘Reducing Work-Life Conflict: the Role of Participating in Decision Making’. This chapter examines how participation in decision making (PDM) can help employees reduce work-life conflict. Using the framework suggested by Karasek’s (1979) job demand-job control model, and treating work hours and PDM as specific instances of the more general concepts of job demand and job control, this chapter argues that the impact of PDM on work-life conflict varies between employees who work long hours and employees who work short hours. This chapter also uses data from the Workplace and Employee Survey 2003 and 2004. Hierarchical multiple regression results indicate that a high level of PDM (high job control) reduces the work-life conflict that results from working long hours (high job demand) by increasing employee job control, reducing role conflict and role ambiguity, and stimulating a positive impact on family life. However, a high level of PDM (high job control) increases the work-life conflict for employees working short hours (low job demand) by increasing employee job stress through undesired decision making power and lack of resources. The discussion part of the chapter also includes some important independent variables such as unionization and full-time employment status. A summary of the definitions and coding of key variables used in this study appears in Appendix 3.
Chapter Five summarizes the empirical results of the three main chapters and outlines the theoretical contribution of the thesis. This chapter also discusses the overall implications of the thesis for organizations, unions, and policy-makers.
CHAPTER TWO

EXPLAINING ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIVENESS TO WORK-LIFE BALANCE ISSUES: THE ROLE OF BUSINESS STRATEGY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEMS

2.1 Introduction

The issue of work-life balance has received extensive publicity during the past two decades. The increasing participation of women with children in the workforce and the increasing need of workers to care for aging relatives has increased the demand for organizations to adopt work-life balance programs (WLBP) (Burke, 2006). However, there is a great deal of variation in the way employers have responded to this increasing demand. Some employers have adopted WLBP and others have not. Even among those who do adopt WLBP, there is a great deal of variation as to the type of programs adopted.

Some researchers argue that organizations with a high percentage of professional employees or a high percentage of women adopt more work-life balance practices (Goodstein, 1994, 1995; Ingram & Simons, 1995). Other researchers argue that there are systematic differences across industries in adopting work-life balance practices because different industries experience different levels of institutional pressures (Goodstein, 1994, 1995; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Milliken, Mattins & Morgan, 1998; Morgan & Milliken, 1992). And others argue that high performance work system (HPWS) (Osterman, 1995) and unionization are related to employer-provided WLBP (Budd & Mumford, 2004; Glass & Fujimoto, 1995).

These different perspectives provide extensive explanations regarding why some organizations are more responsive to work-life balance issues than others. Unfortunately, they are not complete and they do have their weaknesses. First, the current research has not considered the role of business strategy---one of the most important organizational
characteristics which might determine the level of responsiveness. And there are no studies investigating the mechanism through which business strategy may influence an employer’s decision to adopt work-life balance programs.

Second, the data for some of the existing research are derived from interviewing only the employers. Extracting both dependent and independent variables from data provided by just a single source--the employer--can produce a systematically distorted picture and unreliable organizational-level measures due to common method variance (Wright, et al., 2001). These discrepancies can produce biased estimates of the responsiveness to work-life balance issues. Third, previous research has often relied on purely cross-sectional data. It is difficult to control the unobserved factors just from a single snapshot in time.

This research re-examines the issue of WLBPs and improves on prior empirical research in several ways. (1) It is the first study to examine how the type of business strategy an organization follows will influence the likelihood of its adopting of WLBPs and how this relationship is mediated by a high performance work system. This research provides a new insight on how organizational characteristics can affect employers’ responsiveness to work-life balance issues. (2) It uses a short panel of longitudinal data rather than purely cross-sectional data. This facilitates examining how the relationship evolves over time as well as controlling for the effect of unobserved factors that are fixed within each individual. (3) It uses a linked employer and employee survey and obtains dependent and independent variables from different sources. This allows me to examine relationships without concern for common method variance, and to provide more reliable measures than would have been possible with single respondents. And finally, the large,
national representative dataset used in this study allows for appropriate controls in data analysis and enhances the external validity of the findings.

2.2 Theoretical Concepts and Hypotheses

2.2.1 Business Strategy

According to Porter (1980), there are two types of generic strategies that a business can use to compete in a given market—the cost leadership strategy and the product differentiation/leadership strategy. Porter stated that business organizations must choose one strategy or the other. Being “stuck in the middle” between these strategies can often result in poor performance.

As an all-encompassing and long-term organizational objective, business strategy is linked to all the value chains in an organization (Fombrum et al., 1984; Porter, 1985; Schuler & Jackson, 1987) and will affect the policy decisions of the entire organization, including finance, R & D, human resources management, and marketing (Porter, 1985). A key factor linking business strategies and management practice is the search for competitive advantages. All management practices should be in line with the business strategy in order to help the company gain a competitive advantage. Porter (1985) first advanced the concept of competitive advantage and described it in terms of factors which allow an organization to compete successfully in the market. Work-life balance practices are amongst these important factors. Previous research has found that work-life balance practices are positively related to both organizational and individual outcomes such as an organization’s financial performance, labor productivity (Konard & Mangel 2000; Perry-Smith & Blum 2000), employee organizational commitment and attachment (Grover & Crooker 1995;
Wang & Walumbwa 2007) and organizational citizenship behaviors (Lambert 2000). WLBPs help to develop committed and dedicated employees who provide a competitive advantage for organizations that is not easily replicated (Huselid, Jackson, & Schuler, 1997).

Although work-life balance practices can help a company gain competitive advantages by developing committed employees, some work-life balance practices such as on-site day care and compensation for eldercare are costly. Companies pursuing a cost leadership strategy are not likely to adopt these expensive practices. But, companies that follow a product leadership strategy need to invest in their employees in order to attract and retain the best employees (Porter 1985). Experiencing high turnover rates after investing heavily in employee development can be disastrous for these companies (Eby et al., 2005). Studies have shown that one way for these companies to attract and retain quality employees is to adopt work-life balance practices (Allen, 2001; Grover & Crooker 1995; Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Based on the above, the following hypothesis can be offered:

\[ \text{Hypothesis 1a: Product leadership business strategies will be positively related to the adoption of work-life balance practices.} \]

\[ \text{Hypothesis 1b: Cost leadership business strategy will be negatively related to the adoption of WLBPs.} \]

2.2.2 Mediating Effect of High Performance Work Systems (HPWS)

HPWS, also called “high involvement” (Lawler, 1992) or “high commitment” (Arthur, 1992) work practices, is a system of human resources management practices that gives employees the skills, knowledge and motivation to improve productivity in order to help an organization gain a competitive advantage. Though experts disagree on what
practices fall under the HPWS rubric (Becker & Gerhart, 1996), there is growing empirical
evidence suggesting that characteristics of an organization, and in particular its business
strategy, affects the type of HPWS that it adopts (Arthur, 1992; Lawler, 1984; Jackson.
1987; Schuler & Miles & Snow, 1984). This study hypothesizes that an organization’s
HPWS has a mediating effect on the relationship between its business strategy and the type
of work-life balance practices it adopts. This is based on the notion that an organization’s
business strategy determines its HPWS, and its HPWS in turn is related to its work-life
balance practices because a HPWS needs committed employees to function well (Osterman, 1995).

The way employees behave and the roles they take on fundamentally affect the
implementation of an organization’s business strategy. Different business strategies require
employees with different sets of attitudes and behaviours for optimal results (Porter, 1980).
For example, a cost leadership strategy focuses on tight controls, overhead minimization,
and the pursuit of economies of scale. It needs relatively repetitive and predictable
behaviours, modest concern for quality, and a high concern for quantity of output (Schuler
& Jackson 1987). Accordingly, the human resources practices fulfill these requirements by
emphasizing a short-term focus with narrowly designed jobs and career paths, results-
oriented performance appraisals, limited participation, close supervision, minimum levels of
training, and close monitoring of market pay (Arthur, 1992; Porter,1980; Schuler &
Jackson, 1987).

But this does not hold true for organizations competing on product leadership
business strategy. Companies with product leadership strategy need to change production
and organizational processes quickly in order to meet changing market and customer
preferences. This uncertainty requires a greater depth and breadth of skills, a high concern for quality, and a commitment to the goals of the organization. They expect high levels of commitment and discretionary efforts from their employees to help them succeed in a fiercely competitive market. Human resource practices fulfill these requirements by emphasizing a long-term focus with high levels of employee participation, a combination of individual and group criteria for performance appraisal, and extensive and continuous training and development (Schuler & Jackson 1987). Other HPWS methods such as delegation, information sharing through comprehensive communication programs, and use of cross-utilization teams are all aligned with this strategy.

But being aligned with an organization’s business strategy is not enough to make a HPWS successful. To truly succeed, a HPWS must be related to the interests of employee too. Some researchers argue that HPWS must depend on the initiatives and ideas that arise out of a highly committed workforce in order to succeed (Osterman, 1995, page 685). Employee involvement provides an example of one type of HPWS that must be aligned to both the interests of the corporation and the interests of its employees. Companies that want to implement employee involvement programs to improve efficiency and productivity must find ways to encourage employees’ loyalty and commitment, and work-life balance benefits can help achieve this goal (Osterman, 1995).

Thus, I expect that the relationship between business strategy and WLBPs will be an indirect one that results from the necessity for HPWS to be aligned with a company’s business strategy and induce employee commitment through WLBPs. The following hypothesis can be offered based on the previous discussion.
Hypothesis 2: Companies that have implemented HPWS are more likely to adopt work-life balance programs, and HPWS mediates the business strategy--- adoption of WLBPs relationship.

2.3 Methods and Data

The data used in this study were drawn from the Workplace and Employee Survey (WES), which was developed and administered by Statistics Canada. WES is a nationally representative survey of workplaces and their employees. It is a longitudinal survey which followed sample organizations from 1999 to 2005 and followed responses from individual employees within the chosen organizations for two consecutive years. Separate questionnaires were given to management and to employees within each organization and the responses by both groups complement each other to provide comprehensive business unit information on diverse aspects of human resources and industrial relations from both employer and employee perspectives. The data used in this study is a 2003 workplace survey and 2004 employee survey. Response rates were 80 percent or greater. The final usable sample for this study was 3943 workplaces.

2.3.1 Dependent Variables

The linked nature of the WES data enables me to obtain data for independent and dependent variables from different sources, which allows me to avoid single-response bias and ensures more reliable measures by collecting data from multiple respondents in each workplace (Gerhart, et al., 2000). The dependent variables were taken from the employee part of the survey and track the adoption of different work-life balance practices. The independent variables were taken from the employer survey and consist of all predictors,
mediators and control variables. The WES data also permit me to investigate how business strategy and human resources practices in 2003 affect the availability of work-life balance practices through the subsequent year of 2004.

Table 2.1 provides descriptive statistics, reliabilities and correlations for the variables used in the study. The data were weighted to allow for the complex survey design. In general, the results showed limited collinearity between independent variables.

The dependent variables track the presence or absence of the following work-life balance programs at each company.

1. Employee assistance program
2. Childcare program
3. Eldercare program
4. Fitness and recreation program
5. Other personal support program

Due to data restrictions, this study considers only these five dependent variables. This also permits me to concentrate on practices that are solely intended to help employees achieve a work-life balance. Many studies find that some work-life balance practices, such as compressed work hours and working at home, cannot benefit all employees (Batt & Valcour, 2003; Christensen & Staines 1990; Dunham, Pierce & Castaneda 1987). Some researchers argue that the adoption of such programs could be a direct response to an employer’s needs to ensure that employees be able to adjust their family lives in order to meet work demands and to be available to work longer hours and do not help employees find work-life balance (Christensen & Staines 1990; Dunham, Pierce & Castaneda 1987; Grosswals et al., 2001; Lambert, 1993).
WES’s employee questionnaire asked employees whether each of the five practices were available to them. A sample question was: “Does your employer offer help for childcare either through an on-site center or assistance with external suppliers or informal arrangements?” An interrater reliability analysis using the kappa statistics was performed to determine consistency among employees’ answers. The interrater reliability (kappa=0.97 p<0.001, 95% CI (0.93, 0.97)) showed a high agreement among employees’ responses. Thus, an affirmative response was recorded whenever more than one of the employees in the same workplace said that the practice was available to them.

These five practices were measured individually rather than on an aggregate index. By keeping track of which programs are being adopted, we may gain greater insights as to the reasons behind the adoption of specific WLBPs. “Differing management types and different workforces may lead to alternative practices being offered” (Budd & Mumford, 2006, page 28). In addition to examining which specific practices are adopted, I also want to understand the factors that distinguish the companies that offer at least one of the practices from those that do not offer any of these practices. I included a sixth dichotomous dependent variable named “any programs” for this purpose. The data for this variable were obtained from the WES question that asked: “Does your employer offer personal support or family services such as childcare, employee assistance, eldercare, fitness and recreation services or other type of services?”

Employees’ responses indicate that of the 3493 workplaces, 29.4% have employee assistance program available, 16.2% provide fitness and recreation services, 4.6% offer help for childcare, 3.2% offer help with eldercare services and 2.7% offer other personal support or family services. In general, 32.1% offer at least one of the work-life balance practices
listed above. These data indicate a low level of availability of these work-life balance programs in Canadian organizations, especially those programs dealing with childcare and eldercare services. Indeed, of the five family-friendly policies included in the survey, only an assistance program is available at more than 25% of the workplaces. These data are consistent with the survey results of the National Work-Life Conflict Study done by Health Canada. Their study found that only 6.1% of the 100 sampled companies had an eldercare referral service and only 8.1% had on-site daycare (Higgins, Duxbury & Lyons, 2007). The low responsiveness to work-life balance issues in Canadian workplaces is similar to the situation in British workplaces, where a low base rate of workplace-level availabilities was found by Budd and Mumford (2006).

2.3.2 Independent Variables

Strategic typologies have been measured in a variety of ways (Campbell-Hunt, 2000). Most previous studies constructed business strategy as a categorical variable, using cluster analysis to group organizations to one type of strategy or another. This is based on Porter’s (1980) theory that the two major business strategies (cost leadership strategy and the product leadership strategy) are mutually exclusive. But it is plausible to find business units, plants or functional areas pursuing two or more competitive strategies simultaneously (Karnani, 1984; Miller & Dess, 1993; Schuler & Jackson, 1987; Wright, 1987; Wright & Parsina, 1988). In fact, research has found that “combination” strategies are evident in many highly successful firms (Hall, 1980; Kim & Lim, 1988; Wright, 1987; Wright & Parsina, 1988). Organizations only differ in how they emphasize these dimensions of competitive strategies (Thornhill & White 2007). This study adopted this point of view and constructed strategies in two dimensions (cost leadership dimension and product leadership dimension).
This study examines how the two business strategies influence the adoption of HPWS and work-life balance practices.

In the WES 2003 employer survey, respondents were asked to rate the relative importance of 15 items for their workplace’s general business strategy on a scale from 1 to 6. Eleven of the items, consistent with prior business strategy research and theories, were included in the analysis.

I split the sample of 3943 workplaces in half and conducted exploratory factor analysis to identify distinct strategy factors from the eleven items. Using the results of the exploratory factor analysis, I eliminated items with low factor loadings (below .30) as well as items with high cross-loadings on other factors (.30 or greater). A scree test was performed by examining the graph of the eigenvalues; oblique rotation showed a two-factor model has the “cleanest” factor structure because all the items loadings are above .30, there were no cross loadings, and no factor presented fewer than three items (Costello & Osborn, 2005). Six of the items, consistent with previous strategy research and theories, were included in the analysis.

The cost leadership strategy dimension was measured by taking the mean of reducing labor cost (Rabemananjara & Parsley, 2006), reducing operating cost (Dess & Davis, 1984; Kotha & Vadlamani, 1995; Narver & Slater, 1990; Nayyar, 1993; White, 1986) and use part-time, temporary or contract workers (Rabemananjara & Parsley, 2006). The cost leadership dimension has a reliability coefficient (α) of 0.70. The product leadership strategy dimension is the mean score of undertaking research and development (Dess & Davis, 1984; Narver & Slater, 1990; Thornhill & White, 2007; Walsworth & Verma, 2007; White, 1986), developing new products/services (Dess & Davis, 1984; Kotha &
Vadlamani, 1995; Miller & Friesen, 1986a, 1986b; Narver & Slater, 1990; Nayyar, 1993; Thornhill & White, 2007; Walsworth & Verma, 2007; White, 1986), and developing new production/operating techniques (Kotha & Vadlamani, 1995; Thornhill & White, 2007; Walsworth & Verma, 2007). The product leadership dimension has a reliability coefficient of 0.82. The range of the two strategy variables is from 0 to 5 (Walsworth & Verma, 2007). Confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the other half of the dataset. The model fitted the data well ($\chi^2=1139.2$, df=36, P<0.001, CFI=.95, RMSEA=.04), and all items had significant loadings.

### 2.3.3 Mediator

There is no widely agreed upon definition of the term “High-Performance Work System”, because the actual practices of organizations that use HPWS vary (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Osterman, 1995). Most researchers, however, agree that HPWS must involve a certain number of essential practices (Handel & Gittleman, 2004). These practices include: intensive investment in training, variable pay, job rotation and delegation, emphasis on team structure to improve quality and problem solving, encouragement of employees to become involved as corporate citizens and to submit their suggestions to management, and promotion from within (Appelbaum, et al., 2000; Cappelli & Rogovsky, 1994; Huselid, Jackson, & Schuler, 1997; Ichniowski, Shaw, & Prennushi 1997; MacDuffie, 1995; Osterman, 1994; Pfeffer, 1994; Wright & McMahan, 1992).

Four measures of HPWS practices were created in this study. Training effort was created by dividing a company’s training expenditure by its total number of employees; variable pay was calculated as an averaged index of five dichotomous variables (individual incentives systems, group incentives systems, profit sharing plan, merit pay, employee stock...
plan). The alpha for the five variables is 0.61. *Employee involvement* was calculated as an averaged index of six dichotomous variables (employee suggestion program, flexible job design, information sharing with employees, problem solving teams, joint labour-management committees, and self-directed work groups). The alpha for these variables is 0.78. These two measures conform to Walsworth & Verma’s (2007) measures, except that employee stock plan and joint labour-management are added into these averaged indices. The last measure of HPWS is *staff within*, which was calculated as an average index of seven three-item categorical variables. WES asked respondents how vacant positions were usually filled in their organizations. Staffing from within the workplace was coded as “3”, staffing from another workplace within the same legal company or business enterprise was coded as “2” and staffing from outside the company was coded as “1”. The minimum score for this index is 1 and the maximum is 3. The alpha for these variables is 0.94.

### 2.3.4 Control Variables

The control variables in this study were selected based on theoretical perspectives as well as previously published studies. First, resource dependency theory suggests that the percentage of females in the workplace is positively related to the organization’s level of responsiveness to work-life issues (Milliken, Martins & Morgan, 1998). This argument assumes that organizations have become more dependent on women as they have entered the workforce in greater numbers. And as they have become more dependent on women, they have had to adopt work-life balance practices to accommodate their female employees’ needs. In addition to predicting the positive correlation between percentage of females in the workplace and the adoption of WLBPs, dependency theory also predicts that WLBPs
will be positively correlated with the percentage of professional employees and negatively correlated with the percentage of part-time workers in the workplace.

Second, institutional theory suggests that organizational practices are shaped by social rules and conventions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Since each industry has its own norms, it is expected that the adoption of work-life balance practices differs from industry to industry. Previous studies have found that companies in the financial and insurance industries are more likely to adopt work-life balance practices than those in other industries (Goodstein, 1994; Milliken, Martins & Morgan, 1998). This study dummy coded the 15 industrial categories listed in the WES survey and used the financial and insurance industry as the reference group in its regressions. Similarly, different regions of a country may exhibit differences in the level of responsiveness to work-life balance. Institutional theory also suggests that company size, number of years of operation, and public sector status influence social rules and conventions, so these factors must also be used as control variables (Wood, De Menezes & Lasaosa, 2003).

In addition to these theories, a substantial body of literature demonstrates a positive relationship between union status and adoption of some work-life balance practices (Budd & Mumford, 2004; Barcode et al., 1999; Glass & Fujimoto, 1995). Union status was measured in this study as the percentage of employees covered by a collective agreement. It is also important to control for “generosity or ability of the establishment to pay” (Osterman, 1995). This is done by controlling non-wage benefits provided by employers such as health insurance, dental care, pension and sick pay. The variable (non-wage benefits) in this study was measured by non-wage expenditures per employees. Finally, some researchers argue that when the labour market is tight, employers need to offer extra
incentives to attract and retain employees (Budd & Mumford, 2004; Glass & Fujimoto, 1995; Osterman, 1995). Therefore, turnover rate was included in the regression to control for this factor.

2.4 Results

WES data were collected using a stratified sample design, which makes it important to incorporate sampling weights and strata parameters in the data analyses (Sandal, Swensson & Wretman 1992). The results reported below used weighting stratification parameters in probit procedures. Reported in Table 2.2 are the probit analysis results, which report the marginal effect and robust standard errors. The overall test of the explanatory power of all the control variables is significant for all the regressions (as is revealed by the Wald test of joint significance). In general, the estimates are of the expected signs.

The regression results for the models with only control variables show that the percentage of female employees in the workplace is clearly not significant in all the regressions. This finding is important since it implies that there is no relationship between the gender makeup of the workforce and the employer’s responsiveness to work-life balance issues. This finding is not consistent with some prior research (Goodstein, 1994, 1995; Ingram & Simons, 1995), but is consistent with Milliken, Martins and Morgan’s (1998) study.

Organization size is significant in all the regressions. Big companies tend to be more likely to adopt these work-life balance programs. This may be because big companies have more requirements from their relatively large number of employees to adopt WLBP. Other possibilities are economies of scale and/or institutional pressures for maintaining a positive
public reputation. The p-value of the Wald test suggests that including the set of industry
dummy variables creates a statistically significant improvement in the fit of all the models.
This highlights that the institutional perspective that there are systematic differences across
industries in adopting WLBPs holds true in Canadian workplaces. This may also reflect that
different industries differ in labour market conditions. Adding regions dummies also
significantly improves all the models except childcare and eldercare service. Organizations
in different regions of Canada do not show differences in the trend of adoption of these two
WLBPs.

Non-wage benefits are significant in all the regressions and the signs are all positive.
This important finding shows that these benefits represent the company’s ability to afford
some work-life balance programs such as childcare and eldercare service. The finding also
shows that work-life balance programs might simply be proxies for benefits policies in
general.

The percentage of workforce covered by collective agreement is positive and
significant in the regressions of employee assistance program, childcare, and any program,
but not significant in fitness and recreation service, eldercare and other programs. This
implies that unions may be very successful in negotiating some work-life balance programs
but not all of them. One possibility is that the unions and their members may not think
fitness and recreation center or eldercare is important. The other possibility is that the union
is not powerful in the organizations which do not provide fitness and recreation centers and
eldercare. These companies are normally small and not profitable.

The percentage of part-time employees is significant in all the regressions except in
employee assistance programs and other programs. Also, the signs are all negative. This
shows that companies are less likely to adopt work-life balance programs if a large proportion of their employees is on part-time basis.

Next, I used probit models to test the two hypotheses. As shown in Table 2.2, business strategy explains a significant level of variance in adoption of WLBPs. The likelihood ratio test, which tests whether the full model with business strategy variables is significantly better than the model with only control variables, is significant in all the regressions except childcare and eldercare. The results show that adding the two business strategy variables as predictor variables results in a statistically significant improvement in model fit. Especially, product leadership strategy is positively and significantly related to the likelihood of adoption of employee assistance programs (model 1), fitness and recreation programs (model 2), childcare programs (model 3), other programs (model 5) and any programs (model 6). Cost leadership strategy is negatively and significantly related to the likelihood of adoption of employee assistance programs (model 1), fitness and recreation programs (model 2), and other programs (model 5). Relative to the sample mean incidence of these work-life balance programs, however, the effects are small. For example, one unit increase on a five-point scale in the importance of product leadership strategy would result in a 2.5 percentage point increase in the probability of adoption of at least one of the work-life balance programs and a one percentage point increase for adoption of fitness and recreation centers. The results suggest that product leadership strategy does affect the employer’s probability to adopt some work-life balance programs. And cost leadership strategy does lead to a lesser likelihood of adopting some work-life balance programs such as employee assistance programs and fitness and recreation centers. Thus, partial support is found for the Hypothesis 1: product leadership will be positively related to
the adoption of work-life balance practices. Cost leadership business strategy will be negatively related to the adoption of WLBPs.

Finally, I examined the mediation effects of HPWS. Following Baron and Kenny’s (1986) three-step procedure to test for a mediation effect, in the first step of the procedure, I found a significant relationship between the independent variable (business strategy) and the dependent variable (adoption of WLBPS, see above). Next, I examined the relationship between the independent variables and the mediator. As shown in Table 2.3, the measure of business strategy explains a significant amount of variance of HPWS. The reported Chow (partial-F) tests, which tests whether the set of business strategy variables added significant predictive power in the model, are significant at 1% level for training expenditure, employee involvement, variable pay and staff within. The results suggest that the variations in the levels of business strategies significantly account for variations in HPWS, the presumed mediator.

In the final step, I examined changes in the effect of business strategies when HPWS variables were added to the regression predicting the probability of adoption of some work-life balance programs. The results in Table 2.4 show that after adding the four HPWS variables, the relationships between product leadership strategy and employee assistance programs (model 7), other programs ( model 11), and any program ( model12) were no longer significant (model 12), and the relationships with fitness and recreation programs (model 8) and childcare programs ( model 9 ) were decreased, but still significant. For example, the coefficient of product leadership strategy decreases from 0.010 in model 2 to 0.007 in model 8. From the change in the marginal effects of business strategies on the adoption of WLBPs, it appears that approximately 50% of the relationship between product
leadership strategy and childcare programs was explained by HPWS (models 3 and 9). HPWS also explained 30% of the relationship between this strategy and fitness and recreation center (models 2 and 8). Thus, a large proportion of the relationship between product leadership strategy and some WLBPs is explained by the mediating effects of HPWS.

The results presented in Table 2.4 also support the argument that HPWS fully mediates the relationships between cost leadership business strategy and the adoption of WLBPs. As shown in model 7, model 8 and model 11 in Table 2.4, the relationships between cost leadership business strategy and employee assistance program, fitness and recreation centers, and other programs are no longer significant.

2.5 Discussion

This study examines the relationship between adoption of WLBPs and an organization’s business strategy. The model was developed by first defining business strategy dimensions in terms of cost leadership and product leadership, then by conceptually and empirically connecting these strategies to HPWS and the adoption of WLBPs. Our results show that there is a positive relationship between product leadership strategy and the adoption of some WLBPs such as fitness and recreation programs and employee assistance programs. Cost leadership strategy is negatively related to adoption of these programs. But eldercare service, a very important WLBPs used to help employees deal with dependent care obligations, does not appear to be related to business strategies in our data. These results may be due to the fact that very few employers provide such programs, no matter
what business strategy they follow. In our sample, only 123 out of 3943 employers provided eldercare service.

This study provides initial evidence that HPWS mediates the relationship between business strategies and the adoption of WLBPs. It is noteworthy that HPWS explained such a large proportion of the effects of business strategies on adoption of WLBPs. As noted above, the addition of HPWS explained approximately 30% to 50% of the relationship between business strategy and adoption of WLBPs. A company’s overall objectives define its business strategy which in turn guides its conduct in a number of spheres including the adoption of HPWS and WLBPs. The business strategy can be thought of as the way an organization implements its objectives at the policy level. Introducing HPWS is a specific policy a business can adopt to implement its business strategy. And once HPWS is implemented, a company is more likely to adopt specific practices such as WLBPs that are consistent with its overall business objectives.

It is important to note that though HPWS may explain much of the relationship between business strategy and WLBPs, it does not fully explain the relationship. Our results show that business strategies, mediated through HPWS, lead to the implementation of WLBPs. But business strategies also influence the adoption of WLBPs directly. It is also possible that business strategies affect other unobserved practices of the organization which, in turn, influence the adoption of WLBPs. These alternative paths to the adoption of WLBPs were not explored in this study because more detailed measures of organizational practices were not available. Job discretion is one example of an alternative path that could influence the adoption of WLBPs. Budd and Mumford (2006) find that workers who have discretion over their tasks are more likely to be given paid leave. Therefore, future research
should explore the effects of business strategy on other drivers of WLBPs adoption in order to obtain a better picture of how business strategy influences the availability of WLBPs. Other organizational characteristics not examined here, such as the difficulty in filling vacancies, may affect an organization’s responsiveness.

Despite these limitations, this study has a number of strengths. First, because the independent, mediating and dependent data were collected from different sources, the study avoided the common method variance that results from collecting data from a single source. The findings are further strengthened by the use of two years data on factors that explain adoption of work-life balance policies. Using data from different years facilitates examining how the relationship evolves over time as well as controlling for the effect of unobserved factors that are fixed within each individual. Not only does this study establish the existence of this relationship, it also reveals that the relationship is mediated through high performance work systems.

2.6 Implications

The goal of HR is to develop positive employee attitudes and behaviors so that the organizational performance can be enhanced. Work-life benefits are one of the effective HR practices than can achieve this goal. Research has found that the availability of dependent care support, onsite fitness centers and employee assistance programs can send a signal to employees that the organization cares about the employees and regards employees as important assets. In return for this care, employees will exert discretionary effort to help their employers achieve business goals (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007; Grover & Cooker, 1995). Specifically, Lambert (2000) found that employees who are exposed to work-life
benefits participate in employee suggestion systems and team meetings more actively than those who are not. Organizations offering work-life benefits to employees were found to have better performance than those that do not (Kossek et al. 1999; Ferry-Smith & Blum, 2000).

Despite the obvious positive effect of work-life benefits, this paper finds that few organizations in Canada with cost reduction as part of their business strategies offer work-life benefits to employees. This may indicate a viewpoint that labor is a major part of the operational cost. This thought ignores the fact that employees can help reduce the operating cost through their discretionary efforts (Arthur, 1994). They can provide cost reduction suggestions to employers; they can enhance product quality through effective teamwork and problem solving; and they can reduce the scrap rate through their careful and prudent work. Only satisfied and committed employees are willing to work in this way. It is true that some work-life benefits are expensive, like the onsite daycare center. Given the positive results of offering these programs, they are worth the investment. For some small and medium-sized companies, we suggest use of innovative work-life benefits programs to help employees balance work and life. Some examples are a summer student hiring program for children of employees, assistance in finding childcare and eldercare placements, subsidized childcare for employees on business trips or attending company events, summer camp programs for children, and compassionate top-up payments to employees caring for a family member.
### Table 2.1: Weighted Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Employee assistance</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fitness and recreation</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Childcare</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td>0.31*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Eldercare</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.27*</td>
<td>0.25*</td>
<td>0.41*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other WLBPs</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.26*</td>
<td>0.28*</td>
<td>0.20*</td>
<td>0.24*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Offer more than one or more WLBPs</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.94*</td>
<td>0.64*</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td>0.26*</td>
<td>0.24*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Product leadership strategy</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.07*</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>(.83)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Cost leadership strategy</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td>(.72)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Training expenditure per employee</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>786</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.05*</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>0.07*</td>
<td>0.20*</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Employee involvement</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>0.13*</td>
<td>0.13*</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.26*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>0.18*</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Variable pay</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.25*</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
<td>0.15*</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.26*</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12. Staff within                                    | 1.49  | 0.66  |    | 0.24*| 0.15*| 0.12*| 0.09*| 0.09*| 0.23*| 0.05*| 0.03 | 0.07*| 0.18*| 0.10*| (.94)
| 13. Age of the current workplace                    | 32.46 | 28.11 |    | 0.24*| 0.19*| 0.10*| 0.07*| 0.06*| 0.23*| 0.12*| 0.09*| 0.09*| 0.19*| 0.14*| 0.12 |
| 14. Percentage of the workforce female              | 0.41  | 0.29  |    | 0.01 | -0.00| 0.02 | 0.04*| 0.01 | 0.01 | -0.08*| -0.15*| -0.06*| -0.01| -0.08*| 0.10*|
| 15. Percentage of the workforce part time           | 0.18  | 0.26  |    | -0.10*| -0.09*| -0.02 | -0.03 | -0.04 | -0.10*| -0.19*| -0.03 | -0.14*| -0.01 | -0.16*| 0.05*|
| 16. Percentage of the workforce professional        | 0.09  | 0.18  |    | 0.19*| 0.20*| 0.15*| 0.13*| 0.08*| 0.20*| 0.07*| -0.09*| 0.11*| 0.08*| 0.04*| 0.10*|
| 17. Percentage of the workforce covered collective agreement | 0.27  | 0.38  |    | 0.27*| 0.18*| 0.11*| 0.03 | 0.05*| 0.26*| 0.06*| 0.12*| 0.08*| 0.22*| -0.08*| 0.17*|
| 18. Profit Status                                   | 0.85  | 0.35  |    | -0.21*| -0.15*| -0.16*| -0.06*| -0.06*| -0.19*| 0.05*| 0.13*| 0.03 | -0.10*| 0.26*| -0.16*|
| 19. Turnover rate                                   | 0.12  | 0.23  |    | -0.12*| -0.10*| -0.05*| -0.05*| -0.04 | -0.12*| -0.01 | 0.07*| -0.03 | -0.04 | -0.02 | -0.10*|
| 20. Non-wage benefits per employee                 | 3896  | 4853  |    | 0.29*| 0.20*| 0.10*| 0.11*| 0.10* | 0.28*| 0.13*| 0.12*| 0.24*| 0.20*| 0.23*| 0.10*|
| 21. Workplace has a HR employee                     | 0.38  | 0.48  |    | 0.35*| 0.28*| 0.14*| 0.15*| 0.11* | 0.34*| 0.22*| 0.14*| 0.16*| 0.33*| 0.23*| 0.17*|
| 14. Percentage of the workforce female              | -0.03 |       |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 15. Percentage of the workforce part time           | -0.09*| 0.42* |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 16. Percentage of the workforce professional        | 0.05* | 0.21* |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 17. Percentage of the workforce covered collective agreement | 0.24* | -0.11*| 0.01 | 0.05*|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 18. Profit Status                                   | -0.08*| -0.30*|    | -0.21*| -0.28*| -0.29*|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 19. Turnover rate                                   | -0.10*| 0.05* |    | 0.16*| -0.11*| -0.15*| 0.09*|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 20. Non-wage benefits per employee                 | 0.25* | -0.24*|    | -0.28*| 0.09*| 0.26*| 0.03 | 0.17*|     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 21. Workplace has a HR employee                     | 0.21* | 0.03* |    | -0.08*| 0.15*| 0.21*| -0.11*| -0.06*| 0.20*|     |     |     |     |     |

*a n = 3943*  * p < .01  Reliability ( \( \alpha \) ) shown in parentheses.  

Source: Workplace and Employee Survey (WES), 2003, 2004. The sample means and standard errors are fully weighted to account for the complex survey design.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Employee Assistance</th>
<th>Employee Assistance(1)</th>
<th>Fitness &amp; Recreation</th>
<th>Fitness &amp; Recreation (2)</th>
<th>Childcare</th>
<th>Childcare (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Size (reference group 1-19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-99</td>
<td>0.049** (0.026)</td>
<td>0.045* (0.025)</td>
<td>0.024** (0.011)</td>
<td>0.022** (0.010)</td>
<td>0.009*** (0.003)</td>
<td>0.008*** (0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-499</td>
<td>0.188*** (0.059)</td>
<td>0.185*** (0.058)</td>
<td>0.098*** (0.029)</td>
<td>0.093*** (0.029)</td>
<td>0.008* (0.006)</td>
<td>0.007* (0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 employees or more</td>
<td>0.358*** (0.076)</td>
<td>0.342*** (0.077)</td>
<td>0.364*** (0.073)</td>
<td>0.331*** (0.076)</td>
<td>0.076*** (0.038)</td>
<td>0.064*** (0.021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of the current workplace</td>
<td>5.21e-04 (0.000)</td>
<td>5.15e-04* (0.000)</td>
<td>9.97e-05 (0.000)</td>
<td>1.07e-04 (0.000)</td>
<td>6.12e-07 (0.000)</td>
<td>5.82e-05*** (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce female</td>
<td>0.015 (0.059)</td>
<td>0.015 (0.060)</td>
<td>0.009 (0.019)</td>
<td>0.009 (0.015)</td>
<td>0.002 (0.002)</td>
<td>0.002 (0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce part time</td>
<td>-0.013 ~ (0.048)</td>
<td>-0.007 (0.050)</td>
<td>-0.015* (0.014)</td>
<td>-0.007** (0.003)</td>
<td>-0.009** (0.005)</td>
<td>-0.007*** (0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce professional</td>
<td>0.078 (0.084)</td>
<td>0.061 (0.050)</td>
<td>0.037* (0.020)</td>
<td>0.025 (0.018)</td>
<td>0.001 (0.004)</td>
<td>0.001 (0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce covered</td>
<td>0.120*** (0.041)</td>
<td>0.119*** (0.040)</td>
<td>0.003 (0.009)</td>
<td>0.004 (0.008)</td>
<td>0.004*** (0.002)</td>
<td>0.004*** (0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit Sector</td>
<td>-0.078* (0.062)</td>
<td>-0.078* (0.029)</td>
<td>0.014 (0.009)</td>
<td>0.014 (0.009)</td>
<td>-0.014** (0.010)</td>
<td>-0.013*** (0.009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover rate</td>
<td>0.074** (0.022)</td>
<td>0.070** (0.030)</td>
<td>0.011 (0.126)</td>
<td>0.040 (0.198)</td>
<td>0.004** (0.002)</td>
<td>0.004 (0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-wage benefits per employee b</td>
<td>0.052*** (0.010)</td>
<td>0.053*** (0.011)</td>
<td>0.014*** (0.004)</td>
<td>0.013*** (0.004)</td>
<td>0.002*** (0.001)</td>
<td>0.002** (0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace has a HR employee</td>
<td>0.083*** (0.032)</td>
<td>0.077*** (0.031)</td>
<td>0.002 (0.008)</td>
<td>0.001 (0.001)</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.001)</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry (13)</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (6)</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product leadership strategy</td>
<td>0.012* (0.003)</td>
<td>0.010** (0.004)</td>
<td>0.002* (0.002)</td>
<td>4.19e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost leadership strategy</td>
<td>-0.005* (0.002)</td>
<td>-0.005** (0.002)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean of the dependent variable</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald test of joint significance</td>
<td>411.83***</td>
<td>440.48***</td>
<td>405.10***</td>
<td>427.71***</td>
<td>302.20***</td>
<td>316.90***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2 log likelihood a</td>
<td>9.29**</td>
<td>3.28***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * p<.1, ** p<.05 *** p<.01. Each entry reports the marginal effect and standard error (in parentheses) weighted by workplace sampling weights. Industry and region tests are joint test. 

-2 log likelihood test of improvement in model fit over the model with only control variables. DF=2 for all models. 

b in thousands
Table 2.2 (continued): Probit Analysis of the Adoption of WLBPs in Workplaces (with Controls and Business Strategy Variables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Eldercare Program (4)</th>
<th>Eldercare Program(5)</th>
<th>Other Program</th>
<th>Any Program(6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Size (reference group 1-19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-99</td>
<td>0.004** (0.001)</td>
<td>0.003** (0.001)</td>
<td>0.001** (0.001)</td>
<td>4.19e-04*** (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-499</td>
<td>0.008*** (0.006)</td>
<td>0.007*** (0.003)</td>
<td>0.013*** (0.008)</td>
<td>0.011*** (0.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 employees or more</td>
<td>0.057*** (0.030)</td>
<td>0.050*** (0.015)</td>
<td>0.139*** (0.055)</td>
<td>0.112*** (0.056)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of the current workplace</td>
<td>8.95e-06 (0.000)</td>
<td>8.30e-06 (0.000)</td>
<td>1.22e-07 (0.000)</td>
<td>2.64e-08 (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce female</td>
<td>1.93e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td>4.16e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td>6.83e-06 (0.000)</td>
<td>5.46e-05 (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce part time professional</td>
<td>-3.84e-04* (0.000)</td>
<td>-4.34e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td>1.71e-05 (0.000)</td>
<td>1.59e-05 (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce covered collective agreement</td>
<td>-2.04e-04 (0.000)</td>
<td>-1.09e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td>3.60e-04 (0.000)</td>
<td>9.68e-05 (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit Sector</td>
<td>4.23e-04 (0.000)</td>
<td>4.05e-06 (0.000)</td>
<td>1.00e-05 (0.000)</td>
<td>5.81e-05 (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover rate</td>
<td>5.06e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td>5.93e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td>6.92e-05 (0.000)</td>
<td>6.64e-05 (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-wage benefits per employee</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.000)</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.002)</td>
<td>-0.002 (0.002)</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace has a HR employee</td>
<td>0.001** (0.000)</td>
<td>0.001*** (0.000)</td>
<td>0.001*** (0.000)</td>
<td>8.73e-05*** (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry (13)</td>
<td>1.43e-04 (0.001)</td>
<td>7.20e-05 (0.000)</td>
<td>1.73e-05 (0.000)</td>
<td>8.18e-05 (0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (6)</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product leadership strategy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost leadership strategy</td>
<td>6.03e-04 (0.000)</td>
<td>7.12e-05*** (0.000)</td>
<td>0.025* (0.011)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean of the dependent variable</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald test of joint significance</td>
<td>299***</td>
<td>296***</td>
<td>356.97***</td>
<td>424.78***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3735</td>
<td>3735</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * p<.1, ** p<.05 *** p<.01. Each entry reports the marginal effect and standard error (in parentheses) weighted by workplace sampling weights. Industry and region tests are joint test.

a -2 log likelihood test of improvement in model fit over the model with only control variables. DF=2 for all models.
b Organizations in the industry of real estate, rental and leasing operations are dropped because no company in this industry provides other WLBPs.
c in thousands
### Table 2.3: OLS Regression Analysis of the Business Strategy-HPWS Relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Training Expenditure per employee</th>
<th>Employee Involvement</th>
<th>Variable Pay</th>
<th>Staff Within</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Size (Reference 1-19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-99</td>
<td>99.14*** (30.65)</td>
<td>0.16*** (0.01)</td>
<td>0.08*** (0.01)</td>
<td>0.09*** (0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-499</td>
<td>208.60*** (34.58)</td>
<td>0.25*** (0.10)</td>
<td>0.15*** (0.01)</td>
<td>0.24*** (0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 employees or more</td>
<td>312.87*** (46.89)</td>
<td>0.33*** (0.01)</td>
<td>0.16*** (0.01)</td>
<td>0.48*** (0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry (13)</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (6)</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product leadership strategy</td>
<td>63.78*** (9.55)</td>
<td>0.03*** (0.00)</td>
<td>0.02*** (0.00)</td>
<td>0.00 (0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost leadership strategy</td>
<td>-21.12*** (7.46)</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.01)</td>
<td>-0.02* (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R2</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>15.41***</td>
<td>59.99***</td>
<td>48.50***</td>
<td>19.52***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial F test a</td>
<td>22.33***</td>
<td>74.12***</td>
<td>48.81***</td>
<td>5.05***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
<td>3943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * p<.1, ** p<.05 *** p<.01. Standard error (in parentheses) weighted by workplace sampling weights. Industry and region tests are joint test.

a Test of improvement in model fit over the model without business strategy variables. DF=2 for all models.
Table 2.4: Probit Analysis of the Adoption of WLBPs in Workplaces (With both Business Strategy Variables and HPWS Variables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Employee Assistance(7)</th>
<th>Fitness &amp; Recreation(8)</th>
<th>Childcare (9)</th>
<th>Eldercare (10)</th>
<th>Other Program(11)</th>
<th>Any Program(12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Size (Reference 1-19)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-99</td>
<td>0.102***</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.015***</td>
<td>0.001***</td>
<td>0.004***</td>
<td>0.125***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.033)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-499</td>
<td>0.291***</td>
<td>0.114***</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.002***</td>
<td>0.012***</td>
<td>0.275***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
<td>(0.047)</td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
<td>(0.077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 employees or more</td>
<td>0.445***</td>
<td>0.364***</td>
<td>0.089***</td>
<td>0.015***</td>
<td>0.078***</td>
<td>0.457***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.099)</td>
<td>(0.105)</td>
<td>(0.053)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.049)</td>
<td>(0.099)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of the current workplace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>2.20e-04**</td>
<td>1.30e-04**</td>
<td>4.83e-04</td>
<td>7.65e-07</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce female</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>4.43e-04***</td>
<td>3.71e-05</td>
<td>0.125*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.052)</td>
<td>(0.028)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.070)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce part time</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>-4.14e-04**</td>
<td>-3.59e-05</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.055)</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce professional</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-4.23e-04</td>
<td>5.95e-05</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.058)</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.084)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the workforce covered collective agreement</td>
<td>0.090***</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.005*</td>
<td>5.25e-04</td>
<td>1.53e-05</td>
<td>0.120***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit Sector</td>
<td>-0.074*</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.002***</td>
<td>-0.001*</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.054)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover rate</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>-0.060*</td>
<td>0.011*</td>
<td>-4.33e-04</td>
<td>5.95e-05</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.092)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-wage benefits per employee c</td>
<td>0.058***</td>
<td>0.015***</td>
<td>0.002*</td>
<td>3.93e-05**</td>
<td>1.64e-04***</td>
<td>0.068***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace has a HR employee</td>
<td>0.093***</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-1.04e-05</td>
<td>1.20e-04</td>
<td>0.068*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.037)</td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.042)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry (13)</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (6)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes***</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product leadership strategy</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.007*</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>8.71e-06</td>
<td>3.08e-05</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost leadership strategy</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>-4.27e-04</td>
<td>4.89e-05</td>
<td>-1.39e-07</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training expenditure per employee c</td>
<td>0.027**</td>
<td>0.012**</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>6.07e-05</td>
<td>2.23e-04***</td>
<td>0.050***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee involvement</td>
<td>-0.86*</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-8.46e-05</td>
<td>2.40e-04</td>
<td>-0.097*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.044)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.059)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable pay</td>
<td>0.236***</td>
<td>0.042***</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.001***</td>
<td>5.78e-05***</td>
<td>0.322***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.023)</td>
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<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.067)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>325.70***</td>
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<td>499.58***</td>
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</table>

Notes: *p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01. Each entry reports the marginal effect and standard error (in parentheses) weighted by workplace sampling weights. Industry and region tests are joint test.

-2 log likelihood test of improvement in model fit over the model with control variables and business strategy variables. DF=4 for all models. * Organizations in the industry of real estate, rental and leasing operations are dropped because no company in this industry in thousands.
CHAPTER THREE
THE IMPACT OF MANAGERS’ WORK HOURS ON EMPLOYEES’ USE OF PARENTAL LEAVE

3.1 Introduction

The increasing participation of women with young children in the workforce has increased the demand for employers and policymakers to offer organizational practices and public policies to help employees balance their work and personal lives. Many companies and governments have adopted paid parental leave programs in order to achieve this aim.²

However, as Eby et al. (2005) have pointed out, simply offering the practices may not be useful if employees do not actually use them. A survey of female university faculty revealed that 77% thought that taking parental leave would hurt their career development; thus, only 30% took full parental leave after giving birth to or adopting a child (Finkel et al., 1994). This under-utilization of family leave then becomes a waste of employer and government efforts and financial resources in the quest to balance employee work and life.

Some researchers have realized the importance of utilization of leave in helping employees to balance work and life, and have discussed the possible positive roles utilization plays in job satisfaction, commitment, and the organization’s productivity (Sahibzada et al., 2005; Thompson et al., 1999). However, little research has investigated the reasons why some employees prefer not to use available leave. In addition, little of this research

² In 1990, the Canadian government introduced the Parental Benefits Program (PBP), which offered 10 weeks of paid leave, available for sharing by qualifying parents, for taking care of their newborn. Amendments in 2001 to the Employment Insurance Act extended PBP benefits to 35 weeks and eliminated the second two-week waiting period if both parents wanted to use the leave. As of 2009, parental leave-takers can receive 55 per cent of their previous earnings, capped at $477 a week. Some large employers in Canada, such as the University of Toronto, provide top-up benefits that pay the difference between the Employment Insurance (EI) benefit from the federal government and 95% of the salary.
represents studies done in North America. For example, a study of 30 European countries by Plantenga and Remery (2005) found that five factors determined whether a parent would take parental leave—finances, the expected role for women and men, program flexibility, the labour market, and the parents’ educational level.

Unfortunately, the existing research is not complete and has its weaknesses. First, most of the research is based on self-reported measures (employees) collected at a single point in time. Issues such as respondent consistency motifs or response styles, transient mood states, and spurious results due to common method bias are therefore of concern (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Second, these studies surveyed employees’ willingness to take parental leave and the perceived reasons behind it. They did not examine the actual behaviour of taking parental leave.

The present paper extends the existing literature and improves on prior empirical research in several ways. (1) This paper uses a linked employer and employee survey and utilizes dependent and independent variables from different sources. This addresses the problem of common method variance (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). (2) The paper examines employees’ actual behaviours in taking parental leave and explores their objective reasons for not taking the leave. Based on the theory of work-family culture (Thompson et al., 1999), the paper investigates how a manager’s work hours influence employees’ likelihood of taking paid parental leave and how this effect differs between women and men. (3) Finally, the large, national representative dataset used in this paper enhances the external validity of the findings.
3.2 Theory and Hypotheses

3.2.1 Work-Family Culture

Work-family culture is defined by Thompson et al. (1999) as “the shared assumptions, beliefs and values regarding the extent to which organizations value and support the integration of work and family lives, for women and for men” (p. 394). Work-family culture may either advance or thwart the effectiveness of work-life balance programs (Starrels, 1992). A supportive work-family culture reflects the existence of flexibility and alternative work arrangements, recognition of child and elder care issues, and the presence of highly supportive supervisors/managers (Thompson et al., 1999). A contradictory culture emphasizes that the primary obligation of employees is to their employers, that home and work should be separate spheres, and that home life is not the concern of the organization (Jones et al., 2006, p. 5). Although there is no agreement as to what the construct of work-family culture should include, the current literature argues that work-family culture includes several distinct dimensions, such as managerial support, organizational time expectations, career consequences, gendered perceptions of policy use, and co-worker support (McDonald et al., 2007; Thompson et al., 1999).

Work-family culture is significantly associated with utilization rates of work-family benefits (Allen, 2001; Breauhg & Frye, 2007; Sahibzada et al., 2005; Thompson et al., 1999; Thompson et al., 2004). It can influence an employee’s perception of the acceptability or possible consequences of taking parental leave (Thompson et al., 1999). In a company that rewards employees for working long hours, taking parental leave will not be consistent with the underlying culture, and employees will be less likely to take parental leave (Perlow, 1995; Thompson et al., 1992). Burke (2006) also pointed out that organizational culture is
the key to the success of work-life integration. Employees are more likely to use work-life balance programs when the culture is supportive. In addition, those leave-takers are more committed, less likely to quit their jobs, and report less work-family conflict (Thompson et al., 1999). Employees are less likely to use work-life balance programs if the organization’s work-family culture is not friendly.

A typical component of an unfriendly work-family culture is the long-hour culture (Kodz et al., 1998). In this culture, organizations have a norm of visibility; the perception is that workers who are visible in the workplace from early morning to late night are more valuable and committed, no matter their level of productivity. These types of organizations take for granted long workdays, praising individuals for working long hours and viewing extra hours of work as signs of dedication and engagement.

Employees put their careers at risk when taking parental leave because it makes them less visible at work. In one organization that Kodz et al. visited, which featured a long-hour culture, managers did not want employees to take work home but instead wanted to see employees finishing their work at the workplace (Kodz et al., 1998). In some organizations, the culture is so deep-rooted that when senior managers were trying to discourage long hours, employees thought this was just window dressing and strongly believed that the managers indeed valued long hours at work (Kodz et al., 1998). Thus, only employees with “great strength of character and assertiveness” dared to say “no” to long-hour work (Kodz et al., 1998). Most employees working in companies with long-hour expectations are reluctant to take time off to attend to family responsibilities, because they fear that their careers will suffer if they do not follow the company’s rules (Keith et al, 1997; Keith, 1997; Morris, 1997).
3.2.2 Managers’ Work Hours

Managers play an important role in the formation and transmission of an organizational culture (Schien, 1999; Valentino & Brunelle, 2004). Managers and their behaviours intertwine with culture creation, transformation, and destruction (Schien, 1992). Regarding work-family culture, managers have the power to make implicit and explicit choices regarding the adoption of workplace practices (McDonald, Brown, & Bradley, 2005, p. 41; Schneider, 1990); managers can discourage employees from using some work-life balance programs, such as parental leave, by punishing leave-takers. Most importantly, managers can convey the company’s value of working hours through their model behaviours.

“Deliberate role modeling” is one of the most powerful primary mechanisms by which managers are able to embed and reinforce a culture (Schien, 1992, p. 225). Through their behaviours, managers communicate a company’s basic assumptions, guiding beliefs, and principles. By working long hours themselves, managers send a signal to the employees: this company values long hours of work, and the belief of the company is that an employee is committed to the company if he or she works long hours and is seldom absent from the workplace. The assumptions, beliefs, and values conveyed by this behaviour gradually generate a long-hour work culture.

Actually, some researchers have argued that managers’ work hours are the most important determinant in forming this type of long-hour work culture (Hammonds, 1997; Morris, 1997). For example, if the managers work long hours and send emails and memos to subordinates at 3 a.m., their employees may interpret the managerial behaviours as an indication that a long-hour culture exists (Hammonds, 1997; Morris, 1997). Kodz et al.’s
(1998) study reveals a real example: there was a perception in the organizations interviewed that because managers worked long hours, there would be an expectation for employees to follow the managers' example. In their interviews, employees with managers who worked long hours reported, “If he’s still there, you can’t go home” (Kodz et al., 1998, p. 32). Thus, employees may feel reluctant to take family leave because they fear their careers will suffer if they do not follow the managers’ rules and models.

In addition to reinforcing an unfriendly work-family culture, a manager who works long hours might also send a signal to employees that he or she does not support subordinates devoting time to outside-of-work issues. In research by Higgins et al (2008) regarding how managerial support helps employees to balance work and home life, long hours were a major component of non-supportive managerial behaviours. Non-supportive managers may subvert existing paid leave policies by refusing to allow their employees to participate (Thompson et al., 1999). Judge and Colquitt (2004) observed that “even the best parental leave procedure cannot overcome supervisors who forbid their employees from using it” (p. 402). Employees who report to a manager who works long hours and expects employees to do the same, are unlikely either to say “no” to long-hour work and or to take parental leave. Based on the above analysis that work-family culture influences employees’ likelihoods of taking parental leave and managers’ work hours indicate an unfriendly work-family culture, the following hypothesis is developed:

\textit{Hypothesis 1: Managers’ work hours will negatively correlate with employees’ likelihood of taking parental leave.}
3.2.3 Gender Differences of the Effect

The limited research on gender differences with respect to taking parental leave uncovered four factors that prevent fathers from taking parental leave. These are gender role expectations, gender stereotypes, lack of social support and economics (Hass, 1991; Hyde, et al., 1993; Plantenga & Remery, 2005).

According to gender role expectations, women are responsible for the majority of childcare and household tasks (Greenberger et al., 1989; Hochschild & Machung, 1989). The “motherhood mandate” (Russo, 1976) indicates that the priority of the mother is to care for her children, and that commitment to work should be secondary. In contrast, the gender role expectation for men is that they play the traditional role of breadwinner for the home. According to this line of thinking, a good father is one who can provide financial security to the family, even if he has to work long hours and sacrifice the time spent with his family. Any deviation from these expectations will result in a negative employee evaluation.

Because of the perception that taking parental leave is less congruent with the male role than with the female role, men may be less likely to take parental leave than are women. For those male employees who do take parental leave, they are viewed as not serious about their careers (Hall, 1989; Norman & Tedeschi, 1984) and experience negative career results (Allen & Russell, 1999; Lyness & Judiesch, 2001).

Research on sex stereotypes has found that men and women have different sets of attributes (Spence et al., 1975; Heilman, 1989). Men are stereotyped as having instrumental skills that lead them to be independent, ambitious, assertive, skilled in business and competitive (Spence et al., 1975). Therefore, there is an expectation for men to fully engage in work and rarely have absences from their workplace. In contrast, the expectation for
women is that they are more emotional, considerate and home-oriented (Spence et al., 1975). Women are expected to spend more time at home than at their workplace. To conform to the stereotype, male employees therefore avoid taking parental leave. Pleck (1993) interviewed 142 fathers and found that although 87% of them took some days off after the arrival of a newborn baby, half of these days were vacation and sick leaves and the other half were discretionary days. None of these fathers took official parental leave.

Lack of social support is one factor that contributes to fathers being reluctant to take parental leave—they are afraid of negative opinions from their relatives, friends and colleagues (Hass, 1991; Hyde, 1993). In actuality, the majority of the male parental leave-takers in Hass’s (1991) study did not get any support from either their parents or their friends. The less likely the fathers are to get support for taking parental leave, the less likely they are to take parental leave (Hyde, 1993).

Economic factors also come into play, as normally fathers have higher salaries than mothers do. Thus, if a leave is not fully paid, a father taking parental leave will create a larger financial loss to a family than would a mother taking parental leave.

All of these factors together prevent fathers from taking parental leave and it would be reasonable to predict that men need more encouragement and incentives than women do, when it comes to deciding to take parental leave. Pleck (1979)’s sensitization theory can rationalize this prediction. This theory suggests that psychological involvement in a role acts primarily as a sensitizer to interference effects, making the individual more aware of the problems within that role. Translated, this can mean that even when men and women both have a manager who works long hours, men will perceive higher levels of pressure to follow the manager’s hours. This is because their psychological involvement in a man’s role makes
them more sensitive to the effect of managers’ work hours, which leads to men being more aware of the negative career results of taking parental leave. This allows positing of the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 2: Managers’ work hours will have a greater negative effect on the probability of male employees taking parental leave than female employees.*

3.3 Methods and Data

This study used data drawn from the Workplace and Employee survey (WES), which is developed and administered by Statistics Canada. The WES is an ideal dataset for investigating the effect of managers’ work hours for the following reasons:

1. The survey is designed to represent all workplaces operating in Canada;
2. A subset of workers from each workplace is sampled to represent all workers in Canada;
3. The survey generates linked employer-employee information, which makes it possible to obtain dependent and independent variables from different sources. This helps to reduce the problem of common method variance due to the use of self-reported measures from a single source;
4. The linked nature of the survey also allows the inclusion of controls at both the firm level and the employee level. The current literature includes controls only from either the employer or the employee.

The study involved only employees whose employer offered a parental leave and who were eligible for parental leave because they had a child under one year of age during the survey period. The final sample size was 874.
3.3.1 Dependent Variable

Whether employees took parental leave in 1999 is the dependent variable. The 2000 employee survey asked employees the question, “Have you taken any parental leave in the past twelve months?” Coding of the dependent variable “taken parental leave” was as a binary variable with 1=taken and 0=not taken.

3.3.2 Independent Variable

The definition of managers’ work hours was the average work hours of a manager in a company. The 1999 workplace survey asked employers to estimate how many paid hours their managers work in a normal week.

3.3.3 Control Variables

Variables from both workplace and employee sides that had a potential relationship with the dependent variable were included as control variables in the regression equations.

The most important control variable was the number of work-life balance programs that a company provided. In addition to managers’ work hours, work-life balance programs are also a major part of work-family culture. The existence of these practices shows that the employer respects employees’ non-work lives, is ready to help employees when there is a family crisis, and permits the discussion of personal and family needs in the workplace. These practices send a psychological signal to employees that their employer cares about them as people, not just as employees. Research has found that by offering family-friendly practices, employers enhance employees’ perception that the employer invests in, and cares about, its employees and is supportive of employees’ lives outside of work (Kossek, 2005; Jahn et al., 2003). When employees believe that the work environment is family-supportive,
they are more confident in taking parental leave. They do not fear that the use of benefits will have a deleterious effect on their future career prospects within the organization.

The WES 1999 survey asked employees whether any of five work-life balance practices (on-site daycare, elderly care programs, employee assistance programs, fitness and recreation programs, other family support) were available to them. A sample question was: “Does your employer offer help for childcare either through an on-site center or assistance with external suppliers or informal arrangements?” Work-life balance availability for each practice was answered either “yes” or “no.” “Yes” answers scored a value of “1,” while “no” answers scored a value of “0.”

A multilevel analysis done by Kopelman et al. (2006) found that, at both individual and group levels of analysis, the number of work-life balance programs offered was related to an attitudinal outcomes measure. Consistent with Kopelman et al. (2006) and other research (Osterman, 1995; Thompson et al., 1999; Thompson et al. 2005), a composite work-family benefit availability score is created by summing responses across the five items for each response. The score has a value of 0 to 5, and the alpha for the scale is .84.

Other control variables from the employee survey are gender (female=1; male=0), age (in years), race (white=1; others=0), education (four dummy variables: less than high school; some high school; some college; above college), marital status (1=married or living with partner; 0=not married), organizational tenure (in months), years of working experience, number of children younger than 13 years old, family income (in thousand dollars), hourly wages (in dollars), employee status (full time=1, part-time=0), job level (manager or professional=1, others=0), average work hours per week including overtime, and covered by a collective agreement (yes=1, no=0).
Organizational level variables include the size of the company (logarithmic form of the number employees), industry (14 categorical variables), and non-profit status (not-for-profit =1, profit=0). All of these variables are from the 1999 survey, which is in concert with the year in which employees took parental leave.\textsuperscript{3}

3.3.4 Analysis

I used hierarchical probit regressions to test the Hypothesis 1, with control variables entered in the first step, followed by the variable of managers’ work hours. The likelihood ratio test was used to test whether adding managers’ work hours would lead to a statistically significant improvement in the fit of the model. To test Hypothesis 2, I ran separate probit regressions analysis for female employees and male employee.

3.4 Results

Collection of WES data using a stratified sample design made it important to incorporate sampling weights and strata parameters in the data analyses (Sarndal, Swensson, & Wretman, 1992). The results reported below use weighting stratification parameters in probit procedures. Table 3.1 provides means, robust standard errors, and intercorrelations. Reported in Table 3.2 are the probit analysis results, which show the marginal effect and robust standard errors. The overall test of the explanatory power of all the control variables (models 1) is significant (as is revealed by the Wald chi-square test of joint significance).

\textsuperscript{3} Data are also available after 2001. However, because of an important policy change implemented in 2001 regarding parental leave, which may influence employees’ behaviours in taking parental leave, this paper did not include data after 2001.
Hypothesis 1 predicted that managers’ work hours would be negatively related to the probability of taking parental leave. Model 2 supports the hypothesis. In this model, the variable of managers’ work hours has significant coefficients in the predicted direction. The likelihood ratio test, which tests whether the full model with the variable of managers’ work hours is significantly better than the model with only control variables, is significant (chi2=10.32, \( p<0.005 \)). The coefficient indicates that a one-hour increase in managers’ work hours will decrease the probability of employees taking parental leave by 3.2 percentage points. Therefore, compared with managers who work 40 hours a week, managers who work 45 hours a week will decrease their employees’ probability of taking parental leave by 16 percentage points. Compared with the mean of the dependent variable (0.32), the magnitude of the coefficient is substantial. The results show that managers’ work hours have a clear negative impact on the probability of taking parental leave.

Surprisingly, none of the number of work-life balance programs, gender, or family income is significantly related to the probability of taking parental leave. This indicates that these widely researched antecedents of taking parental leave did not influence the Canadian workers in the sample. Another possibility is that the dependent variable is the actual taking of parental leave, not the days of parental leave taken. It is possible that these factors do not affect the probability of taking parental leave but they do affect the amount of leave taken.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that the effect of managers’ work hours was different for women and for men. The regression results of Model 3 and Model 4 support this hypothesis. Model 3 is the regression results for male workers. The coefficient is -0.038 (\( p<0.001 \)), which indicates that a one-hour increase in managers’ work hours decreased the probability that male workers would take parental leave by 3.8 percentage points. Model 4 is the
regression results for female workers. The coefficient is -0.018 ($p<0.001$), which indicates that a one-hour increase in managers’ work hours decreased the probability that female workers would take parental leave by 1.8 percentage points. The t-test of whether the two managers’ working hours estimates are statistically significant from each other is $t=5.867$ ($p<0.000$). Managers’ work hours clearly had a stronger effect on men than on women.

3.5 Discussion and Conclusion

The present study adds a number of unique contributions to the work-family literature concerning the determinants of taking paternal leave. Although many countries have established the right to take parental leave, research on parental leave is still limited. As well, where this type of research does exist, it tends to focus on the gender differences in the patterns of take-up and the impact of leave on employee’s career results.

Information about company practices and culture toward parental leave remains relatively limited (Plantenga & Remery, 2005). The present study helped to fill this gap by showing that an unfriendly work-family culture, especially as reflected by managers’ long work hours, has a negative impact on the probability of employees taking parental leave.

Given that the organizational work-family culture affects utilization of work-life balance programs (Allen, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999), identifying the factors that can contribute to a supportive and favourable work-family culture is an important endeavour. The present results demonstrate that managers’ work hours are an important part of this culture. As noted by Schneider (1990), managers’ behaviours communicate to employees what is valued and important in the organization. When the employee perception is that managers do not support benefits usage, employees may be fearful of using the benefits,
despite their availability. By working long hours, managers gradually create a culture in which working long hours or having long periods of visible “face time” at the workplace often serves as a prime indicator of productivity and commitment. This unsupportive long-hour culture clearly prevents employees from taking any type of family leave to meet responsibilities at home.

The fact that the combined male and female analysis did not find any significant impact of work-life balance programs might indicate that managers and co-workers in the company are not supportive. Duxbury et al. (1995) research found that supportive managers and co-workers, but not the existence of work-life balance programs, correlated with the utilization of work-family friendly programs. The finding of the present paper confirms that simply providing some work-life balance programs may not be useful (Eyb, 2005). However, it is also possible that the finding is due to the data restriction. The measure of work-life balance programs included only daycare, eldercare, employee assistant programs, and recreation programs. These programs are the only programs available on the WES questionnaire. It is obvious that not all employees can benefit from all of these programs. For example, only people who have elder people to take care of are eligible for eldercare benefits, and only those who have time after work can afford to use recreation programs. Because these programs are not accessible to all employees, the programs cannot generate employees’ perception that the company takes care of them and supports them in taking parental leave.

The finding of no gender differences in the trend of taking parental leave appears to be somewhat inconsistent with theory and other research (Greenberger et al., 1989). A possible explanation is that, in recent years, an important cultural shift has encouraged
fatherhood and men’s involvement in childcare (Daly, 2004). The gender role expectation is clearly changing in Canada (Doucet, 2006). Taking care of children is no longer only the responsibility of women; more and more men are now starting to spend time with their children. Another possible explanation is that this paper’s research question is what determines an employee’s decision to take parental leave, and not the decision regarding the length of the leave. It is possible that some male employees take only a very short parental leave, while female employees take longer leaves. This paper regarded all leaves as parental leave, regardless of duration. However, gender roles and social expectations have a more obvious influence on the decision of how many days leave to take than on the decision whether or not to take any leave.

Several limitations that need addressing are apparent in the present study. First, due to data restrictions, the paper did not include some work-life balance programs such as flexible work hours, working from home, compressed work week, telecommunication, etc. Future research could develop a comprehensive measure of this construct by including all of these alternative work programs. Second, the data do not enable us take into account the length of parental leave taken. Due to human capital theory (Becker, 1985), a long absence from work will decrease human capital substantially and will have a negative impact on the leave-takers’ career development. It is reasonable to believe that the factors that influence an employee’s decision to take a one-week leave differ greatly from those used to decide on several months’ leave. Future research can study these different factors, focusing especially on aspects that can help an employee who takes a long parental leave to balance work and home life. Finally, the paper used a linked employer and employee survey. Ideally, the study would have used a multilevel analysis to address the research questions. However, due to the
limited sample size within each workplace (the average number of employees for each workplace was 1.7), the study did not use this technique. Future research could use multilevel analysis to obtain a more accurate picture of the relationship between managers’ work hours and the probability of employees taking parental leave.

3.6 Implications

High productivity, employee commitment, and both actual and perceived improvements in organization performance (Breaugh & Frye, 2007) have all been demonstrated as a result of utilization of family-friendly practices by organizations. Grover & Crooker (1995) also found that employees who had access to and partook of parental leave offerings were more committed to their employers than were those who did not. Thus, if employers want to promote positive employees attitudes and behaviours by facilitating the taking of parental leave, they should consider the fact that long managerial work hours appear to deter employees from taking family leave. This could entail employers becoming more proactive in encouraging employees to take leave and lessening the worry about retribution from managers who work long hours. It may also entail stricter enforcement of legislative rights regarding parental leave, in order to balance employees’ work and life. The present research indicates that organizations need to alter the behaviour of their managers and supervisors in order to facilitate a family-friendly culture change. Providing work-family training to managers would help in communicating the importance of this issue. Sensitizing supervisors to the fact that productivity is not always a function of hours at the desk or of perfect attendance records would also be useful for promoting a family-friendly working environment and thus encouraging employees to take parental leave.
Parental leave constitutes a major component of government policies for promoting work-life balance. Much research has found that the taking of parental leave, especially the father’s participation, has a positive effect on the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children (Allen & Daly, 2007). A good way to encourage parents to take parental leave is for the government to provide a high-wage replacement rate for leave-takers. Policymakers can also provide individual non-transferable periods of leave for each parent.

Canadian policy is supportive of long periods of parental leave, but the use of this long leave by male employees remains low (Marshall, 2008). To increase the number of males who take long leaves, both the government and employers can work together to change sex-specific social roles. Employers can de-emphasize gender-based expectation in their formal rules and informal practices, in order to make it easier for men to become active in childcare. Public policymakers can implement some family leave that would target only men. Other possible government initiatives could be to subsidize daycare heavily, and to promote gender equality through the media.
Table 3.1: Weighted Means, Standard Errors and Correlations

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<td>3. Gender (1=female; 0=male)</td>
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<td>4. Family income (in $1000)</td>
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<td>0.27*</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Race (1=White; 0=Non-White)</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Number of dependent kids</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.10*</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Age</td>
<td>50.17</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Tenure on the job (month)</td>
<td>116.20</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.41*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Years of experience</td>
<td>18.13</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.17*</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.15*</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.80*</td>
<td>0.40*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Wages ($/hr)</td>
<td>19.73</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.21*</td>
<td>0.60*</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.24*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Full time employment (1=Yes, 0=No)</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Professional (1=Yes; 0=No)</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.30*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.39*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Union coverage (1=Yes, 0=No)</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Weekly work hours</td>
<td>41.29</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.30*</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.16*</td>
<td>0.13*</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Work-life balance programs offered in the company</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.16*</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Company size (log of total employees)</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.18*</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Non-profit (1=Yes; 0=No)</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.25*</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 14 15 16 17</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a n = 874  * p < .01 Source: Workplace and Employee Survey (WES), 1999, 2000. The sample means and robust standard errors are fully weighted to account for the complex survey design.
Table 3.2: Probit Analysis of the probability of taking parental leave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3 Male</th>
<th>Model 4 Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (female=1 male=0)</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.059)</td>
<td>(0.059)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family income (in $1000)</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status (1=Married 0=single)</td>
<td>0.103*</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.162**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.058)</td>
<td>(0.057)</td>
<td>(0.071)</td>
<td>(0.066)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (1=white 0=others)</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.073)</td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
<td>(0.077)</td>
<td>(0.110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of dependent kids</td>
<td>-0.042</td>
<td>-0.037</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>-0.133***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.031)</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td>(0.050)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>0.008***</td>
<td>0.008*</td>
<td>0.013**</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure on the job (months)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working experience (years)</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>-0.012*</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly wage (in dollars)</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status (1=full time 0=part time)</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>0.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.082)</td>
<td>(0.080)</td>
<td>(0.103)</td>
<td>(0.080)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation (1=professional , 0=others)</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
<td>0.165**</td>
<td>-0.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.062)</td>
<td>(0.062)</td>
<td>(0.080)</td>
<td>(0.091)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective agreement (1=covered 0=not covered)</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>0.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.058)</td>
<td>(0.057)</td>
<td>(0.067)</td>
<td>(0.084)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly work hours</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of employees in the company (logarithm)</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.017)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit status (1=non-profit 0=profit)</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>-0.021</td>
<td>-0.120</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.098)</td>
<td>(0.087)</td>
<td>(0.068)</td>
<td>(0.136)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of work-life balance programs offered</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.024)</td>
<td>(0.025)</td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
<td>(0.037)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers’ work hours</td>
<td>-0.032***</td>
<td>-0.038***</td>
<td>-0.018**</td>
<td>-0.018**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * p<.1, ** p<.05 *** p<.01. Each entry reports the marginal effect and robust standard error (in parentheses) weighted by workplace sampling weights. Education and industry tests are joint test.

-2 log likelihood test of improvement in model fit over the model with only control variables. DF=1.

13 categories of Industry variables and 3 categories of Education variables are also included in the regression.
CHAPTER FOUR

REDUCING WORK-LIFE CONFLICT: THE ROLE OF PARTICIPATING IN DECISION MAKING

4.1 Introduction

Changes in the demographic nature of the workforce over the last few decades have challenged employers and researchers to develop strategies that can help employees maintain healthy work-life balances. Researchers have suggested that promoting employee participation in decision making (PDM) can be an important strategy for reducing job-related stress and work-family conflicts (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Jackson, 1983; Spector, 1986). PDM can reduce stress by improving job-related communication and by increasing the control that employees perceive that they have over their jobs. It can also reduce stress by decreasing job ambiguity and role conflict (Jackson, 1983).

Recently, however, a growing body of literature has questioned the universal acceptance of the effects of PDM on job-related stress and illness (Karasek, 1979; Xie, 1996; Xie & Johns, 1995). Some researchers argue that the effects depend on job demand and that this will vary among different individuals. For example, Karasek (1979) argues that the combination of job demands and PDM is what determines the level of stress. Other researchers have found that increased job control in the workplace benefited only those employees who were highly motivated and who did not blame themselves for negative job outcomes (Schaubroeck et al., 2001). Xie (1996) also suggests taking into account individual and socio-economic differences in research on PDM and job-related strain.

These different studies provide extensive explanations regarding the manner by which job control may mitigate high job demands and thereby reduce stress and work-
family conflict. Unfortunately, these studies are not complete and they do have their weaknesses. First, the current research has not directly considered the interaction between the number of hours worked and participation in decision making. This gap in the research is surprising, since the amount of time spent at work is one of the most fundamental patterns of daily life in modern society (Jahoda, 1982). Long work hours are therefore one of the most important aspects of workload and job demand (Trucker & Rutherford, 2005).

According to the literature on the interactive effect of job demand and job control, it is reasonable to believe that PDM can help employees to cope with the negative effects of long work hours on work-life conflict. However, up to this point, this idea has been nothing more than speculation, since the effects of long work hours remain unexamined in the literature.

Second, current literature disproportionately focuses on the negative effect of work stress on family activities (work-to-family conflict). However, this excludes a very important group of employees: those who do not have family responsibilities because they are single, childless or their children have left home. The current literature is also deficient in that it does not consider that some employees place a higher value on leisure time activity with their families than do others.

Third, most of the research is based on self-reported measures (by employees) collected at a single point in time. Issues such as respondent consistency motifs or response styles, and spurious results due to common method bias, remain as concerns (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

Fourth, previous research has often relied on purely cross-sectional data. It is difficult to control for unobserved factors from just a single snapshot in time.
This paper examines the issue of reducing work-life conflict through PDM and improves on prior empirical research in several ways: (1) It is the first study to examine how PDM and work hours interactively influence work-life conflict. This paper provides a new insight on how PDM can help employees cope with the stress caused by working long hours. (2) It extends the current literature from work-family conflict to work-life conflict, by taking into account the needs of those who do not have family responsibilities. It also accounts for the fact that some workers value leisure time with their families more highly than do others. (3) The study uses a short panel of longitudinal data rather than purely cross-sectional data. This facilitates examination of how the relationship evolves over time as well as controlling for the effect of unobserved factors fixed within each individual. (4) It uses a linked employer and employee survey, obtaining dependent and independent variables from different sources. This addresses the problem of common methods variance (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Lastly, the large, national representative dataset used in this paper enhances the external validity of the results.

This paper starts with a discussion of how PDM and work hours interactively influence work-life conflict. A brief description follows, regarding the data sources, samples, and variables used. The paper concludes with a discussion of the results and their theoretical and practical implications.

4.2 Theoretical Perspectives

4.2.1 Participation in Decision Making

The amount of involvement employees have in the decision-making processes of their organization, defined as “participation in decision making” (Locke & Schweuger,
Newton & Jimmieson, 2008), is ostensibly one of the most important factors for reducing work-related stress and work-family conflict (Jackson, 1983; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Spector, 1986). Current literature indicates that several mechanisms may operate to allow PDM to reduce this stress and conflict.

First, PDM can increase employees’ perceived control over their jobs (Heaney et al., 1993). “Perceived control”, defined as the “belief that one can influence the environment” (Ganster, 1988, p.88), can result in decreased stress and improved health (Israel et al., 1989; Spector, 1986). PDM can increase employees’ perceived job control by enabling them to affect how their jobs are accomplished. It also enables workers to use their influence to remove obstacles, thereby reducing their frustration and stress at work (Karasek, 1979).

Second, PDM can increase an employee’s perceived social support and managerial support (Heaney et al., 1993). Social support, defined as “instrumental help” as well as “a flow of communication between people involving emotional concern, caring, and information” (Daniels & Guppy 1994, p.1525), is a resource that people can call upon when coping with stress (Thoits, 1992). For example, when a person is experiencing stress, he or she can call upon co-workers to help finish a job, to offer guidance and advice, to provide information or to introduce new contacts (Heaney et al., 1993). Because employees have to communicate extensively with their coworkers when making decisions, the increased communication amongst workers and improved interpersonal relations in the workplace will give employees a sense of social support from co-workers. This can help employees cope with stress and conflict (House, 1981).

In addition to increasing an employee’s perceived social support, PDM can also increase an employee’s perceived managerial support. As an important managerial
behaviour, delegating the decision making power to an employee provides the employee with the opportunity to exercise self-direction and control, which signals to these employees that the manager trusts them and considers them to be capable and organizationally important (Gardner, Van Dyne, & Pierce, 2004; Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Research finds that this kind of trust and support from managers is the most critical variable in employees’ decision to use work-life balance practices (Thompson et al. 1999) and to reconcile work and family responsibilities.

Third, PDM can reduce role conflict and role ambiguity (Jackson, 1983). Role conflict and role ambiguity produce psychological stress that affects both mental health and physical health. PDM requires repeated interchange amongst members of an organization. Members gain a better understanding of the demands and constraints faced by others through this type of interchange (Schuler, 1979). “When the conflicts among workers become clear, perhaps for the first time, negotiation is likely to begin over which expectations should be changed in order to reduce inherent conflicts” (Jackson, 1983, p.6).

In addition to reducing work-related stress and ill health, PDM may also have a positive impact on family life. Grzywacz and Marks (2000) analyzed the National Survey of Midlife Development in the USA and found that a lower level of decision-making latitude was associated with an adverse impact on family life. The stress due to lack of control at the workplace was brought back to the home at the end of the workday. However, the augmentations and assumptions of positive effects of participation in decision making have not gone unchallenged. In both organizational behaviour and industrial relations literature, an extensive body of research exists that claims negative implications for participation in decision making (Barker, 1993; Parker & Slaughter, 1995; Schaubroeck et al., 2001; Xie,
1996). In industrial relations literature, a number of studies have found that participation in decision making is associated with increased work intensity, stress and fatigue (Fucini & Fucini, 1990; Lewchuck et al. 1997; Rinehart et al. 1997). Babson (1993) views that some participation in decision making programs are nothing more than a form of exploitation. Employers may adopt PDM to tax people’s minds as well as their hands. For example, in some workplaces, employers use PDM to force production employees to take on responsibility previously performed by the supervisor, such as to decide whether it is necessary to stop a production line when there is a quality issue. Without any increased incentives to perform this level of task, workers felt that they are pushed to do more with less. In a study of auto workers, Parker and Slaughter (1995) found that participation in decision making increased employee stress. In a study of the clothing and telecommunication industries, Batt & Appelbaum (1995) found evidence that employee participation during out-of-work hours increased employee workload and fatigue.

In the organizational behaviour literature, a number of studies have reported that there were limits of PDM as a contributor to employee outcomes. In a study of Swedish workers, Karasek (1979) found that participation in decision making could only reduce employee stress when their job demand was high. Schaubroeck, Jones and Xie (2001) found that increased job control and PDM in the workplace benefited only those employees who were highly motivated and who did not blame themselves for negative job outcomes. For those employees who lacked the capacity to make decisions, participation in decision making increased their stress.
4.2.2 Work Hours

Previous research and surveys have found that more people are working short hours than have done so in the past (Green, 2001; Jacobs & Gerson, 1998). The number of part-time workers has been steadily increasing and now represents approximately 20% of Canadian workforce (Statistics Canada, 2009). This trend is not confined to Canada, as numbers of part-time workers have increased in the USA and Europe as well (Nardone, 1995; Barling & Gallagher, 1996).

There are many reasons why people work short hours (Maynard, 2006). Some choose this option in order to take care of their families, while others cannot find a full time job (Nardone, 1995), and still others have to study at the same time (Maynard, 2006). For those who work short hours voluntarily, research has found that they have a salient family identity and internalize the values or expectation associated with their family roles (Lobel & St. Clair, 1992). Individuals with salient family identity dedicate more time to family activities at the expense of work activities (Day & Chamberlain, 2006). They feel increased pressure to be intensively involved in their work. Time spent on out-of-work-hour participation and activities depletes their time spent with their families and causes work-life conflict.

Nonetheless, no matter whether employees work short hours voluntarily or involuntarily, Pfeffer (1994: 22) argues that they “…have insufficient attachment or commitment to a particular organisation to provide it with some comparative advantage”. Pfeffer’s statement has since become a widely accepted assumption of employers toward employees working short hours. Consequently, employers are reluctant to provide these
employees with the training and resources required to make decisions (Almeida-Santos & Mumford, 2005; Arulampalam & Booth 1998; Nelen & de Grip, 2009). Without intentions, skills, knowledge, and resources, participation in decision making and job involvement then put extra responsibilities and stress on the employees who work short hours.

Previous research and surveys have also shown that increasingly more people are working longer hours than they have in the past (Green, 2001; Jacobs & Gerson, 1998). As seen for employees who work short hours, there are many reasons why employees work long hours. Some employees must work long hours just to pay their debts (Scor, 1991), while others work long hours because their employers require them to do so (White et al; 2003; Godard, 2001). Some work long hours because they have a salient organizational identity, and they want to work longer hours to help the organization attain its goals and enhance its stature (Foreman & Whetten, 2002; Haslam, Eggins, & Reynolds, 2003).

Whether longer work hours are discretionary or non-discretionary, they are a likely cause of work-life conflict (Day & Chamberlain, 2006; Ng & Feldman, 2008). Long work hours may deplete an individual’s energy, resulting in more job stress and mental strain (Golden & Wiens-Tuers, 2006; Tucker & Rutherford, 2005). A growing body of scientific literature also now demonstrates that long work hours have effects on a variety of other health issues. Those who spend long hours at their desks are less likely to find the time to exercise, and their sedentary lifestyles may increase their health risks. Health risks associated with long work hours include cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal disorders, musculoskeletal disorders and mental illness (Caruso et al., 2004, 2006). Long work hours can also deprive workers of time for family life and leisure activities (Duxbury & Higgins, 1991), and this too causes work-life conflict.
The number of hours worked is undoubtedly an important factor contributing to job stress, but an expanded model is needed to account for other contributing factors as well. The association between the number of hours worked and worker stress level is confounded by a number of other factors. Long work hours *per se* may not affect job related stress and work-life conflict; rather, it may be the combination of the number of hours worked and the control that workers can exercise over their job that influences their level of stress (Johnson & Lipscomb, 2006). As early as 1954, a well-known organizational case study found that personal and organizational tensions increased when miners under heavy workloads experienced close supervision (Gouldner, 1954). Drabek and Hass (1969) also found in their case study that employees experienced high levels of job stress when they had heavy workloads, and had to work under rigid company rules.

4.2.3 Hypothesis:

Karasek’s (1979) job demand-job control model, also known as the decision-latitude model, provides possible explanations for the unevenness of the findings on the implication of participation in decision making and work hours.

Karasek’s model consists of four distinctly different types of work experience generated by the interactions of high and low levels of job demand and job control. His model suggests that job stress and related health problems are most likely to occur if a job is high in job demand but low in job control. Moreover, his model suggests that a high level of job control may act as a buffer against the increased stress that would normally occur during performance of a high demand job. The model predicts positive outcomes, such as improved health and increased work motivation, if jobs are simultaneously high in job
control and job demand. Under these conditions, demands act as a source of challenge and regeneration, rather than as a source of mental stress. Job controls provide the opportunities for individuals with high job demand to adjust their high job demand according to their own needs and situations (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Although Karasek’s model indicates a multiplicative interactive relationship between job demand and job control, tests of the model have focused on how job control moderates the relationship between job demand and stress (i.e. how the effect of job demand varies in different levels of job control). Few studies have explicitly tested how the effect of job control varies in different levels of job demand.

Current literature also often measures job demand through indicators such as work intensity (e.g., the pace of work) and qualitative workload (e.g., the necessity of solving problems that have not been previously encountered). However, few researchers have taken the number of hours worked into account. This is surprising, since the amount of time spent at work is one of the most fundamental patterns of organizing daily life in modern society (Jahoda, 1982). Long work hours inevitably increase job demand above the ideal level for employees (Clarkberg & Moen, 2001). Trucker and Rutherford (2005) suggest that the number of hours worked is one of the most important aspects to consider in evaluating workload and job demand.

This present study treats work hours and PDM as specific instances of the more general concepts of job demand and job control, respectively. Using the framework suggested by Karasek’s job demand-job control model, this paper argues that the impact of PDM varies between employees who work long hours and employees who work short hours. I predict that a high level of PDM (high job control) reduces the work-life conflict
that results from working long hours (high job demand) by increasing employee job control, reducing role conflict and role ambiguity, and stimulating a positive impact on family life. However, a high level of PDM (high job control) increases the work-life conflict for employees working short hours (low job demand) by increasing employee job stress and work-life conflict through undesired decision making power and lack of resources.

Hypothesis: Participation in decision making will interact with work hours in such a way that participation in decision making will reduce work life conflict for employees who work long hours, but will increase the conflict for those who work short hours.

4.3 Data and Method

The data used in this study originated from the Workplace and Employee Survey (WES) developed and administered by Statistics Canada. The WES is an ideal dataset to investigate the effect of PDM for the following reasons:

(1) The survey is designed to represent all workplaces operating in Canada;

(2) A subset of workers from each workplace is sampled to represent all workers in Canada;

(3) The survey generates linked employer-employee information, which makes it possible to obtain dependent and independent variables from different sources. This helps to reduce the problem of common method variance due to the use of self-reported measures from a single source;
The linked nature of the survey also allows the inclusion of controls at both the firm level and the level of the individual employee. The current literature only includes controls from either the employer or the employee part of survey. The data used in this paper comes from the 2003 workplace and employee survey and the 2004 employee survey. These were the most recent cohort data available for this research. The reason for using the 2004 instead of 2003 employee survey was to obtain a dependent variable that was a year older than the independent variable. Using data that spanned a two-year period permitted examination of the relationship as it evolved over time.

4.3.1 Work-Life Conflict as a Dependent Variable

The current focus of the literature on work-family conflict is too narrow to obtain an accurate picture of stresses that arise in the workplace. This paper broadens the traditional focus by examining all employees, irrespective of their marital or parental status. Traditional measures of work-family conflict also fail to account for the fact that some employees value leisure time more than others do. This paper’s analysis of work-life conflict also takes this into account. The WES asked those employees who wanted to reduce their work hours whether they felt any work-life conflict arising from any of the following five factors:

1. Family responsibilities
2. Work-related stress
3. Other health problems
4. Desire for more leisure time
5. Other conflicts
All five questions had yes/no answers which were dummy coded as 1=Yes and 0=No. All employees answered all of the questions, so there was no category of “no response”. Maximum likelihood factor analysis was used to determine whether it would be more efficient to retain these items separately or to construct a composite variable. A scree test was performed by examining the graph of the eigenvalues; oblique rotation revealed that only one factor had eigenvalues greater than 1, and this factor explained 89% of the variance. Therefore, this paper constructed a composite variable whose value ranges from 0 to 5 from the five factors.

4.3.2 Participation in Decision Making

Previous studies have not measured PDM in a consistent way. Many authors have developed or adapted different measures to suit their particular purposes (Spector, 1986). Different authors have focused on different issues. For example, Tucker and Rutherford (2005) focused on work schedules, while Heaney et al. (1993) focused on strategy issues. Karasek (1979) focused on daily issues and Fox et al. (1993) focused on recruitment and staffing. These approaches complement each other, but even when combined together, the data still do not provide a comprehensive picture of PDM. In addition, these measures suffered from common method variance due to the almost exclusive use of self-reported employee surveys. The present paper is the first to formulate a comprehensive measure for decision making by taking into account twelve aspects of decision-making within an organization. It includes daily and weekly planning schedules, training, customer relations, 

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4 The Stata command used for the factor analysis is polychoric and is used for factor analysis on categorical variables.
and quality control, amongst others. This paper solves the common method variance problem that arises from self-reporting surveys by obtaining PDM measurements from employer responses to the Workplace and Employee Survey (WES) and then attributing the derived results to the employees to whom the employers had been referring.

The WES asked employers to identify the individuals within their companies who normally made decisions with respect to twelve workplace activities. These activities included the daily planning of work and the choice of production technology. The survey rated each of the twelve workplace activities on a scale from 1 to 6, with “6” indicating that the decision regarding the activity was made at the highest level of the organization and “1” indicating that the decision was made by the individual employee. The scale that the employers used to indicate who made the decision for each of the activities was as follows:

1. The business owner.
2. A person or group from outside the organization.
3. A senior manager.
4. A work supervisor.
5. A work group.
6. An individual employee.

A factor analysis conducted on the 12 items revealed a uni-dimensional factor that explained 92% of the variance. The alpha for these items was 0.94. PDM in this study was calculated as the average of the 12 items, yielding a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 6.

\[\text{Footnote: 5 Appendix 3 has the detail of the 12 items.}\]
4.3.3 Work Hours

“Working hours” were defined as the average number of hours worked per week over the past 12 months. It includes both paid and unpaid overtime. This definition and measure is consistent with current literature on work hours (Ng & Feldman, 2008; Day & Chamberlain, 2006; Ng, Sorensen & Feldman, 2007). Employees who provided responses for this study worked a mean of 41.8 hours.

4.3.4 Controls

The control variables selected for this study arose from theoretical perspectives as well as previously published studies. Variables were included in the analysis to control for aspects of the workplace and individual situations that could affect work-life balance. The most important control was the number of work-life balance programs available to employees. Researchers have found that work-life balance programs, which include on-site daycare, elderly care programs, employee assistance programs, and fitness and recreation programs, can help employees maintain balance in their work and life (Thompson & Prottas, 2005; Eby, et al., 2005; Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999).

WES’s employee questionnaire asked employees whether any of five work-life balance practices were available to them. A sample question was: “Does your employer offer help for childcare either through an on-site center or assistance with external suppliers or informal arrangements?” Work-life balance availability for each practice was answered with either a “yes” or “no” response, with “yes” answers given a value of “1” and “no” answers given a value of “0”. Consistent with other research (Osterman, 1995; Thompson
et al., 1999; Thompson & Prottas, 2005), a composite work-family benefit availability score was created by summing responses across the five items for each response. This yielded a value of 0 to 5 and the alpha for the scale was 0.84.

Another control variable was union status in the organization. Long work hours were sometimes mandatory and workers could not refuse to work overtime. Employers may use mandatory overtime as a cost-saving measure associated with recruiting and training new hires (Dawson et al. 2004). According to Kojola (2004), labour unions can be very effective in reducing employers’ ability to mandate excessive overtime. The existence of a union in the workplace can also give employees a sense of control over their workplace (Allen & Keaveny, 1981; Lawler & Walker, 1984). This perceived control will also help employees to reduce work-related stress. However, other researchers have argued that stress is actually higher in unionized organizations than in non-unionized workplaces. This is because unionized organizations have inflexible hours, faster work paces and more structured work settings (Duncan & Stafford, 1980; Kalachek & Raines, 1980; Addison & Belfield, 2004).

Other factors controlled on the employee level as well, because they can influence employee stress, included:

(1) Age
(2) level of Education
(3) Number of years working for the organization
(4) Number of years of experience
(5) Race
(6) Martial status
(7) Number of children
(8) Family income
(9) Wages
(10) Employment status (part time or full time)
(11) Status as a professional or a non-professional worker.

Control variables at the organizational level included organization size and the industrial sector of the organization.

4.4 Results

The WES data were collected using a stratified sample design, which makes it important to incorporate sampling weights and strata parameters in the data analyses (Sandal, Swensson & Wretman, 1992). The results reported below use sample weights derived from stratification parameters and supplied by Statistics Canada. Table 4.1 provides descriptive statistics and correlations for the variables used in the study. In general, the results showed limited collinearity among independent variables.

In this study, OLS regressions with two-way interactions were run to test the hypothesis outlined previously. To test for the Hypothesis, an interaction of work hours and PDM is used. This interaction is tested in a hierarchical multiple regression. In the first step, all the control variables and major interaction terms were entered. At the second step, the two-way interaction was entered. In all of the regressions, PDM and work hours are centred around the mean according to the established procedure of testing interactions suggested by Ailen and West (1991).
The OLS analysis results shown in Table 4.2 give both the coefficients and robust standard errors. The overall test of the explanatory power of all the variables in Model 1 is significant ($F=2.36$, $p<0.001$).

The regression results in Model 1 show that neither work hours nor PDM is significant. This finding is important, since it implies that there is no relationship between work hours or PDM and work-life conflict, which is consistent with the study by Johnson and Lipscomb (2006) and which may simply indicate that the relationship between work hours or PDM on work-life conflict is complex. The true picture must take into account the interactive effect between these two variables (Karasek, 1979).

Unionization is highly significant in two regressions and the signs are negative. This shows that in the sample, unions help employees to reduce work-life conflict either by providing control to employees or by regulating employers’ behaviours.

A negative and significant relationship between full-time employment status and work-life conflict was found. This may indicate that the insecurity of the job is an important stressor for part-time employees. The insecurity makes part-time workers feel stressed both on the job and away from work.

Next, I added the interaction term to the Model 1 to test the hypothesis. The two-way interaction in Model 2 was found to be significant ($F=8.16$, $p<.01$). Specifically, the regression coefficient for the interaction term is statistically significant ($\beta=-0.008$, $p<.01$). To further clarify the interaction effects of PDM and work hours, I examined separate simple slopes depicting the relationship between PDM and work-life conflict. Separate plots were drawn up for individuals who work different hours. The mean of the work hours plus a standard deviation of work hours defines the long hours. Short hours are the mean of
the work hours minus one standard deviation of work hours. Figure 1 represents a typical significant interaction effect for work hours; namely, its moderation of the relationship between PDM and work-life conflict. The graph shows that PDM reduces the work-life conflict for employees who work long hours, but for those employees who work short hours, PDM increases their conflicts. The above results, taken together, provide support for the Hypothesis.

4.5 Discussion

This study makes two important contributions to the literature on the relationship between PDM and work-life conflict. Theoretically, one would expect PDM to reduce employees stress and conflict as the level of PDM increases. This is often the case, but the current literature shows that it is not always true. This study explains why this is not universally true, by being the first to investigate how the number of work hours moderates the relationship between PDM and work-life conflict. It shows that conflict reduction can only occur when the workday is long. This study also goes beyond the current literature, by extending the traditional focus from work-family conflict to work-life conflict. This is more inclusive than the traditional approach, which neglects how job control and job demand affect single employees who do not have families. The theoretical and applied implications discovered in this study are outlined below.

4.5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study found that participation in decision making can reduce the work-life conflict, but only amongst those employees who work long hours. Those who work short
hours do not appear to benefit from participation in decision making. This finding suggests that the effect of participation in decision making depends on the level of work hours. Employees who work short hours and who are required to be involved in the decision making process will experience more work-life conflict than will employees who work long hours and participate in decision making processes.

This paper does not find any independent effects of either work hours or PDM, but does confirm the expected interaction between work hours and PDM, which supports Karasek’s (1979) job demand-job control model. Karasek’s model suggests that positive outcomes such as improved morale and better health will occur if jobs are simultaneously high in decision-making latitude and job demand. In the current study, the length of work hours and the level PDM are specific instances of the more generalized concepts of job demand and job control, respectively. This paper establishes that increasing PDM improves the welfare of those employees with heavy workloads. This is just what Karasek et al. (1981) found in their research on Swedish men, and is similar to results found by Bromet et al. (1988) and Fox et al. (1993).

4.5.2 Managerial Implications

Working long hours can pose significant challenges to the health and well-being of working people. This paper suggests that providing high levels of PDM to individuals can help them to balance the competing demands of work and personal life. PDM can help employees cope with job stress by reducing role ambiguity and role conflict and by providing social support and a sense of control over their lives. PDM can also help
employees to find a balance between work and life, by positively influencing their relationships with their families.

Based on the findings of this study, organizations should promote involvement in decision making for employees with heavy workloads. For those employees who work short hours, however, it is not sufficient simply to provide employees with the power to make decisions (Parker & Slaughter 1995; Barker 1993; Graham 1995; Danford 1998). Adequate information and relevant training also play important roles in this relationship. It is therefore important to train employees in the areas in which decision making is expected of them, in order for them to realize the benefits of their involvement.

4.5.3 Limitations and Future Studies

The results of this paper are consistent with Karasek’s (1979) model, which proposes that job control research should account for job demand. However, Karasek’s theory does not take into account a number of differences between individuals (Xie, 1996). For example, some employees voluntarily work long hours because they identify with the organization (Brett & Stroth, 2003), and want to help it gain prominence and attain its goals (Ng & Feldman, 2008; Foreman & Whetten, 2002; Haslam, Eggins & Reynolds, 2003). Working long hours might not be stressful for those who volunteer to do so, because they are motivated to see their organization succeed.

Future research should aim to develop a refined PDM scale for testing different aspects of PDM and their effects on reducing stress, health problems and work-life conflict. It is possible that different aspects of PDM will affect work-life conflict differently. For example, Spector (1986) suggests that allowing employees to participate in decision making
about their daily work can give them a greater sense of control than would allowing them to participate in decision making regarding corporate strategies and technologies. The question remains, therefore, whether finely targeted PDM can have the same beneficial effects as broad-based PDM. Only by developing a more sophisticated way of measuring different aspects of PDM can we answer questions such as this.
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<td>3: Participation in Decision Making</td>
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<td>6. Age</td>
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<td>-0.06</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.08*</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
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<td>11. Full Time Employment (1=Yes, 0=No)</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<td>12. Wages ($/hr)</td>
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<td>0.77*</td>
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<td>-0.00</td>
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<td>0.46*</td>
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<td>0.26*</td>
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<td>-0.01</td>
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<td>0.18*</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Years of Experience</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>-0.20*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Race (1= White; 0=Non-White)</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Professional/Manager (1=Yes, 0=No)</td>
<td>0.25*</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Company Size (log of total employees)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Non-profit (1=Yes; 0=No)</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.18*</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a n = 1654 \quad * p < .01\)

Source: Workplace and Employee Survey (WES), 2003, 2004. The sample means and robust standard errors are fully weighted to account for the complex survey design.
Table 4.2: Results of Regression Analyses: Effect of Participation in Decision Making and Work Hours on Work-Life Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Decision Making (PDM, centered)</td>
<td>0.047(0.030)</td>
<td>0.023(0.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Hours (centered)</td>
<td>0.001(0.003)</td>
<td>-0.001(0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1=Female, 0=Male)</td>
<td>-0.069(0.074)</td>
<td>-0.067(0.073)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Work-Life Balance Programs in</td>
<td>-0.000(0.031)</td>
<td>0.004(0.031)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>-0.001(0.007)</td>
<td>-0.001(0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure (Month)</td>
<td>0.000(0.000)</td>
<td>0.000(0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covered by a Union (1=Yes, 0=No)</td>
<td>-0.132(0.075)*</td>
<td>-0.127(0.074)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor (1=Yes, 0=No)</td>
<td>0.047(0.061)</td>
<td>0.045(0.061)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status (1=Yes, 0=No)</td>
<td>0.000(0.090)</td>
<td>-0.003(0.088)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Status (1=full time; 0=part time)</td>
<td>-0.490(0.264)*</td>
<td>-0.457(0.0251)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages ($/hr)</td>
<td>-0.003(0.003)</td>
<td>-0.003(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income (in $10,000)</td>
<td>-0.003(0.007)</td>
<td>-0.003(0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Dependent Kids</td>
<td>-0.007(0.036)</td>
<td>0.002(0.036)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Experience</td>
<td>0.004(0.008)</td>
<td>0.004(0.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (1=White; 0=Non-white)</td>
<td>0.005(0.083)</td>
<td>0.022(0.085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Manager (1=Yes; 0=No)</td>
<td>0.112(0.116)</td>
<td>0.106(0.114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (5 Dummy variables)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Profit (1=yes, 0=No)</td>
<td>0.335(0.095)***</td>
<td>0.311(0.095)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Size (log of total employees)</td>
<td>-0.013(0.022)</td>
<td>-0.020(0.022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry (14 dummy variables)</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>Yes**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM x Work Hours</td>
<td>-0.008(0.003)***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall F</strong></td>
<td>2.36***</td>
<td>2.35***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partial F test</strong></td>
<td>8.16***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>1617</td>
<td>1616</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*: * p < .1, ** p < .05, *** p < .01. Estimates weighted by workplace sampling weights. Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors. Industry and education tests are joint test. N=1,654.
Figure 1: The Interactive Effect of Work Hours and Participation in Decision Making on Work-Life Conflict
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter summarizes the key findings of the individual chapters (Chapters Two, Three and Four), highlights the theoretical contributions of this research and their implications both for organizations and for unions, as well as for government, and concludes by listing limitations and future research opportunities in this field.

5.1 Summary of Empirical Findings

5.1.1 Business Strategy and Availability of Work-Life Balance Programs

Chapter Two examines the relationship between the adoption of work-life balance programs and an organization’s business strategy. The model was developed by first defining business strategy dimensions in terms of cost leadership and product leadership, then by conceptually and empirically connecting these strategies to high performance management systems and the adoption of work-life balance programs. The results show that there is a positive relationship between product leadership strategy and the adoption of some work-life balance programs such as fitness and recreation programs and employee assistance programs. Cost leadership strategy negatively relates to adoption of these programs.

Chapter Two also finds that there is no relationship between the gender makeup of the workforce and the employer’s responsiveness to work-life balance issues, that big companies are more likely to adopt work-life balance programs and that the percentage of
part-time employees is negatively related to the adoption of work-life balance programs. Another important finding is that non-wage benefits are positively related to the adoption of work-life balance programs. This indicates that these benefits represent the company’s ability to afford some work-life balance programs. Lastly, union status is positively related to some work-life balance programs, but not all of them. This shows that unions may be very successful in negotiating some, but not all, work-life balance programs.

Chapter Two contributes to the literature in several ways. (1) It is the first study to examine how the type of business strategy that an organization follows will influence the likelihood of its adopting of work-life balance programs and how the high performance work system mediates this relationship. This research provides a new insight on how organizational characteristics can affect employers’ responsiveness to work-life balance issues. (2) It uses a short panel of longitudinal data rather than purely cross-sectional data. This facilitates examining how the relationship evolves over time as well as controlling for the effect of unobserved factors fixed within each individual. (3) It uses a linked employer and employee survey, obtaining dependent and independent variables from different sources. This allowed to examine relationships without concern for common method variance, and to provide more reliable measures than would have been possible with single respondents. Lastly, the large national representative dataset used in this study allows for appropriate controls in data analysis and enhances the external validity of the research results.

5.1.2 Managers’ Work Hours and Utilization of Work-Life Balance Programs

Chapter Three investigates the relationship between managers’ work hours and the likelihood of employees taking parental leave. The major finding of this study is that a long-
hour organizational culture, revealed through managers’ work hours, discourages new parents from taking parental leave. As noted by Schneider (1990), managers’ behaviours communicate to employees what is valued and important in the organization. When employees perceive that the managers are sending a message that is not supportive of benefits usage, employees may be fearful of using the benefits, despite their availability. By working long hours, managers gradually create a culture in which working long hours or showing more “face time” often serves as a prime indicator of productivity and commitment. Furthermore, this study finds that longer managers’ work hours have a more pronounced negative effect on male than on female employees in terms of the probability of taking parental leave.

Chapter Three also shows that none of the widely researched antecedents of taking parental leave (number of work-life balance programs, gender, and family income) is significantly related to the probability of taking parental leave.

Chapter Three contributes in a number of unique ways to the work-family literature concerning the determinants of taking paternal leave. (1) The study fills a gap in the literature by showing that an unfriendly work-family culture, especially involving managers’ long work hours, has a negative impact on the probability that employees will take parental leave. (2) This paper examines employees’ actual behaviours with respect to taking parental leave, as well as the objective reasons for not taking the leave. Based on the theory of work-family culture (Thompson et al., 1999), this paper investigates how a manager’s work hours influence employees’ likelihood of taking paid parental leave and how this effect differs between women and men.
5.1.3 Participation in Decision Making and Reducing Work-Life Conflict

Chapter Four explores whether increased participation in decision making (PDM) can help employees reduce their work-life conflicts. Using the Workplace and Employee Survey 2003 and 2004, this study finds that participation in decision making reduces the work-life conflict for employees who work long hours, but for those employees who work short hours, participation in decision making increases their conflicts. This results support Karasek’s (1979) job demand-job control model, which suggests that positive outcomes, such as improved morale and better health, will occur if jobs are simultaneously high in job control and job demand. In this chapter, the length of work hours and the level of PDM are specific instances of the more generalized concepts of job demand and job control, respectively. This paper establishes that increasing participation improves the welfare of those employees with heavy workloads.

Chapter Four also finds that unionization helps employees reduce work-life conflict. This study also finds that part-time workers experience more work-life conflict than full time workers do. This may indicate that the insecurity of the job is an important stressor for part-time employees. The insecurity makes part-time workers feel stressed both on the job and away from work.

Chapter Four makes two important contributions to the literature on the relationship between PDM and work-life conflict. First, it is the first study to examine how PDM and work hours interactively influence work-life conflict. This paper provides a new insight into how PDM can help employees cope with the stress caused by working long hours. Second, it extends the current literature from work-family conflict to work-life conflict, by taking
into account the needs of those who do not have family responsibilities. It also accounts for
the fact that some workers value leisure time with their families more highly than do others.

5.2 Implications and Recommendations

The research results of this thesis have identified a number of strategies and approaches that key stakeholders can use to reduce work–life conflict. The recommendation section consists of three parts, each of which is devoted to one of the key stakeholders in the work-life arena: employers, governments and unions.

5.2.1 What Can Employers Do to Reduce Work–Life Conflict?

First, employers can help employees to deal with heavy work and life demands by adopting some work-life balance programs. Well documented research has found that work-life balance programs can reduce work-family conflict (Allen, 2001; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), and are positively related to employees’ organizational commitment (Grover & Crooker 1995), citizenship behaviours (Lambert, 2000), and perceived organizational performance (Perry-Smith & Blum 2000). However, Chapter Two of this thesis finds that companies with a cost leadership business strategy are less likely to adopt work-life balance programs. It also finds that few workplaces provide childcare and eldercare programs. Based on these research results, Canadian employers, no matter what business strategy they follow, should provide more work-life balance programs to their employees to help them balance work and life.

Second, employers can also help employees reduce work-life conflict by creating a friendly work-family culture. Adopting work–life policies is a necessary first step to
addressing work-life conflict. Unfortunately, this thesis and many other studies find that
many employees do not utilize these programs, even when these programs are available to
them. The importance of addressing the issue of organizational culture cannot be
overemphasized. It is a “key to the success of work-life integration” (Burke, 2006 p.235).
The findings from Chapter Three identify managers’ work hours are an important part of
work-family culture. Managers’ behaviours communicate to employees what is valued and
important in the organization. When employees perceive that the managers are sending a
message that is not supportive of benefits usage, employees may be fearful of using the
benefits, despite their availability. By working long hours, managers gradually create a
culture in which working long hours or putting in a good deal of “face time” often serves as
a prime indicator of productivity and commitment.

The present research indicates that employers may need to alter the behaviour of
their managers and supervisors in order to facilitate a family-friendly culture change.
Providing work-family training to managers would help communicate the importance of the
issue. Sensitizing supervisors to the fact that productivity is not always a function of hours
at the desk or of perfect attendance records would also be useful for promoting a family-
friendly working environment and thus encouraging employees to take parental leave.

Third, employers can help to reduce employees’ work-life conflict by increasing
employees’ sense of control. This thesis suggests that providing high levels of PDM to
individuals can help them to balance the competing demands of work and personal life.
PDM can help employees to cope with job stress by reducing role ambiguity and role
conflict and by providing social support and a sense of control over their lives. PDM can
also help employees to find a balance between work and life, by positively influencing their
relationships with their families. Based on the findings of this paper, organizations should promote involvement in decision making for employees with heavy workloads. For those employees who work short hours, however, it is not sufficient simply to provide employees with the power to make decisions (Parker & Slaughter 1995; Barker 1993; Graham 1995; Danford 1998). Adequate information and relevant training also play important roles in this relationship. It is therefore important to train employees in the areas in which there are expectations of decision making from them, in order for them to realize the benefits of their involvement.

5.2.2 What Can Governments Do to Reduce Work–Life Conflict?

First, governments may provide financial incentives for parental leave-takers. Governments play a critical role in improving employees’ work-life balance. Research from Europe (Sweden in particular) has found that social policies designed to help working mothers (including universal child care) are associated with increased fertility rates. Parental leave constitutes a major component of government policies for promoting work-life balance. Much research has found that parents taking parental leave, especially the father’s participation, has a positive effect on the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children (Allen & Daly, 2007). Accordingly, we recommend that governments provide a high-wage replacement rate for leave takers. Policymakers can also provide individual non-transferable periods of leave for each parent.

Second, governments may encourage men to take parental leave. Canada has long periods of parental leave policy, but the use of this long leave by male employees remains low (Marshall, 2008). To increase the number of male long-leave takers, both the government and employers can work together to change sex-specific social roles.
Employers can de-emphasize gender-based expectations in their formal rules and informal practices, in order to make it easier for men to become active in childcare. Public policymakers can implement some family leave that targets only men. Other possible government initiatives could be to subsidize day care heavily, and to promote gender equality through the media.

Third, based on the finding that few employers adopt eldercare programs, governments may need to take the lead with respect to this issue. In particular, they may need to develop appropriate policies and to identify and implement relevant supports in the community.

5.2.3 What Can Unions Do to Reduce Work–Life Conflict?

First, unions may include more work-life provisions in negotiations during the collective bargaining process. Unions have an important role to play in the establishment of family-friendly practices in the workplace. This thesis shows that unions may be very successful in negotiating some work-life balance programs, but not all of them. Unions can negotiate more work-life provisions into the collective bargaining.

Second, unions may act as the advocates of employee work-life balance by undertaking public campaigns to raise awareness of work-life issues and by suggesting ways for improving the situation. Unions can also set up educational campaigns to increase the individual worker’s knowledge of work-life balance issues.

5.3 Limitations and Future Studies

Several limitations that need addressing are apparent in this thesis. First, the thesis used a linked employer and employee survey. Ideally, the study would have used a
multilevel analysis to address the research questions. However, due to the limited sample size within each workplace (the average number of employees for each workplace was 1.7), the study did not use this technique. Future research could use multilevel analysis to obtain a more accurate picture of work-life balance issues in the workplace.

Second, wherever possible, this thesis used two years of data instead of one year of data. Although this allowed capture of the development of effect over two years, it cannot provide any causal relationship between dependent and independent variables. Future studies can use longitudinal design and lab studies or natural experiments to examine causal and dynamic work-life relations.

Third, due to data restrictions, several measures of the constructs in this thesis are not perfect. For example, managers’ work hours in Chapter Three do not include unpaid overtime hours, while the work-life balance programs in Chapter Four do not include working at home, compressed week, etc. Future studies can pay closer attention to the choice and the validity of these measures.
REFERENCES


Green, F. (2001). It’s been a hard day’s night: The concentration and intensification of work in late twentieth-century Britain. *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 39*(1), 53-80.


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Kojola, B. Organized labor's responses to long work hours. *Conference Long Working Hours, Safety and Health: Toward a National Research Agenda,* University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD.


### APPENDICES

**Appendix 1:**
Definition and Coding for Key Variables in Chapter Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Variable</strong> /<strong>Definitions</strong></th>
<th><strong>Questions in WES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Scale/Coding</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee Assistance Programs</td>
<td>Does your employer offer employee assistance such as counselling, substance abuse control, financial assistance, legal aid etc.?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare Program</td>
<td>Does your employer offer help for childcare either through an on-site centre or assistance with external suppliers or informal arrangements?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldercare Program</td>
<td>Does your employer offer help with eldercare services?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness and Recreation Program</td>
<td>Does your employer offer fitness and recreation services (on-site or off-site)?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Personal Support Program</td>
<td>Does your employer offer other personal support or family services?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Programs</td>
<td>Does your employer offer personal support or family services such as childcare, employee assistance, eldercare, fitness and recreation services or other type of services?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Product Leadership Business Strategy | Please rate the following factors with respect to their relative importance in your workplace's general business strategy.  
1. undertaking research and development  
2. developing new products/services  
3. developing new production/operating techniques | 0= Not applicable  
1= Not Important  
2=Slightly Important  
3= Important  
4= Very important  
5= Crucial  
The product leadership business strategy index is the mean of the three scores, range from 0 to 5. |
### Appendix 1 Continued:
Definition and Coding for Key Variables in Chapter Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable /Definitions</th>
<th>Questions in WES</th>
<th>Scale/Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cost Leadership       | Please rate the following factors with respect to their relative importance in your workplace's general business strategy.  
1. reducing labour cost  
2. reducing operating cost  
3. use part-time, temporary or contract workers | 0= Not applicable  
1= Not Important  
2= Slightly Important  
3= Important  
4= Very Important  
5= Crucial  
The cost leadership business strategy index is the mean of the three scores, range from 0 to 5. |
| Business Strategy     |                                                                                   |                                                                  |
| Training Effort       | Please estimate this workplace's total training expenditure, between April 1 2002 and March 31 2003. | Training effort = total training expenditure / total number of employees |
| Variable Pay          | Does your compensation system include the following incentives?  
A: Individual incentive systems.  
B: Group incentives system  
C: Profit sharing plan  
D: Merit pay  
E: Employee Stock Plan | 0= No ; 1= Yes  
Variable pay was calculated as an average index of these five dichotomous variables. |
| Employment Involvement| For non-managerial employees, what year were the following practices implemented on a formal basis in your workplace?  
A: Employee's suggestion program (Includes employee survey feedback)  
B: Flexible job design  
C: Information sharing with employees  
D: Problem solving teams  
E: Joint labour-management committees  
F: Self-directed work groups | 0= No ; 1= Yes  
Employment involvement was calculated as an average index of these six dichotomous variables. |
| Staff Within          | 1: How are vacant administrative positions usually staffed?  
2: How are vacant managers' positions usually staffed?  
3: How are vacant professionals' positions usually staffed?  
4: How are vacant sales' positions usually staffed?  
5: How are vacant technical's positions usually staffed? | 3= From within the workplace  
2= From another workplace within the same legal company or business enterprise  
1= From outside the company |
### Appendix 1 Continued:
Definition and Coding for Key Variables in Chapter Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable /Definitions</th>
<th>Questions in WES</th>
<th>Scale/Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Staff Within                                | usually staffed?  
6: How are vacant production positions usually staffed?  
7: How are other vacant positions usually staffed?                                                                                                                                                          | Staff within index was an average index these seven three-item categorical variables.            |
| Union status                                 | Of the total employment in March 2003, how many employees were covered by collective bargaining agreements at this location?                                                                                           | Union status=Employees covered by a collective agreement /Total number of employees              |
| Percentage of Female Employees in the Workplace | Of the total employment in March 2003, how many were female?                                                                                                                                                     | Percentage of Female Employees in the Workplace= Total female employees / Total number of employees |
| Non-Wage Benefits                            | What was the total expenditure on non-wage benefits at this location between April 1, 2002 and March 31, 2003?                                                                                                   | Non-Wage Benefits= Total expenditure on non-wage benefits/ Total number of employees            |
| Profit Status                                | Which of the following best describes your organization? NON_PRFT                                                                                                                                                 | 1=profit sector  
0=non-profit sector                                                                                                                                  |
| Turnover Rate                                | Please estimate by reason the number of employees who have permanently left this location between April 1, 2002 and March 31, 2003. Resignations (No special incentives)                                          | Turnover Rate= Total Resignation / Total number of employees                                     |
# Appendix 2:
Definition and Coding for Key Variables in Chapter Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable /Definitions</th>
<th>Questions in WES</th>
<th>Scale/Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Leave Taken</td>
<td>Have you taken any parental leave in the past twelve months?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers’ Work Hours</td>
<td>Excluding all overtime, how many paid hours do managers work in a normal week?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Availability of Work-Life Balance Programs: the number of work-life balance programs that were offered to employees.</td>
<td>Does your employer offer employee assistance such as counselling, substance abuse control, financial assistance, legal aid etc.? Does your employer offer help for childcare either through an on-site centre or assistance with external suppliers or informal arrangements? Does your employer offer help with eldercare services? Does your employer offer fitness and recreation services (on-site or off-site)? Does your employer offer other personal support or family services?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Status</td>
<td>In your job, are you a member of a union or covered by a collective bargaining agreement?</td>
<td>0=No ; 1=Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 3:
**Definition and Coding for Key Variables in Chapter Four**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable /Definitions</th>
<th>Questions in WES</th>
<th>Scale/Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Participation in Decision Making: the amount of involvement employees have in the decision-making processes of their organization. | Who normally makes decisions with respect to the following activities?  
1. Daily planning of individual work  
2. Weekly planning of individual work  
3. Follow-up results  
4. Customer relations  
5. Quality control  
6. Purchase of necessary supplies  
7. Maintenance of machinery and equipment  
8. Setting staffing levels  
9. Filling vacancies  
10. Training  
11. Choice of production technology  
12. Product / Service development | Decision made  
6: by the business owner  
5: by an individual or group outside the workplace,  
4: by a senior manager,  
3: by a work supervisor,  
2: by a work group,  
1: by individual employees. 

In the chapter, it is reversed coded with 6 indicating the highest level of participation in decision making and 1 the lowest level of participation in decision making. 

The final scale of participation in decision making is calculated as the average of the 12 items with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 6. |
| Working Hours: the average number hours worked per week during the past 12 months. | Excluding all overtime, how many paid hours do you usually work per week at this job? (HRS_WK)  
How many hours of paid overtime do you usually work per week? (POVER_WK)  
How many hours of unpaid overtime do you usually work per week? (UOVER_WK) | Working hours=  
HRS_WK+ POVER_WK+ UOVER_WK |
| Union Status | In your job, are you a member of a union or covered by a collective bargaining agreement? | 0=No ; 1=Yes |
### Appendix 3 Continued:
Definition and Coding for Key Variables in Chapter Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable /Definitions</th>
<th>Questions in WES</th>
<th>Scale/Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Availability of Work-Life Balance Programs: the number of work-life balance programs that were offered to employees. | Does your employer offer employee assistance such as counselling, substance abuse control, financial assistance, legal aid etc.?  
Does your employer offer help for childcare either through an on-site centre or assistance with external suppliers or informal arrangements?  
Does your employer offer help with eldercare services?  
Does your employer offer fitness and recreation services (on-site or off-site)?  
Does your employer offer other personal support or family services? | 0=No ;  1=Yes  
A composite work-life benefit availability score is created by summing responses across the 5 items for each response.  
It has a value of 0 to 5. |