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ALLEN &
LILLIAN T.
EBY

≡ The Oxford Handbook of
WORK *and* **FAMILY**

The Oxford Handbook of Work and Family

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The Oxford Handbook of Work and Family

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Tammy D. Allen

Lillian T. Eby

OXFORD
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Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Allen, Tammy D., editor. | Eby, Lillian Turner de Tormes, 1964– editor.

Title: The Oxford handbook of work and family / edited by Tammy D. Allen and Lillian T. Eby.

Description: Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, [2016] | Includes index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2015036165 | ISBN 978–0–19–933753–8

Subjects: LCSH: Work and family.

Classification: LCC HD4904.25 .O975 2016 | DDC 306.3/6—dc23

LC record available at <http://lcn.loc.gov/2015036165>

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed by Sheridan, USA

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Peter E. Nathan
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Tammy D. Allen is Professor of Psychology at the University of South Florida. Her research centers on work–family issues, career development, and employee well-being from both individual and organizational perspectives. She is the author of over 100 peer-reviewed publications and four books. Her body of scholarship has received multiple awards and has accrued over 15,000 citations. Dr. Allen is past Associate Editor of the *Journal of Applied Psychology* and the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, and current Associate Editor of *Journal of Business and Psychology*. She has served on the editorial boards of a variety of journals. She is a Fellow of the *Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, the *American Psychological Association*, and the *Association for Psychological Science*. She served as the 2013-2014 President of the *Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology*.

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The Oxford Handbook of Work and Family

Introduction and Overview

Introduction

Tammy D. Allen *and* Lillian T. Eby

Abstract

Multiple factors such as changes in family structure and labor patterns have contributed to interest in work–family scholarship and practice over the past several decades. The global economy and rapidly evolving technology have introduced new challenges to how individuals structure and manage their work and family responsibilities. This chapter sets the stage for the rest of the volume. It includes an overview of the seven sections of the book and brief highlights of the chapters that comprise the total volume.

Key Words: work–family, changing demographics, technology, global workforce, work–family practice, technology

Introduction

Work–family scholarship has grown rapidly over the past several decades, not only in the United States but across the globe (Poelmans, Greenhaus, & Maestro, 2013). A PsycINFO search conducted on June 15, 2015 using the term “work–family” produced 5,382 hits. A total of 1,895 of those hits were from 2010 and later alone. This is no surprise in that the harmonization of work and family roles is an issue that resonates with many adults (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2009). Moreover, work–family issues are a major human resource concern to organizations (Society for Human Resource Management Workplace, 2013). In this introductory chapter we identify some of the factors responsible for growth in the field and provide an overview of the volume.

Growth in the Work–Family Field

Interest in the topic has been fueled by multiple factors. A major driver has been a panoply of changes in family structure and paid labor participation patterns that have increased the likelihood that individuals face simultaneous work

and family demands and that these demands occur across the life course. For example, the percentage of women in the paid labor force has increased over the past several decades whereas the percentage of men has decreased. Specifically, in 1972 43.9% of women were participating in the paid labor force compared to 57.7% in 2012 (United States Department of Labor, undated); in 1972 78.9% of men were participating in the labor force compared to 70.2% in 2012. Labor force participation by mothers with children under the age of 18 years has also continued to increase. In 1976 48.8% of mothers with children under age 18 years participated in the paid labor force. The percentage increased to 70.9 in 2012. The percentages are even higher if limited to children aged 6–17 years (none younger); they were 56.2% in 1976 and at 76.0% in 2012 (United States Department of Labor, undated).

Labor patterns also show a shift in the pattern of work among married couples. In 1967 43.6% of married couple families involved households in which both the husband and the wife worked. This

grew to 52.8% in 2011 (United States Department of Labor, 2014a). During the same time period married couple families in which only the husband works have decreased (in 1967 it was 35.6% and in 2011 it was 19.1%) whereas married couple families in which only the women works have increased (in 1967 it was 1.7% and in 2011 it was 6.8%). Women are also contributing a greater percentage of the total family income. In 1970, wives' earnings as a percentage of family income was 26.6%. In 2011 it grew to 37.0% (United States Department of Labor, 2014a).

The population is also aging at a rapid rate. The population of individuals aged 65 years and older increased 10-fold from 1900 to 2000, from 3.1 million in 1900 to 35.0 million in 2000. Importantly, this increase occurred in years in which there was only a 2-fold increase in the total population (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). Given these trends, it comes as no surprise that eldercare responsibilities have further contributed to the need to better understand the work–family interface (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2012). Estimates indicate that more than one in six Americans who are working full or part time are also assisting with the care of an elderly or disabled family member, relative, or friend. Moreover, 70% of working caregivers report that they suffer work-related difficulties due to their caregiving responsibilities (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2012). The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the population of individuals aged 65 years and older will more than double between 2012 and 2060, from 43.1 million to 92.0 million, with just over one in five individuals in this age group. Individuals aged 85 years and older are also projected to triple from 5.9 million to 18.2 million during this same time period (<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-243.html>). These projections indicate that eldercare will continue to be a pressing work–family issue in the decades to come.

Life-span issues are also relevant given that more individuals have dependent care responsibilities at later stages of life than in the past. Birth patterns have changed over the past several decades. In 1970 the average age of women at first birth was 21.4 years whereas in 2000 it was almost 25 years (Mathews & Hamilton, 2002). In 2013 it reached a high of 26 years (Martin, Hamilton, Osterman, Curtain, & Mathews, 2015). In addition, the number of women in their forties giving birth has been climbing. In 1970, 1% of first children were born to women aged 35 years and older. The percentage rose to 15% in 2012 (Shah,

2014). Moreover, although the number of births to women aged 50 years and over is small (there were a total of 677 in 2013), it has been steadily increasing (Martin et al., 2015).

Technology and the global economy have also impacted the way in which individuals manage their work and family lives. Technological advancements continue to change the way work is done as well as where it can be done, blurring the boundary between work and home. Large percentages of employees telecommute (Allen, Golden, Shockley, 2015). In addition, more individuals are working within what has been referred to as the “on-demand” economy, taking on tasks at a moments notice (Wladawsky-Berger, 2015). Indeed, work is no longer solely linked to a discrete physical location (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2009). Similarly, the globalization of work, aided by technology, has contributed to a “round-the-clock” work culture, in which workers are expected to be available 24/7 (Miller, 2015).

Growth in work–family scholarship has also been fueled by interest in the topic outside of academia. Columns on work–family are regular features in periodicals such as the *Wall Street Journal*. Popular press articles with titles such as “*Why Women Still Can't Have It All*” generate heated discussion (Slaughter, 2012). Females appointed to high-level, high-profile positions combined with motherhood face intense scrutiny and ignite debate (Allen, French, & Barnett, in press). Men are not immune from public work–family debates. Daniel Murphy, a second baseman for the New York Mets, faced criticism for his decision to skip a few games after the birth of his first child (Pearlman, 2014). The White House has also weighed in on work–family issues, holding a *White House Summit on Working Families* in 2014 (United States Department of Labor, 2014b). In early 2015, President Obama proposed a set of policies such as expanded paid sick leave and paid family and medical leave intended to address “the challenge of balancing work and family” (The White House, 2015). In sum, the subject of balancing work and family is a popular one among scholars, practitioners, and the public at large.

Organization and Overview of the Volume

This volume is composed of 35 chapters that comprehensively examine work–family issues from a variety of perspectives. Chapters are contributed by leading scholars and students of the field who come from different disciplines and from different

countries and who represent both science and practice. Laser sharp reviews of long-standing topics of interest as well as emerging bodies of literature are included. The volume is organized into seven sections: (1) Introduction and Overview, (2) The Worker, (3) The Family, (4) Organizational Practice, (5) Local, National, and International Context, (6) Special Topics, and (7) Integration and Future Directions. We provide a brief preview of each below.

Introduction and Overview

Following this introductory chapter, the first section includes a history of the field and reviews of theory and methodological approaches. French and Johnson chart the history and evolution of the work–family field. Leading figures in the development of the field from multiple disciplines including Lotte Bailyn, Rosalind Barnett, Anne Crouter, Kathleen Gerson, Jeffrey Greenhaus, Shelley MacDermid-Wadsworth, Phyllis Moen, Joseph Pleck, Maureen Perry-Jenkins, and Sheldon Zedeck share their insights with regard to where the field has been and where it is heading. The next chapter focuses on work–family theory. Rather than tread traditional ground by focusing on a review of established theories, Matthews, Wayne, and McKersie propose five theories that have yet to be fully leveraged by work–family scholars that they believe can help propel the work–family field forward. Lapierre and McMullan review methodological and measurement approaches to the study of work and family. An important feature of this chapter is that it provides an update of the review of research methods used in work–family research in a select group of industrial and organizational/organizational behavior (I-O/OB) journals conducted by Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, and Lambert (2007).

The Worker

The second section of the volume includes five chapters that focus on characteristics associated with the worker that make a difference in work–family experiences.

The section begins with a chapter authored by Leslie, Manchester, and Kim. Leslie et al. review the literature on sex and gender roles, a topic that has historically played a prominent role in work–family research. Next, Wayne, Michel, and Matthews review the growing literature that links worker personality and values with work–family experiences. This chapter is an important

inclusion in that role of individual differences has taken a more prominent place in work–family research in recent years. Moving to issues with regard to affect, Grandey and Krannitz integrate the literatures on emotion regulation with that of the work–family interface, opening up interesting avenues for future research. Next Sonnentag, Unger, and Rothe review the relationship between work–family experiences and recovery experiences such as relaxation, mastery, control, and psychological detachment from work. The final chapter in this section provides a review of boundary management by Rothbard and Ollier-Malaterre. They trace the relationship between work and nonwork from the industrial revolution through to today.

The Family

This section includes five chapters that examine work–family issues that take into consideration family members and what family means. Although much of the research that covers worker perspectives on work–family is generated in the I-O/OB literatures, studies that takes into account couple and child issues bring together research from a variety of disciplines. These are topics especially ripe for multidisciplinary collaborations. Two chapters in this section focus on the couple. Shockley and Shen cover the literature concerning the division of labor among couples whereas Westman reviews the research to date that examines crossover processes among couples. Both of these chapters provide unique insights into the couple dynamics that are so important to understanding work–family experiences. The next two chapters place the spotlight on children. Cho and Ciancetta examine child outcomes that are associated with parental work–family experiences. Brennan, Rosenzweig, Jivanjee, and Stewart bring a unique perspective to the volume, reviewing the issues that face working parents with children who have disabilities. The final chapter in this section by Casper, Marquardt, Roberto, and Buss represents a departure from the way in which work–family research is typically viewed. Casper and colleagues review the literature from the perspective of single workers without dependent children, making the case for increased attention focused on the family issues of such workers.

Organizational Practice

The study of organizational policies and practices has been a major topic of interest within the

work–family literature. The six chapters in this section cover a variety of practice issues. The section begins with a contribution by Ellen Galinsky of the Families and Work Institute. The Families and Work Institute has been at the forefront of bringing work–family issues to the awareness of the public and has sponsored key research to inform public policy. Galinsky reviews and provides examples of the “research-to-action” approach they have used over their 25-year history. A number of scholars have noted the importance of the deinstitutionalization of existing work practices to better facilitate employee work–life balance (e.g., Bailyn, 2011). In the second chapter of the section, Wells uses an organizational change perspective in the study of workplace initiatives, providing the background and information needed to facilitate further scholarship and practice concerning the redesign of work to better accommodate working families. Massman, Kiburz, Gregory, McCance, and Biga discuss work–family practice within multinational organizations. Through the use of case studies that illustrate work–family practices within two Fortune 500 firms, they provide insight into work–life effectiveness within the current business environment. Supervisors play a key role in how individuals experience work and in their success in balancing work and family roles. Major and Litano provide a review and integration of leadership theory and research with work–family experiences. Flexibility has been the organizational practice most discussed by the public and has received the most research attention by scholars. Kossek and Thompson provide a balanced and nuanced review of workplace flexibility practices. Dependent care support has been another featured work–family practice. In the final chapter in this section, Rothausen reviews existing research and develops a need-based model of organizational dependent care support use.

Local, National, and International Context

Contextual issues are important to understanding work–family experiences. In this section, three chapters take into consideration the larger context within which work–family experiences occur. The section begins with a contribution by Minnotte who reviews the impact of community on the work–family interface. The following two chapters examine macrolevel issues. As is often recognized, nations differ considerably with regard to legislation, policies, and practices that support working families. den Dulk and Peper provide an

overview of national policies and review their relationships with work–family outcomes. The section closes with a contribution by Ollier-Malaterre who reviews the findings from cross-national comparative work–family research.

Special Topics

In this section, we include nine chapters that cover what we believe to be underresearched, emerging, and/or novel topics to the work–family literature. As previously mentioned, technology is having a major impact on the intersection of work and family and we expect will continue to do so well into the future. Olson-Buchanan, Boswell, and Morgan provide a detailed review and summary of key finding from the literature on information communication technology and work–family issues. As technology continues to change the way we do work and the way in which we intersect with co-workers, this is sure to be a major topic of research well into the future. As documented by Hammer, Demsky, Kossek, and Bray, there is a surprising lack of intervention research within the work–family literature. These authors document existing research and provide a set of guidelines for future intervention research and practice. Agars and French make the case that the majority of work–family research is based on a narrow slice of the population. They focus on the case for expanding our typical research samples and provide specific populations in need of work–family research. In the next chapter, Lyness and Erkovan connect the careers literature with that of the work–family interface. As the authors note, career constructs are not well represented within the work–family literature. Much needed background and suggestions for better bridging of these two areas are provided. Grzywacz tackles the literature on work–family and employee health. He illustrates the complexities associated with the study of health and provides a roadmap for researchers interested in integrating work–family experiences and health outcomes. In the coverage of a topic largely unexplored to date, Poelmans and Stepanova masterfully inform readers of the ways by which research on neuroscience can inform work–family research. Eby, Mitchell, and Zimmerman bring a completely novel topic to the volume by discussing nonwork crises (e.g., death of a loved one, addiction) and how such unexpected events can affect the work–family interface across time. Pieper, Astrachan, and Neglia describe the unique work–family issues

and dynamics associated with family-owned businesses. As noted by the authors, 60% of total employment within the United States is in family businesses, making this understudied topic an important area for future research. Although work–family issues continue to be framed as a women’s issue in some circles, recent research and popular press coverage have increasingly recognized that work–family issues are important to men as well as to women. The final chapter in this section is contributed by Harrington, Humberd, and Van Deusen who focus on work–family issues for men, providing a much needed advancement in the work–family field.

Future Directions

The final section of the volume includes three chapters that focus on ideas for the future of work–family scholarship and practice. Biga, Church, Wade, Pratt, Kiburz, and Brown-Davis provide inspiration from the practice-side of the table. They bring their experience as behavioral scientists responsible for work–family programs across a variety of organizations to the development of questions that they believe are in need of research from scholars. The translation of our science into practice is often discussed as an important goal. Social media, blogs, and other nonacademic outlets have provided new platforms for communicating scholarship that can reach a large audience. Valcour and de Janasz provide an excellent primer for those interested in communicating work–family research to the public through technology-mediated communication. The volume concludes with a future research chapter by Allen and Eby. In this chapter they identify five future research themes that spanned chapters across the volume and provide additional suggestions for needed research directions based on those themes.

Conclusions

The audience for this volume includes a wide range of scholars who are conducting work–family research across national contexts and disciplines. Professionals engaged in the design and delivery of workplace work–family programs will also benefit from this handbook, as will policymakers who are interested in work–family issues. Our objective for the volume is that it will be a useful resource to all interested in the intersection between work and family and will serve as a guide for charting new directions in work–family research, theory, and practice.

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A Retrospective Timeline of the Evolution of Work–Family Research

Kimberly A. French and Ryan C. Johnson

Abstract

This chapter provides a historic overview of the work–family field from the 1970s through today. Several reviews and timelines are compiled to identify themes throughout each time period. To supplement published resources, interviews with prominent work–family scholars were conducted to identify key trends and issues, and to obtain a more personal view into the lives of some of work–family’s most influential minds. The review covers a broad range of topics across time, including the evolution of societal trends and legislation, key organizations and foundations, popular topics, theoretical developments, and methodological techniques. The chapter concludes with the interviewed work–family scholars’ future visions for the work–family field.

Key Words: work–family, history, review, societal trends, theory, methods, interview

Introduction

When I started graduate school in the ‘70s there was no field. There was no concept of a field. There was no inkling of a field. We hadn’t even begun to frame the questions.

(K. Gerson, personal communication)

Today work–family is a popular “kitchen table” topic (Allen, 2012). Television news reports feature stories about the impact of working experiences on child well-being, popular magazines are speckled with headlines about the secret to work–family balance, and prominent newspapers such as *The Wall Street Journal* have entire columns devoted to discussing work–family issues. With this public attention has come the burgeoning of a diverse, multidisciplinary academic field. The field of work–family currently has specialized journals (*Community, Work, & Family*), professional organizations (e.g., Families and Work Institute, Work–Family Researchers Network), and growing popularity in the traditional fields of sociology,

developmental psychology, industrial and organizational psychology, economics, and management. Despite the current prominence of work–family research, it has a relatively brief academic history, spanning roughly 50 years. Over those 50 years, work–family research blossomed from a fairly myopic focus on women’s employment to the widely expansive and multidisciplinary field it is today.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a historical overview of the work–family field from the 1970s through today. Previous reviews, timelines, and reports from multiple disciplines are consolidated to create this review. To supplement published resources, 10 seminal and influential researchers from a variety of disciplines were interviewed between October 24, 2013 and January 30, 2014. These personal accounts provide a unique perspective of the field’s development. Rather than diving deep into specific topics, we instead place a historical backdrop against the range of content covered in this volume while opening a window

into what has most inspired work–family’s most influential minds.

We organize our review into three time periods: inception (1970–1989), growth (1990–1999), and expansion (2000–2014). We then speculate on the future (2015 and beyond). Within these time periods we cover two primary arenas: societal context and academic research. Societal context includes significant U.S.-based societal events and organizations and foundations that contributed to the development of work–family research through funding and large-scale research projects (e.g., Catalyst, Families and Work Institute). Within academic research we discuss popular constructs and topics, advancements in theory, and advancements in methods.

The Inception Years: Work–Family in the 1970s and 1980s

The inception of the work–family field can be traced back to the 1970s. At that time, work–family was not an established field per se, but rather consisted of a few disjointed work–family studies conducted in various disciplines (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1965). Our interviews revealed two themes that united these fields into a more coherent research agenda. First, most of the researchers we interviewed described personal experiences that triggered curiosity for work–family issues. For example, Jeff Greenhaus attributed his interest in work–family to one of his student’s difficulties in managing graduate school, his wife’s career, and a new child.

One of our PhD students, Nick Beutell, was looking for a dissertation topic. At the time he was married, they had a child . . . and he observed the stress and the strain within the family.

(J. Greenhaus, personal communication)

Similarly, Phyllis Moen’s initial interests stemmed from her personal experience struggling to “keep all the balls in the air” as a mother, widow, and budding female professional. Her fellow female colleague managed by hiring a nanny, a housekeeper, and a gardener.

I realized I’d never have those resources, so I started trying to understand how people are successful at their jobs and their personal lives.

(P. Moen, personal communication)

Second, several researchers described unconventional experiences in graduate school that stretched them beyond the bounds of their discipline of

expertise. For example, Joseph Pleck’s work on gender led him to focus on work and family roles.

Once we got outside the realm of college students about 80% of what we were talking about when we talked about gender roles had to do with what people do in work and family life.

(J. Pleck, personal communication)

Similarly, Rosalind Barnett quickly realized the need to branch out beyond women’s work challenges in her graduate education.

I really found it fascinating early on . . . you can’t study women’s careers and those kind of aspirations without at the same time thinking about their family lives.

(R. Barnett, personal communication)

In short, the connections between work and family became increasingly apparent to researchers in the 1970s and 1980s. Early researchers’ personal experiences and questions helped extend their thinking and trigger research on the relationship between work and family domains.

Societal Context

SOCIETAL TRENDS

The entry of women into the workforce is an often-cited impetus for work–family research.

If you think of social changes like a see-saw, in the 1970s for the first time in American history the percentage of women in the labor force rose above 50%. So, suddenly the see-saw tipped in the other direction. That was a huge demographic shift that shaped my consciousness.

(K. Gerson, personal communication)

Work–family scholars were quick to point out that women, particularly lower-class women, single women, and racial minority women, had been active in the workforce before this demographic shift. What was most noticeable in the 1970s was that middle-class white mothers of school-age children began to enter the workforce (Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1982; Pruitt & Rapoport, 2002). This change occurred in stages, starting with mothers of school-age children, followed by those with toddlers, and by the end of the 1980s over half of all mothers with children under 3 years of age reported workforce participation (Mosisa & Hippie, 2006).

The movement of women into the workforce was stimulated in part by feminism and the women’s liberation movement. Feminists such as Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*, 1963) challenged traditional gender roles and the breadwinner

family model. Feminists also advocated for women's advanced education, expanding occupational opportunities. Finally, the feminist movement problematized fathers' lack of participation in family responsibilities (J. Pleck, personal communication). As women became more involved in paid employment, they continued to bear the weight of family responsibilities, while the involvement of husbands in the family remained stagnant. Thus women had less available time to spend on household responsibilities with no one to pick up the slack.

By the end of the 1980s, public values began to shift, favoring a dual-earner family model and husbands' involvement in unpaid work (Kanter, 1977; Menaghan & Parcel, 1990; Zedeck, 1992). Birth control became widely available in the 1960s, contributing to a subsequent decrease in birth rates, and enabling women to plan families around career decisions (Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1982). No-fault divorce was also legalized, increasing the number of divorced families and single parents (Zedeck, 1992). The 1970s and 1980s also brought about changes in the structure of work. The number of manufacturing and blue collar positions began to decline while the number of service, professional, and technical positions increased (Menaghan & Parcel, 1990). Finally, with more educated women entering the workforce, occupational sex segregation began to slowly decline (Menaghan & Parcel, 1990).

These demographic and workforce changes stirred the interest of organizations and society as a whole. *Working Mother Magazine* was first published in 1981, and in 1985 awarded its first annual award for Best Companies for Mothers (Pruitt & Rapoport, 2002). Popular press outlets began citing work by researchers such as Dana Friedman and Ellen Galinsky (Pruitt & Rapoport, 2002). Jay Belsky's studies linking nonmaternal care in the first year of life with child aggression, noncompliance, and withdrawal created a public uproar and negative attitudes toward working mothers of infants (Pruitt & Rapoport, 2002).

ORGANIZATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Prior to the 1970s, employees were encouraged to keep work and family roles separate. However, early work-family researchers (e.g., Kanter, 1977; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1965) demonstrated the many ways in which work and family were interconnected. Consequently, organizations began to implement employee assistance programs and flexible working arrangements (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Catalyst, a

not-for-profit research organization, conducted the first large-scale studies in the 1970s and early 1980s examining flexibility programs among social workers and teachers. Findings showed part-time work was beneficial for businesses and for women managing work and family roles (Kropf, 1999).

The Ford Foundation was also a key early supporter of work-family research, funding projects such as James Levine's The Fatherhood Project (1981; Pruitt & Rapoport, 2002). In 1988, The Ford Foundation launched its novel initiative titled *Work and Family Responsibilities Achieving a Balance* (Rapoport & Bailyn, 1996). This initiative was among the first to problematize work and family as a societal issue for men and women, and to suggest that workplaces could be changed to better help employees manage work and family roles. To help carry out this initiative, the Ford Foundation also helped launch the now-prominent Families and Work Institute (Rapoport & Bailyn, 1996).

[The Ford Foundation] really put the field on the map. It's they who started the emphasis on the workplace, which seemed strange at the time, but is now taken for granted.

(L. Bailyn, personal communication)

Other research and funding institutions, such as Work/Family Directions, were also founded in the 1980s, and professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association (APA) and Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) began to take note of work-family research (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002). In his 1987 SIOP presidential address, Sheldon Zedeck made a call for Industrial and Organizational (I-O) Psychologists to join the work-family conversation. His call and subsequent SIOP Frontiers book, *Work, Families, and Organizations*, caught the attention of I-O psychologists, expanding the work-family field (Allen, 2012).

Academic Research

POPULAR TOPICS

Women's entry into the workforce introduced new challenges and changes for family life ripe for academic research. Researchers first began by examining the ways in which working couples manage life transitions (e.g., Rapoport & Rapoport, 1965) and the ways in which work and family roles influenced one another (e.g., Crouter, 1984; Pleck, 1977). Kanter's 1977 monograph is widely cited as the seminal work of this time period, shattering the myth of separate work and family domains.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter published a really thin, little book that outlined what work and family was all about. I remember ordering it when it came out, and being very excited about it. That was the beginning of talking about this area of research in those terms.

(A. Crouter, personal communication)

Kanter articulated the many ways in which work and family affected one another, setting an ambitious research agenda that would shape the field's direction for many years. Subsequent work–family research in the 1970s and 1980s almost exclusively focused on negative work and family issues, including negative spillover and work–family conflict, consequences of managing work and family schedules, and negative child and individual health outcomes (Zedeck, 1992).

The development of work–family spillover and the development of work–family conflict constructs were some of the most notable contributions in the inception years. Work–family conflict was first measured for the U.S. Department of Labor's 1977 Quality of Employment Survey (QES; J. Pleck, personal communication). Results revealed that work–family conflict was a widespread phenomenon, reported by one-third of the sample respondents (Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980). The QES data were also used in several studies focused on time use and the implications of nonstandard work schedules for family time and quality outcomes (e.g., family adjustment and conflict, Staines & Pleck, 1984). Subsequent theoretical (e.g., Pleck, 1977) and empirical (e.g., Crouter, 1984) papers described the ways in which work factors spilled over to negatively influence family experiences. Years later, Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) published their theoretical paper, defining work–family conflict as incompatibility of role demands and identifying three forms of work–family conflict (time, strain, and behavior-based conflict). This definition of work–family conflict continues to be one of the most widely used today.

Division of labor was another hot topic within work–family's inception years. Data from the 1977 QES were used to examine the proportion and absolute number of hours husbands and wives spent in paid and unpaid work. Findings indicated that the husband performed a higher proportion of family work when his wife was employed; however, this was only because the wives were contributing less to the family, not necessarily because men were contributing more (Pleck & Staines, 1985). Hochschild's *The Second Shift* (1989) monitored 50

couples to study the implications of a dual-earner household for women's time in paid and unpaid work and health. Findings revealed that women were primarily responsible for the “second shift” (i.e., housework), and that bearing the brunt of home and childcare responsibilities left women feeling fatigued, resentful, and depressed (Hochschild & Machung, 1989).

The negative implications of working for child and maternal well-being constituted another major theme in the early decades of work–family research. Researchers in the 1970s took a social address approach, comparing employed versus unemployed mothers and, to a lesser extent, fathers (Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1982; Kanter, 1977). As a whole, this research showed no relationship between mothers' working status and child development outcomes, although fathers' unemployment seemed to have negative implications for marital relationships and child well-being (Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1982). A review conducted by Repetti, Matthews, and Waldron (1989) also found no clear main effect of employment status on women's health. Instead, an in-depth look at working conditions (e.g., work demands and control) was necessary for predicting the relationship between women's work and health.

It wasn't the number of roles that you occupied . . . it turns out it depends on the quality of those roles. . . . We moved to a more textured understanding of how to ask questions.

(R. Barnett, personal communication)

Novel research at the time investigated how working conditions affected parenting values and behaviors (e.g., Kohn & Schooler, 1983). While mothers dominated research involving parenting and child outcomes, researchers such as Joseph Pleck, Michael Lamb, and James Levine pushed for a fatherhood research agenda. James Levine and his colleagues conducted The Fatherhood Project in 1981, using time diary research to demonstrate the importance of men's involvement in child rearing (Pruitt & Rapoport, 2002).

There was pressure on men to get more involved in childcare and housework. If we were going to be a field that focused on child development, we had to understand the key people in children's lives, and that fathers mattered.

(A. Crouter, personal communication)

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The 1970s and 1980s produced a flurry of foundational theories that remain the basis of

work–family scholarship today. Several role-based theories were proposed, based on the early works of Kahn and colleagues (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Katz & Kahn, 1978). Role-based theories generally conceptualized work and family as two different roles that could be incompatible (i.e., role conflict), spillover into one another (i.e., positive and negative spillover), compensate for one another, or be actively separated (i.e., segmentation; Zedeck, 1992). Researchers also proposed that work and family roles were differentially permeable, and thus the likelihood that roles would influence one another might differ depending on directionality and gender (Pleck, 1977). The state of research at the time could be interpreted as supporting multiple theories due to poorly defined constructs, methodological issues, and vague theoretical propositions (Zedeck, 1992).

Stress theories were also influential for work–family research, particularly in the 1980s (Menaghan & Parcel, 1990). Theories such as Karasek's (1979) job demand control model and Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resources theory are still used frequently as frameworks to study the relationship between work and home characteristics and cross-domain individual and organizational outcomes. Theoretical and empirical work on daily stress by Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, and Wethington (1989) and Repetti (e.g., 1987) is also used as a foundation for today's research examining the daily interplay among work, family, and well-being.

Other influential theories included ecological theory and economic theory. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory proposed that phenomena are influenced by multiple layers of context. Thus to understand work–family phenomena, we need to understand the individual, family, organizational, and societal-level context (Perry-Jenkins & MacDermid, 2012). Finally, Becker's (1981) *A Treatise on the Family* stirred discussion of women's labor force participation. His microeconomic theory proposed that the most efficient family structure was one in which parents had specialized roles in either work or family (Menaghan & Parcel, 1990).

[A Treatise on the Family] sparked a huge backlash about 'is this really the case?' and 'can there be an economic argument for these behaviors?' It explains some of the outcomes we are interested in but nowhere near everything.

(M. Perry-Jenkins, personal communication)

METHODOLOGICAL TRENDS

Early research was dominated by cross-sectional, single source survey designs (Zedeck, 1992). Most often, subjective variables were global measures such as overall job satisfaction or marital satisfaction (Zedeck, 1992). Demographic variables were frequently used, as researchers focused on social address questions (e.g., comparing employed versus unemployed mothers; Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1982). Methodological issues of the time also included clarifying the definition of work and family (Zedeck, 1992).

The Growth Years: Work–Family in the 1990s

Social Context

SOCIETAL TRENDS

Work–family research continued to gain traction in the popular press in the 1990s. In 1991, Sue Shellenbarger began her award-winning weekly column discussing work–family issues in the *Wall Street Journal*. Stories about the plight of dual-earner families and working mothers started appearing in popular news outlets such as *Newsweek* and *The New York Times* (Williams, Manvell, & Bornstein, 2006), and *Child Magazine* began honoring the Best Companies for Dads (Pitt-Catsoupes, 2002).

Economic prosperity was on the rise, accompanied by an expanding workforce (Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, & Crouter, 2000). With this expansion, workers contributed an increasing number of hours to paid work (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000). In addition to a growing numbers of workers, the composition of the workforce shifted as women's labor force participation slowed through the 1990s, hovering around 76.7% for women ages 25 to 54 years and 72.1% for mothers with children under 18 years of age (Mosisa & Hippie, 2006). At the same time, workers became increasingly diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and age (Mosisa & Hippie, 2006).

The structure of work continued to change as well. Computer-related occupations, service occupations, and occupations requiring higher education expanded (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). New technology, such as the internet and home computers, became more affordable and accessible, changing the design of work and increasing possibilities for workplace flexibility (S. Zedeck, personal communication). Indeed, a report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) estimated that approximately 10% of the workforce engaged in job-related

work at home in the mid-1990s, with estimates rising to 17% by the early 2000s.

Finally, the attention given to working parents in the 1970s and 1980s increased pressure for family-friendly policy and legislation, and in 1993, U.S. President Bill Clinton passed the Family Medical Leave Act. This landmark federal policy provides employment protection and unpaid time off for employees who need to provide family care in the event of a serious health condition, birth, or adoption (Block, Malin, Kossek, & Holt, 2006). Although the policy was a much-needed step forward to advance work–family support for employees, it has been criticized for limited applicability and usability (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000), and is still notably less supportive compared to work–family policies in other developed countries, such as Canada and the United Kingdom (Block et al., 2006). The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 also impacted work–family issues for those in poverty by requiring welfare recipients to work in order to receive financial aid, and limiting financial support to a maximum of 2 years (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000). The act created new challenges for low income families, as it encouraged welfare recipients to take on low-paying, temporary jobs, perpetuating low socioeconomic status (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000).

ORGANIZATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Centers and organizations conducting work–family research blossomed in the 1990s, helping to launch work–family as a mainstream topic (L. Bailyn, personal communication). One of the most influential organizations was The Center for Work & Family at Boston University, founded in 1990 (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002). This center applies academic work–family research to corporate settings and publishes research and best practice recommendations for those interested in helping workers attain and maintain work–family balance. The Center for Work & Family also inaugurated the Kanter Award in 1999, honoring the best in work–family research published the preceding year (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002). Other institutions began work–family research centers, including the Center for Families at Purdue (founded in 1994) and the Alliance for Work-Life Progress (founded in 1996; Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002).

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation established their work–family program in 1994 (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002) and over the next 20 years provided generous support for work–family research by funding

large projects, disseminating findings, sponsoring conferences, and providing an online resource network (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). The Sloan Foundation also established numerous research centers, including, but not limited to, the Cornell Employment and Family Careers Institute, the Center on Parents Children and Work at the University of Chicago, and the National Opinion Research Center (Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002).

Finally, the Ford Foundation followed up on their work–family initiative, launching research projects at three corporations in the early 1990s. These projects took an action research approach, but worked in different ways. At Xerox, researchers worked with three different business units to implement interventions targeting work practices that not only helped alleviate work–family issues and made the workplace more gender equitable, but also improved the effectiveness of the work (Rapoport & Bailyn, 1996; Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, & Pruitt, 2002; Perlow, 1997). These studies not only had an impact in terms of knowledge and methodological advances, but also garnered public and media attention (L. Bailyn, personal communication).

Academic Research

POPULAR TOPICS

The work–family field saw steady growth in research popularity throughout the 1990s. Work–family conflict remained popular, as researchers more clearly defined the construct and its nomological network (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Brodeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Several researchers in this decade empirically followed up on Kanter's (1979) discussion of the many manifestations of work–family interactions. Frone and colleagues were among the first to empirically establish the bidirectional nature of work–family conflict (e.g., Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992), and new measures were developed to capture the multidimensional nature of work–family conflict (e.g., Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). Researchers also started identifying those more likely to experience work–family conflict, focusing on individual differences such as gender and family responsibilities (Eby et al., 2005). Finally, research on antecedents and outcomes associated with experiencing work–family conflict was prominent (Eby et al., 2005). For example, in their comprehensive qualitative review, consisting primarily of research conducted in the 1990s, Eby and colleagues (2005) found work–family conflict to be positively related to a host of work and family

stressors (e.g., parental demands, work role ambiguity) and undesirable domain outcomes (e.g., marital dissatisfaction, turnover intentions), and negatively related to factors such as spousal support, job satisfaction, and well-being. Notably, most of this research focused on work-to-family conflict, with a limited consideration of family-to-work conflict (Eby et al., 2005).

Dual-earners and child outcomes remained a popular topic as well, with Rosalind Barnett's longitudinal study of dual-earner couples (e.g., Barnett, Marshall, Raudenbush, & Brennan, 1993) being particularly influential by focusing on not only mother and father effects individually, but also couple-level constructs, such as family earnings, across time. While work demands increased, society's expectations for parents also increased (e.g., "intensive mothering"; P. Moen, personal communication), creating pressure for dual-earner families. With the 24/7 working economy and increased time and energy expectations for parents, nonstandard work and overwork also became dominant dual-earner issues (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000).

Research also advanced from a social address approach (i.e., examining categorical objective predictors such as sex or occupation type; Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1983) to looking at how nuanced aspects of the individual and the environment, such as autonomy, stability, and stress at work, influence child and family outcomes (M. Perry-Jenkins, personal communication). Studies were conducted to understand the process through which parent work affects child outcomes and began modeling perspectives of multiple family members (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000). Research in the early 1990s focused a great deal on child care, particularly for young children, and results from the NICHD Early Child Care Researchers Network suggested that parenting practices were more important determinants of child outcomes than whether or not young children received nonparental care (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Overall, there was little evidence for a direct relationship between maternal employment and child outcomes for young children. However, research did show that white, middle class to upper class boys experience significant negative effects when mothers had substantial work demands (Perry-Jenkins & MacDermid, 2012). Researchers also identified parental monitoring and knowledge as key moderators for the relationship between work hours and child problem behaviors for older children (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000).

The growth years were also characterized by a focus on work context as researchers began to pay attention to the design of work and workplace culture as potentially changeable factors influencing work-family issues (Bailyn, 1993; Thompson, Beauvis, & Lyness, 1999).

In 2005, 3 or 4 books came out by the same publisher. Different books, all on work-family, all of which had a culture chapter. There's now a culture scale. The late 1990s is when it moved into the mainstream of academic work.

(L. Bailyn, personal communication)

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Most of the work conducted in the growth years was based on theories identified in the earlier decades. Resource and role-based theories such as Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resources theory and Kahn et al.'s (1964) role conflict theory largely dominated thinking during this time. Because of an overreliance on limited theory and lack of theory testing, work-family research was criticized as atheoretical (e.g., Eby et al., 2005; Zedeck, 1992). To this end, efforts were made to clarify theory (e.g., Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), and calls were made for the direct testing of theoretical propositions and models (Eby et al., 2005).

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Throughout the growth years, cross-sectional, single source designs remained the most common methodological approach. More sophisticated statistical analyses began to emerge (e.g., longitudinal data analysis, dyadic data analysis), but were rarely used in work-family studies (Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, & Lambert, 2007). Additionally, research continued to focus primarily on white, middle-to-upper class individuals in dual-parent families (Casper et al., 2007). With the proliferation of work-family foundations, organizations, and centers came a plethora of large-scale, methodologically rigorous data sets, often including multiple waves, sources, and/or nationally representative sampling strategies (e.g., IBM, American Time Use Survey, and National Study of the Changing Workforce). Much of these data are publicly accessible, providing researchers with unique opportunities to study work-family issues over the life span and across a variety of individual contexts. Finally, the Ford Foundation's work-family intervention research during the early 1990s set the stage for subsequent workplace-focused action research (L. Bailyn, personal communication; Rapoport & Bailyn, 1996).

We systematically examined issues of work design and how we need to change organizational practices in order to meet the needs of employees to integrate work and personal life. One of the first things we found was that the same things that were preventing employees from making this integration were also not very good for meeting business goals.

(L. Bailyn, personal communication)

The Expansion Years: Work–Family Research in the 2000s

Social Context

SOCIETAL TRENDS

In the 2000s, popular press pieces continued to shape public dialogue around work–family issues. For example, Belkin’s controversial piece *The Opt-Out Revolution* (2003) argued that well-educated women were opting out of high status work positions to stay home with their families, stimulating the conversation of whether women could have it all, and what having it all really meant. Nearly a decade later, Anne Marie Slaughter reinstigated the “having it all” conversation with her famed *Atlantic Monthly* article, *Why Women Still Can’t Have It All* (2012). Shortly thereafter, Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg’s (2013) acclaimed book, *Lean In*, garnered widespread interest, proposing several ways in which women and mothers can be more assertive and “lean in” to their career paths and opportunities.

The economic prosperity of the 1990s was followed closely by a recession in the early 2000s (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002), and the composition of the workforce continued to become more diverse in terms of demographic characteristics. Women’s labor force participation hovered around 75.3% for women ages 25 to 54 years and 70.1% for women with children under 18 years of age (Mosisa & Hippie, 2006).

The structure of work and family continued to change as well. The 24/7 economy started to become the norm, and workers were constantly accessible by workplaces, resulting in blurred boundaries between work and home (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). In the 2000s, dual-earner households became the norm, with 59.1% of married households reporting dual-earner status in 2013 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Divorce also continued to increase, resulting in more divorced joint-custody families, single-parent families, and stepfamilies (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Finally, in the 2000s society became increasingly aware and accepting of gay and lesbian families, and states in the United States began

legalizing same-sex marriage (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Botelho, 2014).

Work–family issues have continued to gain traction as legislative topics in the U.S. federal government. The Obama administration focused on work–family balance and flexibility, pushing policies and practices to help employees manage work–family responsibilities (S. MacDermid-Wadsworth, personal communication). Meanwhile, work–family researchers became active lobbyists for the political work–family agenda. For example, Georgetown Law created the Workplace Flexibility 2010 initiative, a campaign bringing work–family researchers to the U.S. political table to lobby for expanded consideration of flexibility and job design for low-wage workers by presenting research-based national policy and practice recommendations (M. Perry-Jenkins, personal communication).

ORGANIZATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

The Work, Family, and Health Network (WFHN) was one of the most prominent organizations formed during this time (founded in 2005). Funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the W.T. Grant Foundation, the WFHN joined scholars from numerous institutions and disciplines across the United States initially to conduct pilot studies in several industries and later to develop and test interventions aimed at changing work conditions for employees in two contrasting corporate contexts to better understand the health implications of work–family issues. In 2012, the Sloan Work-Family Network transitioned into the Work and Family Researchers Network (WFRN). Consistent with the former organization’s mission, the WFRN seeks to promote and disseminate work–family knowledge to researchers, policy makers, and practitioners, and holds biannual conferences bringing together work–family researchers and decision makers from multiple disciplines to discuss cutting-edge research and practice issues.

Academic Research

POPULAR TOPICS

Core topics such as work–family conflict, dual-earner couples and division of labor, child health, and stress are still prominent issues in the literature. However, with many key questions and basic relationships having been established, researchers have dived deeper into the nuanced interface between work and nonwork roles.

Work–family conflict and stress research started to incorporate the moderating and mediating effects of individual differences during the expansion years such as the “big five” personality factors (e.g., Wayne, Musisca, & Fleeson, 2004), work and family saliency and values (e.g., Noor, 2004), personal characteristics such as age and race (Perry-Jenkins & MacDermid, 2012), coping styles (e.g., Lapierre & Allen, 2006), and boundary management (e.g., Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2009). Most recently, work–family research has started to shift toward person-centric work–family experiences. For example, research began examining recovery behaviors as a way to manage boundaries and reduce work–family conflict (e.g., Sonnentag, 2003). Studies also examined aspects of work–family conflict episodes, such as decision making (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2012) and health biomarkers (e.g., blood pressure, Shockley & Allen, 2013). Finally, emotional and cognitive experiences associated with work–family conflict (e.g., guilt, mindfulness; Allen, 2012) have been investigated as predictors and moderators of the relationship between work–family conflict and correlates.

Demographic shifts to dual-earner, single parent, and divorced parent families in combination with the heavy societal emphasis on mothers’ careers have also reinvigorated research on division of labor. Research demonstrates that although mothers are still the primary caregivers and fathers tend to have more paid work hours (Craig & Mullan, 2010), division of labor in the home is slowly becoming more equal (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Cultural attitudes toward gender equality in division of labor follow this trend. In her interviews with 120 young adults, Kathleen Gerson revealed cultural attitudes that favor a more egalitarian, “neotraditional” partnership, in which women are increasingly self-reliant and men favor increased household involvement while still retaining primary breadwinner status (Gerson, 2010). Unfortunately this shift increases pressure for fathers to perform well in both work and family domains, decreasing earnings and family relationship quality compared to childless men (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010).

Although flexibility and work–family formal policy research started in the inception decades, it was particularly popular in the 2000s as more organizations started to offer these benefits and supports. Studies examining the relationships between flexibility and work–family outcomes have yielded mixed results (Kelly et al., 2008). In an effort to better understand these relationships,

researchers focused on identifying and categorizing different forms of flexibility, such as flextime, telecommuting, job sharing, and child care supports (Kelly et al., 2008). Additionally, the distinction between availability and the use of flexible supports was identified as a critical factor for understanding whether employees experienced the benefits of flexibility (Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2013). Researchers also expanded consideration of family care to include elder care supports with Neal and Hammer’s (2005) sandwich generation study exploring issues for parents who care for both children and aging parents.

Work–family researchers also expanded beyond previously popular constructs and perspectives. Although work published in the 2000s still focuses largely on work–family conflict (Eby et al., 2005), the 2000s also brought a shift to focusing on positive work–family interactions. Barnett and Hyde’s (2001) review concluded that work and family domains are likely to be positive and enriching. This review opened the door for research on several positive work–family interactions, including positive work–family spillover (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000), work–family enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), and work–family facilitation (Hanson & Hammer, 2006). Researchers also focused on neutral interactions such as work–family fit (Barnett, 1998) and work–family balance (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

The 2000s were also characterized by an expanded consideration of context beyond the workplace. Research has started to more strongly consider community resources, services, and health (Voydanoff, 2007), and research involving children has expanded to include contextual factors external to the family such as peer influences and bullying (Perry-Jenkins & MacDermid, 2012). Finally, multinational and cross-cultural studies began to examine the generalizability of theory and empirical results across multiple countries and cultures (Allen, 2012).

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

In addition to theories defined in earlier decades, several new theoretical perspectives developed during this time. Border and boundary theory (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000) proposed that individuals’ work and family roles are separated by boundaries, which range from highly integrated to segmented and can vary in permeability. Work–family enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) is another theory that helped to shape much of the research on positive work–family interaction, and

Westman's (2001) crossover theory helped shape research on how work and family issues influence other individuals in the immediate work and family environments such as spouses and co-workers. Finally, Greenhaus and Powell (2012) published theory to guide research on choosing between work and family during a work–family conflict episode.

Theoretical critiques from previous decades still linger today as recent reviews lament the lack of theoretical development guiding the field, overuse of poorly delineated theory, and poorly defined constructs (Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011). In addition, the wide variety of constructs that proliferated during the expansion years begs the question of how they all fit together. Indeed, in our discussion with Sheldon Zedeck, he emphasized a need to reassess where we have been theoretically and how to move forward by integrating what we have learned (personal communication). Lotte Bailyn also reflected this sentiment.

There's lots of knowledge out there, but it doesn't somehow come together.

(L. Bailyn, personal communication)

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Although cross-sectional, single source designs are still the most common methodological approach, multisource and longitudinal data continue to gain traction (Casper et al., 2007). Some of the most influential research in the 2000s has been conducted using multiple sources and longitudinal panel data to examine work–family issues from multiple perspectives across the life course (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Additionally, experience sampling methodology (Alliger & Williams, 1993) furthered our understanding of how individuals experience daily work and family role interactions (e.g., Shockley & Allen, 2013). Researchers began to incorporate objective data such as physical health (e.g., blood pressure; Shockley & Allen, 2013) and Occupational Information Network (O*NET) data (e.g., Johnson & Allen, 2013). Researchers during these decades also started to include more diverse and underrepresented samples, including low-income individuals, racial and ethnic minorities, and individuals with varying family structures (Perry-Jenkins & MacDermid, 2012).

Methods accounting for data dependencies, including dyadic data analysis, hierarchical linear modeling, and multilevel structural equation modeling, have also been applied to model daily experiences of individuals, change trajectories, and work–family relationships across individual, family,

and organizational levels (Allen, 2012). Maureen Perry-Jenkins spoke specifically about the contributions of these advanced methods.

What has surprised me, in my own work and that of others, is that comparing group averages and mean levels of change tells a very different story than when examining different trajectories for individuals or subgroups, which we can do using hierarchical linear models. We were able to look at trajectories of change and different patterns of changes and that has been ground breaking. It changed the way I pursue my research and think about outcomes.

(M. Perry-Jenkins, personal communication)

Work–family intervention research is still a rarity in the field (Allen, 2012). Most recently, the Work, Family, and Health Network conducted several groundbreaking intervention studies in two phases of research (see Bray et al., 2013). During the first phase, several intervention studies were conducted, including one aimed at increasing flexibility and promoting a “results only work environment” in a white-collar organization (Kelly, Moen, & Tranby, 2011) and another focused on training grocery store supervisors to be more supportive of family demands (Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner, & Zimmerman, 2011). In their second phase, the researchers are investigating the effects of a combined intervention targeting both family-supportive supervision and control over work scheduling in both a healthcare industry sample and Information Technology (IT) organization. Results of this methodologically rigorous randomized controlled trial are currently being published (e.g., Kelly et al., 2014), and data will be made available to the public in the coming years for further analysis.

Finally, with the sprawling proliferation of work–family research came the need to summarize and review the literature. Meta-analytic techniques met this need, resulting in several work–family meta-analyses in the expansion years. Kossek and Ozeki (1998) and Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton (2000) were among the first to examine the relationship between work–family conflict and its correlates. These early meta-analyses were followed by a steady stream of meta-analyses focusing on a variety of topics including work–family conflict antecedents, formal organizational benefits, stressors, personality, involvement, support, and satisfaction (e.g., Allen et al., 2013; Byron, 2005).

The Future: Work–Family Research in 2015 and Beyond

Our review of societal trends and legislation, key organizations and foundations, popular topics,

theoretical developments, and methodological techniques through the decades sets the stage for an exciting question: What does the future hold for the work–family field? Our interviewees had several thoughts on this question:

In the societal context, the “bigger picture” will play an important role. . .

We need to keep track of the population trends. What kinds of choices are people making about family formation, fertility, retirement? Those broad, big decisions that frame a life.

(A. Crouter, personal communication)

. . . and changes to family definition and structure will drive our focus.

These constructs of work and family are social constructions. If you really look at the structure of families over the past 20 years it's been changing dramatically. We leave out so many people. When we go in we target a mother and child, sometimes mother and father and a child, but there are other people living in the home that we don't talk to. Family structure is changing but we continue to do our research on the family structure that we think exists, that we constructed in our literature. As we move ahead, we must look beyond the nuclear family.

(M. Perry-Jenkins, personal communication)

We may see a lot more attention to gay families in the next 10 years. There will be better attention to diversity and representativeness of samples.

(S. MacDermid-Wadsworth, personal communication)

Changes in careers and family over the life course will necessitate new approaches from individuals and organizations. . .

We will see a lot of attention given to intergenerational issues. The millennial generation is moving into the work force in large numbers, and the baby boomers are going to be increasingly moving out. Caregiving is going to get a lot of attention in the coming decades.

(S. MacDermid-Wadsworth, personal communication)

I would love to do a study looking at part-time or phased retirement policies, for example, or policies enabling older workers to bridge from their current jobs to other paid or unpaid work.

(P. Moen, personal communication)

. . . with the ultimate goal of having a larger impact on society as a whole.

Work–family scholarship has much to say about policy and practice, but it is buried in academic journals. We

need to also write for social media and more widely-read outlets and participate in larger policy debates.

(P. Moen, personal communication)

To meet these goals, we must become more organized as an interdisciplinary field.

There has been a bit of a void in terms of the institutional supports the field needs to pull itself together and to develop a coherent trajectory. The danger if we're not able to do that is that we will keep reinventing the wheel. Every new generation will discover the same issues and problems that an earlier generation talked about, or one discipline will discover something that another discipline had been talking about for years. The good news is that a new organization, the Work and Family Researchers Network, was recently launched, and its recent conference brought together over 1,000 participants from 42 countries.

(K. Gerson, personal communication)

In our quest for societal impact, academic research will examine exciting new topics. . .

I think the next big construct to evolve and become important is, for a lack of a better term, work–family or work–life balance. What it really boils down to is the extent to which people are able to be effective, satisfied, and fulfilled in a variety of different roles in their lives. I think that should be the target of research. To better understand how people put together different parts of their lives so that they can accomplish things.

(J. Greenhaus, personal communication)

We need to study how policies can be changed to make work life more compatible with other dimensions of life for both women and men regardless of their occupational level or stage of the life course. I believe the construct of fit, the degree of match or mismatch between demands, resources, and needs will be increasingly fruitful. Thus it may not be simply work hours that are problematic, but whether or not workers are working the hours they want.

(P. Moen, personal communication)

. . . and revisit the basics.

I would like to have a more nuanced understanding of gender issues. Not only men versus women, but really how gender is constructing this whole area. Men's roles are changing. I think men are more constrained, in some ways, these days than women are. I would like to see researchers both theoretically and empirically think more sophisticatedly about how gender plays into everything.

(L. Bailyn, personal communication)

We can't just control for biological sex. Recognizing that men and women similarly and differently pursue careers and play out different parts of their lives, and then to ignore that, to control for sex, I don't think really gets at really important work–family issues that we have to understand better.

(J. Greenhaus, personal communication)

We will further organize our theoretical toolbox. . .

We need to start consolidating some of our theories and trying to understand when they are actually saying the same thing. For example, there are multiple theories that talk about stress and spillover, and they almost seem to me like they are saying the same thing, just from different disciplines. That's a big challenge for an interdisciplinary field.

(M. Perry-Jenkins, personal communication)

. . . and test ideas using purposeful, sophisticated methodology. . .

The greatest potential for growth lies in natural experiments and field experiments that test the value of interventions changing the temporal organization of work.

(P. Moen, personal communication)

I'd like to see some long-term longitudinal studies. For example, what is the effect on young people coming out of school during this terrible period for employment? What is going to happen ten years, fifteen years down the road to these people? Do they ever make it up, do they not?

(R. Barnett, personal communication)

Taking an episodic approach rather than a chronic approach to certain work–family issues is the way to go.

(J. Greenhaus, personal communication)

Work with biomarkers is exploding. There is constant interest in new kinds of biomarkers and less intrusive methods to study them. Technology and geographic information systems will also open up the possibilities of data on where families live and work to much richer objective data on the quality of the neighborhoods that they live in that can enrich studies in terms of what we know about context.

(A. Crouter, personal communication)

. . . developed by teams of interdisciplinary scholars, expanding what we know about the intersection of work and life.

One of the exciting things about being a researcher today, compared to when I was in graduate school,

is I think the world is much more encouraging of interdisciplinary research. For this generation of grad students, post-doc, young faculty, that's what will be the norm. Working in interdisciplinary groups, submitting larger multidisciplinary projects, thinking about and forcing oneself to understand a phenomenon through different disciplines. That is exciting!

(A. Crouter, personal communication)

In sum, it is clear that although work–family research has come far, we still have so much left to learn.

I never get bored. I never wake up and say "oh, these problems are solved and these questions are answered!" It seems that every time we answer one question in this area, it raises multiple new ones. So there's a lot of work to be done, and it is inspirational work.

(K. Gerson, personal communication)

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the interviewees, Lotte Bailyn, Rosalind Barnett, Ann Crouter, Kathleen Gerson, Jeff Greenhaus, Shelley MacDermid-Wadsworth, Phyllis Moen, Joseph Pleck, Maureen Perry-Jenkins, and Sheldon Zedeck, for their time, insights, resources, and suggestions. Our chapter would not have been complete without their diverse and enlightening perspectives. We would also like to thank Debra Heffner and Jenna-Lyn Roman for their transcription work, as well as Soner Dumani for his helpful thoughts and comments in reviewing this work.

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Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Work and Family: Avoiding Stagnation via Effective Theory Borrowing

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Abstract

In an effort to move the field forward work–family scholars continue to evaluate their research with an ever-increasing critical eye. Yet, one area work–family scholars often struggle with is the development and application of theory. Building on previous discussions of theory within the literature, we focus on five theories (i.e., social-exchange theory, person–environment fit theory, adaptation theory, affective events theory, and theory of planned behavior) that have the potential to propel work–family scholarship forward. Also provided in the chapter is a discussion concerning how some theories are misused in the literature. Throughout the chapter, particular emphasis is placed on discussing steps researchers may take to further develop, apply, and refine theories when examining the work–family interface.

Key Words: work–family interface, theory testing, social-exchange theory, person–environment fit theory, adaptation theory, affective events theory, theory of planned behavior, work–family conflict

Across the various qualitative and quantitative reviews of the work–family literature (e.g., Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, & Lambert, 2007; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005), two basic themes consistently present themselves. First, the work–family interface is complicated and is becoming more so with continued demographic shifts, evolving technologies, and the changing nature of work (Major & Germano, 2006). Second, more research is needed to help better understand how working adults manage their work and family lives so that effective interventions, policies, and practices can be developed and implemented.

Although there is an abundance of directions work–family research may take over the next decade, there are issues facing our field that have the potential to significantly limit the contribution we make toward improving employee well-being and organizational effectiveness (Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011). One area with which work–family scholars

continue to struggle is the application of theory. In preparing to write this chapter, we surveyed 113 pre-eminent work–family scholars regarding the status of theory within the field: 89% of respondents indicated that it is either *very* or *extremely important* that work–family scholars effectively incorporate theory into their research. Yet, only 31% believed that scholars are either *very* or *extremely effective* in incorporating theory into research. As Klein and Zedeck (2004) note, we often receive abundant graduate training on research and quantitative methods, but are generally left to our own devices when it comes to understanding the development and application of theory.

Characteristics of a good theory include providing comprehensive, logical, and clear description or explanation of Who? What? Where? When? How? and most importantly, Why? (Van de Ven, 1989), accounting for as many empirical findings as possible; being testable, refutable, and

parsimonious; and fecundity, or being productive in terms of opening up new ways of thinking about a phenomenon (Wacker, 1998). This explanatory potential is what separates a theory from a hypothesis, a concept, a framework, or a model. For example, although spillover has been referred to as a “theory” (Madsen & Hammond, 2005), it seems more accurate to describe spillover as a process in which experiences in one domain (e.g., work) affect experiences and outcomes in another domain (e.g., family) rather than a theory that thoroughly explains why things occur or specifies testable propositions. Within the work–family field, given the numerous disciplines contributing to our scholarship, each emphasizing its own theoretical paradigms, our ability to develop a comprehensive set of theoretical frameworks to help guide hypothesis testing has been hindered (Voydanoff, 2007), opening the field up to criticism (Eby et al., 2005).

This is certainly not the first chapter written summarizing the status of theory within the work–family literature (e.g., Bellavia & Frone, 2005). In fact, Greenhaus and ten Brummelhuis (2013) recently published an excellent review of five macro frameworks that have been used to guide much of the existing work–family research. Specifically, they emphasize general frameworks around the concepts of work–family conflict and enrichment drawing on role theory conservation of resources theory, boundary theory, decision-making frameworks, and ecological systems theory. Additionally, Greenhaus and ten Brummelhuis (2013) provide commentary on how these different frameworks interconnect and extend the work–family literature.

To build on these previous discussions we take a different approach by focusing on five theories that we believe have the potential to, if systematically applied, propel work–family scholarship forward. To provide context around our discussion, we first report on results of our survey to better understand where work–family research is being published. After reviewing the five theories, we shift gears to provide a discussion concerning how some theories are misused (or overused) in the literature; based on feedback from our survey of work–family scholars, we position conservation of resources theory as one such theory. We draw on the concept of *theory borrowing* (Murray & Evers, 1989) as a framework that may help guide work–family scholars seeking to effectively apply theories from other disciplines. We close the chapter with a discussion of steps researchers may take to further develop, apply, and refine theories when examining the work–family interface.

Defining the Field: Publishing Theory-Based Work–Family Research

As part of the goal of understanding the status and use of theory within the field, we believed it important to have an understanding of where theoretically comprehensive work–family research is being published. Given the broad base of fields contributing to work–family scholarship, we contacted members of the Work and Family Researchers Network (WFRN), an international organization representing interdisciplinary work–family scholars. Based on membership records, we identified 274 members involved primarily in research (student members were excluded). Data were obtained from 113 scholars (response rate = 41.2%). Our sample was 96.2% academic (2.8% practitioner) from 12 countries (77.2% from the United States). A third of the respondents (35.7%) indicated their discipline as business, management, human resources, organizational behavior, organizational studies, or industrial relations. Another 28.6% indicated their discipline as psychology, and 31% indicated their discipline was sociology, social work, or family studies. On average respondents had 11.1 ($SD = 6.95$) years of research experience within the field, and 60% indicated they had five or more work–family-related publications.

Respondents were first asked to make a series of ratings for a set of 36 journals. This chapter’s authors identified journals publishing work–family scholarship by reviewing various research databases and using keywords such as work–family conflict/enrichment, dual earner, and spillover. To ensure the rating of the journals was a reasonable exercise for respondents, these 36 journals were selected to be *representative* of the field, not exhaustive of journals publishing work–family research. Respondents were asked to make four ratings for each journal based on five-point Likert-type scales: their familiarity with the journal, the perceived theoretical rigor of the journal, its methodological rigor, and its influence on the field.

Responses were filtered such that only scores in which respondents were at least “somewhat familiar” with the journal (i.e., a score of three or more) were included in our analyses (each journal had a minimum of six raters at least somewhat familiar with the journal), with an average of 38.6. We then averaged responses to obtain a theory, method, and influence score for each journal. Not surprising, across the 36 journals, theoretical rigor covaried strongly with both methodological rigor ($r = .97, p < .01, n = 36$) and perceived influence

($r = .94$, $p < .01$, $n = 36$), as well as the journal's impact factor ($r = .77$, $p < .01$, $n = 36$). What is clear, albeit not surprising, is that theory, methods, and influence go hand-in-hand. However, this background does not do justice to *why* work–family scholars should strive to embrace theory application within their own research.

The Value of Making a Meaningful Theoretical Contribution

Our goal is not to provide an encompassing primer on what a good theory is and is not; this has already been effectively done (e.g., Campbell, 1990; Klein & Zedeck, 2004). Rather, we hope to provide a compelling argument for why work–family scholars should be excited about the application of good theory within their own research.

When preparing a manuscript, one of the most challenging tasks for many scholars, including those in the work–family arena, is to ensure the proper balance between an adequate review of the existing literature while also presenting a compelling rationale for the research under consideration. Using good theory to guide research is the natural solution to this dilemma. Good theories are ones that go beyond linking ideas and constructs together; rather they explain *why* they are related. Furthermore, at the core, good theories are exciting and illicit new and novel research. Work–family scholars who effectively leverage theory will avoid the temptation of overcomplicating their conceptual model with “constructs, propositions, boxes, and arrows” (Klein & Zedeck, 2004, p. 932). In doing so, these scholars effectively guide the reader toward novel and focused understandings of why the work–family interface behaves the way it does. Also, scholars are better able to select how best to operationalize their constructs *and* can do so with convincing arguments for why the operationalization makes sense. Thus, good theory also facilitates hypothesis formation, and in turn, the analytics applied to test those propositions.

Propelling the Field Forward: Theoretical Paradigms within the Work–Family Literature

Existing theories can be classified into three categories: established paradigms, developing paradigms, and emerging paradigms. *Established paradigms* are those theories that have been consistently applied to work–family research. Theories best representing this category include role theory, conservation of resources theory, boundary theory, and

systems theory (e.g., family and ecological system theories). In our survey of work–family scholars, when asked to indicate theories most applicable to the examination of the work–family interface, of the 201 responses, these four theories represented 46% of responses. Because this class of theories has been reviewed by Greenhaus and ten Brummelhuis (2013), we focus on the two remaining categories: developing and emerging paradigms.

Developing paradigms are theories that are not exactly new to the field but have the potential to continue to be effectively leveraged; developing theories are classified not on their absolute newness (some of these theories have been around for a long time) but rather their relative newness to the work–family literature. We briefly introduce two such theories, social-exchange theory and person–environment fit theory, and focus on avenues in which these theories may be further applied to work–family research. *Emerging paradigms* are theories that have been applied in other research but rarely to work–family scholarship. Within this section, we focus on adaptation theory, affective events theory, and theory of planned behavior as archetypes of how work–family scholars may wish to approach the application of new theories within the field.

Developing Paradigms

SOCIAL-EXCHANGE THEORY (SET)

SET is founded on the argument that in a social relationship, individuals form exchange relationships with one another based on a series of interactions that subsequently generate obligations for both parties (Emerson, 1976; for a larger review see Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The application of SET, and its corollaries (i.e., leader–member exchange theory), to the examination of the work–family interface has been steadily increasing.

At the heart of SET is what researchers call a reciprocal relationship between relationship partners, suggesting an interdependence between two people that includes mutual agreement and benefit. A reciprocal relationship is proposed to form only if both parties provide resources that are deemed valuable to the other person. There are six generally recognized types of resources that individuals can give in a social-exchange relationship: love, status, information, money, goods, and services. Furthermore, each of the resources falls along two dimensions, *particularism*, which considers the resource's value to the receiving party, and *concreteness*, which considers the tangibility of the resource (Cropanzano

& Mitchell, 2005; Foa & Foa, 1980). Ultimately, social-exchange relationships result in trust, appreciation, and a sense of obligation, providing benefit to both parties. Furthermore, social-exchange theorists have proposed various rules and norms that are purported to guide the exchange relationships (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). That is, implicit to SET is the argument that social-exchange relationships evolve over time, and that this process is governed by these rules and norms. For example, the theory lays out rules associated with reciprocity (i.e., repayment), as well as rules that guide various decision-making processes.

SET has given rise to numerous other theories. Specific to the work–family literature, one of the most influential of these is leader–member exchange (LMX). Within LMX, the social-exchange relationship develops between a supervisor and his or her subordinate. LMX has been consistently linked to a number of positive outcomes for employees, including higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and well-being, as well as lower turnover intentions (e.g., Gerstner & Day, 1997). To this end, work–family scholars have emphasized the importance of the supervisor in shaping subordinate experiences of the work–family interface. Based on 65 studies ($N = 56,636$), Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, and Hammer (2011) found a significant negative relationship between supervisor support for work–family and work–family conflict. Thus, several scholars have argued that LMX theory offers unique value as a tool for mitigating work–family conflict (e.g., Major & Morganson, 2011).

In the earliest work–family/LMX research, LMX was found to be negatively associated with work–family conflict (Bernas & Major, 2000; Major, Fletcher, Davis, & Germano, 2008). More recently, consistent with a deeper theoretical examination of LMX processes, Matthews and Toumbeva (2015) examined the dynamic interplay between LMX and other critical work–family-related constructs. Consistent with social-exchange theory, Matthews and Toumbeva demonstrated that LMX and family-supportive supervision are dynamically reciprocally related. That is, employees who receive family-supportive supervision are more likely to report that they have a positive LMX relationship with their supervisor in the future, but that over-time, employees in a high LMX relationship are more likely to experience family-supportive supervision. A primary theoretical implication than is that for scholars interested in examining LMX and other family-related resources, positioning one as

the “cause” of another, especially in a cross-sectional design, may mask the complex dynamic interplay between the constructs.

LMX quality has also been found to mediate the relationship between supervisor family-supportiveness and work outcomes (Bagger & Li, 2014). Though not an empirical test, Major and Morganson (2011) draw from LMX theory to articulate how a high-quality supervisor–subordinate relationship relates to effective work–family coping. They argued that high-quality leader–member relationships are more likely to result in supervisory attempts to help members cope with their work–family issues, as well as supervisors who suggest problem-focused solutions, such as giving employees the freedom to choose when and where to work (i.e., flextime and flexplace) to alleviate work–family conflict (Major & Morganson, 2011).

Moving forward, SET and LMX provide a foundation for research designed to better understand effective interventions, policies, and practices that can help people manage work and family. Although research typically examines the relation between resources (e.g., availability and/or use of family supportive policies, or supervisor support) and employee attitudes and behaviors, SET provides greater insight into what (e.g., concreteness of resources), for whom (e.g., those who most value a resource), how (e.g., establishing greater trust or appreciation), and why (e.g., felt reciprocity) support-based interventions might relate to attitudes and behaviors.

We encourage researchers to comprehensively consider and test multiple elements of a theory. For example, within LMX theory, researchers might examine *what* resources are exchanged that have the most meaningful impact on the work–family interface, and might also examine the agreement between supervisor–subordinate pairs regarding resource exchange. This may shed light on *why* supervisors participate in social-exchange relationships. In addition, considering specifically what resources are exchanged may strengthen interventions and/or policies directed at increasing high supervisor–subordinate LMX relationships. Furthermore, researchers may examine the obligation and felt-responsibility components of SET, considering how specifically a supervisor’s felt-responsibility for engaging in supportive supervision may play a role in the resources supervisors provide their subordinates. Finally, testing the proponents of SET in regard to co-worker relationships and examining how social exchange

among co-workers contributes to work–family constructs (e.g., work–family conflict, work–family facilitation, work–family spillover) may also prove beneficial.

PERSON–ENVIRONMENT (PE) FIT THEORY

PE fit theorists argue that strain is a result of a mismatch between the person and the environment (Lewin, 1951; Murray, 1938). Theoretically, individuals can reduce the mismatch between the person and the environment through either coping mechanisms, which involve changing the objective (or actual) realities, or defensive strategies, which change the subjective (or perceived) realities, of the person or the environment. It is the subjective evaluations, perhaps more than the objective conditions, that have the ability to produce strain.

There are four elements that can be used to assess the person and the environment: demands, abilities, needs, and supply. *Demands* refer to requirements, expectations, and social norms placed on an individual by the environment. *Abilities* are the skills, time, and energy an individual has to meet environmental demands. A mismatch between environmental demands and individual abilities can lead to increased levels of strain (Lewin, 1951; Murray, 1938). Alternatively, *needs* refer to innate values or drivers an individual feels and *supplies* are extrinsic and intrinsic rewards that is received relative to their needs. PE fit theory asserts that individuals will feel strain when there is a mismatch between needs and supplies.

As PE fit theory has evolved, arguments have been made that there are a host of individual and organizational characteristics that can be assessed to determine fit including goals, values, needs, and interests (Judge & Cable, 1997; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Also, arguments have been developed for different conceptualizations of environment, including vocation, job, organization, group, and supervisor, giving rise to several distinct, albeit conceptually and empirically related, forms of fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). To a certain degree these different forms of fit can be nested within one another. That is, first person–organization fit describes the fit, for example, between an individual’s goals or values and his or her organization’s goals or values. The interpersonal compatibility of an individual with his or her work group is termed person–group fit. In turn, the fit between an individual and his or her supervisor is conceptualized as person–supervisor fit. And finally,

person–job fit relates to the degree to which, for example, an individual’s knowledge, skills, and abilities match that of the job requirements (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Scholars have suggested that PE fit theory offers new and unique ways to examine the work–family interface (Edwards & Rothbard, 2005). Initial research suggests that demands–abilities and needs–supplies are typically compared along the same dimension (i.e., either work or family); however, some aspects of each are general enough that they can cut across domains (Edwards & Rothbard, 2005). For example, managing subordinates and children can cut across both domains and fall under “responsibility for others” as a general demand and relationships with co-workers and with their spouse can fall under the general need of “relationships with others” (Edwards & Rothbard, 2005). These abilities–demands and needs–supplies relationships have been shown to be associated with psychological, physical, and behavioral strains. PE fit suggests that some of these strains are specific to work or family, whereas others are more general strains and can be felt across domains (Edwards & Rothbard, 2005). For example, negative affect may be domain-specific and impact only the work or family domain, whereas anxiety might initiate in one domain but impact both domains. These strains are said to arise due to needs exceeding supplies or demands exceeding abilities. In addition, it is important to note that it has also been suggested that strain may also increase, remain constant, or decrease when abilities surpass demands and when supplies surpass needs, such that simply increasing supplies and abilities will not necessarily alleviate strain (Edwards & Rothbard, 2005).

The PE fit literature suggests that within work and family individuals reduce strain by either coping or using defensive mechanisms (Edwards & Rothbard, 2005). Individuals might cope through reducing their job demands or taking classes to increase their skills and knowledge. They might participate in defense through ignoring demands or overestimating their organization or parenting skills. It is important to note that PE fit theory suggests that centrality plays an important role in how we experience strain within the domains of work and family. Research suggests that centrality moderates the relationship between PE fit and strain, such that the more important a domain is to an individual, the more strain she or he will feel as a result of a mismatch between person and environment (Edwards & Rothbard, 1999).

Moving forward, we argue that the PE fit theory offers useful avenues in which to frame work–family scholarship. Whereas work–family research has typically focused on stressors or resources as the primary antecedents of conflict and enrichment, PE fit theory suggests that primary antecedents are the fit between demands–abilities and needs–supplies. As such, work–family scholars might examine not only people’s demands (or needs) but also their abilities (and supplies) and either their objective relationship (does the individual’s abilities exceed his or her demands in his or her work or family role) or the individual’s perceptions that his or her abilities (or supplies) exceed his or her demands (or needs). Practically speaking then, work–family scholars, based on PE fit theory, would move beyond looking at the incremental prediction of demands and abilities, but would consider needs and supplies relative to one another. For example, based on PE fit theory, the relative influence of family-supportive supervision should be less for someone who has limited family demands, relative to someone who has significantly more family demands. That is, family-supportive supervision should impact strain outcomes only to the degree to which someone requires the support. This would be a distinct departure from past research that generally assumes linear relationships between stressors and resources and strain-related outcomes (Casper et al., 2007).

An additional way to apply PE fit theory, which would have both conceptual and methodological implications, would be to apply it to a dyadic context by applying the conceptualization of person–supervisor fit, or potentially even person–partner fit. In such a context, scholars might wish to examine the fit, or agreement, between relationship partners. Atwater and Yammarino (1997) have developed a process model of self–other rating agreement in which they propose that in-agreement ratings that are “good” (i.e., self–other are similarly high) should be related to better outcomes than in-agreement ratings that are “bad” (i.e., self–other ratings are similarly low). For example, in a context in which a manager actually provides a high level of family-supportive supervision, and an employee perceives this support, the best outcomes should be observed, especially relative to a situation in which the supervisor reports of family-supportive supervision are low, and the employee similarly perceives a low level of support. However, consistent with Atwater and Yammarino (1997) and PE fit theory, what may be particularly interesting is what happens when there is disagreement. In other words, when supervisors

report high levels of family-supportive supervision but the employee does not perceive it (supervisor is an overestimator), does that lead to worse outcomes than when supervisors report low levels of family-supportive supervision but the employee perceives high levels of family-supportive supervision?

In summary, these two theories, SET and PE fit, are “developing theories” that have been used in the work–family literature, have demonstrated promise empirically, and hold great potential for additional research. Two “emerging” theories that to our knowledge have not been incorporated into the work–family literature but that hold great promise are adaptation theory and affective events theory.

Emerging Paradigms

ADAPTATION THEORY

Adaptation theory is based on the general premise that when an individual experiences a stressor, after an initial decrease in well-being, over time they will adapt to this stressor and return to baseline levels of well-being; a reverse pattern is predicted for positive stimuli (Frederick & Loewenstein, 1999). Evolutionarily speaking, adaptation is seen as critical to ensure that people do not become overwhelmed by their emotions and continue to be able to attend to new and different stimuli (Lyubomirsky, 2011). Adaptation has been found to occur even for some of the most traumatic life-changing events (e.g., Luhmann, Hofmann, Eid, & Lucas, 2012). As such, the adaptation process has been used to explain why people generally report relatively high levels of well-being, despite the prevalence of life stressors (Diener & Diener, 1996). Similarly, adaptation theory could also be used to examine how people react to work–family stressors (e.g., situational and chronic) and the experience of strain over time.

Several mechanisms have been proposed to explain the adaptation process (Lyubomirsky, 2011). Various cognitive processes may be at play in terms of goals and values, as well as attention paid to stimuli. For example, after experiencing significant work–family conflict, reflecting on our values and/or setting boundaries across work and family may help a person adapt faster to the negative impacts of work–family conflict on our well-being. Behavioral efforts may also affect the adaptation process in terms of, for example, seeking out social support. In the instance of increasing family demands, for example, an individual may seek out instrumental or emotional support as a means to adapt to and deal with family–work conflict.

Extending adaptation theory to the work–family literature, Matthews, Wayne, and Ford (2014) suggest that although individuals experience short-term decrements in well-being when they experience work–family conflict, over time they adapt and are eventually able to again experience positive well-being. Contrary to expectations grounded in stress reaction models (e.g., conservation of resources theory) but consistent with adaptation theory, Matthews et al. (2014) found evidence for a positive cross-lagged (i.e., longitudinal) effect between work–family conflict and subjective well-being after accounting for concurrent levels of work–family conflict and past levels of subjective well-being. That is, individuals who experienced work–family conflict, as a relatively stable stressor (i.e., chronic), experienced a concurrent drop in well-being, but adjusted (i.e., adapted) to the experience over time, and in turn, experienced more positive well-being (after the initial drop in well-being).

Beyond the conceptual implications associated with the application of adaptation theory, the theory also has several important methodological implications. For example, adaptation theory naturally lends itself to events-based research (Maertz & Boyar, 2011) in that the majority of extant research on the theory deals with the effects of major life events. For example, within the work–family arena, returning to work after the birth of a child marks a major life event. Conceptually, coinciding with a return to work, working parents are likely to experience a host of different stressors (i.e., stimuli). Some of these stimuli are likely to be positively valenced, such that individuals may have an expanded sense of self or may feel a greater sense of purpose and meaning in their life. Alternatively, some of these stimuli are likely to be negatively valenced, such as more time pressure in trying to meet the new demands of being a parent while also managing ongoing work demands. Additionally, with the birth of their child, parents may experience an initial reduction in their social network in that they may no longer have the opportunity (time or ability) to interact with the same people as they did before the birth of the child. Examining how parents adapt to these stressors would shed light on how people effectively return to work as well as maintain a positive sense of well-being.

Additionally, this would be an excellent opportunity to examine potential gender differences (Ahmad, King, & Anderson, 2013). That is, men and women may adapt to positive and negative stimuli differently, with potentially important

implications for their well-being. Drawing on, for example, sexual selection theory may help to substantiate research questions around gender and adaptation in that the theory operates under the assumption that men and women, over the course of evolutionary history, have faced different adaptive problems, resulting in men and women employing different strategies for environmental stressors (Archer, 1996). As such, adaptation mechanisms (cognitive processes, behavioral efforts, and physiological processes) may be differentially implemented by men and women.

Another potential application of this theory involves adaptation to positive stimuli in that in the adaptation literature there is on-going debate regarding the premise that individuals adapt to positive stimuli faster than they adapt to negative stimuli (Lyubomirsky, 2011). This differential pattern of predictions could be examined in the context of understanding work–family enrichment and work–family conflict. Conceptually, enrichment is associated with better outcomes such as more positive life and role attitudes (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Consistent with various premises ground in adaptation theory, perceptions and effects of work–family enrichment on positive life and role attitudes should be more short-lived (i.e., people should adapt to faster) than the perceptions and effects of work–family conflict as a negative stimulus.

In sum, adaptation theory is particularly well suited to answer questions about how work–family experiences unfold over time and whether (and how long it takes) people to adapt to positive and negative stimuli. For example, when new resources are experienced, do employees experience an increase in work–family enrichment and, if so, is it sustained over time or does it return to baseline quickly? Are the processes similar for adaptation to role demands? Furthermore, what are the cognitive, emotional, and other adaptive processes that explain when, how, and under what conditions adaptation to positive and negative work–family stimuli occurs?

AFFECTIVE EVENTS THEORY (AET)

AET focuses on explaining the relationship between features of the work environment and behaviors through affect and attitude (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). AET theorists propose that the work environment is composed of a series of temporally bound discrete events in which these events are a function of (i.e., the result of and driven by) various features in the work environment. These events influence the development of affective reactions

(e.g., mood, emotions), which result in affect-driven behaviors at work (Weiss & Cropanzano; 1996).

As we noted, good theories are ones that evolve with testing and refinement. To this end, Dalal (2013) suggests that within AET, features of the work environment also drive the development of cognitive evaluations of the job (i.e., attitudes), which leads to judgment-driven behavior. Furthermore, Dalal (2013) suggests that an important theoretical consideration is that beyond job events influencing job affect, job affect and cognitive evaluations of the job are dynamically related to one another over time. An interesting implication is that AET inherently suggests that stable features of the job or work environment influence the development of stable attitudes and behaviors, which drive specific job events that, in turn, influence more dynamically related attitudes and behaviors. These dynamic attitudes and behaviors can feed back to influence cognitive evaluations of the job. To this end, a key aspect of AET is that affect changes over time (Weiss & Cropanzano; 1996). Thus, within AET, attitudes are conceptualized to be neither stored nor recalled, but rather are said to be constructed.

Specific to the work–family interface, Carlson, Kacmar, Zivnuska, Ferguson, and Whitten (2011) used AET to examine the relationship between work enrichment and job performance. Carlson et al. (2011) argued and found support for AET-based processes wherein work enrichment (work-related event) led to a positive mood (affect), which resulted in job satisfaction (attitude) and subsequently job performance (individual behavior). We would suggest that this initial study serves as an excellent lens through which to consider the potential application of AET to the examination of the work–family interface.

We suggest that AET might also be applied to the examination of work–family relationships as it relates to understudied populations, specifically, individuals who work in temporary positions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014) estimates that at the beginning of 2014, there were almost three million U.S. workers employed in temporary help services, up from approximately two million at the start of 2010. Brief and Weiss (2002) have suggested five primary work characteristic categories that result in affective reactions: stressful events, leaders, group characteristics, physical setting, and organizational rewards and punishments. To this end, temporary workers are more likely to be employed in low-wage, socially isolated, stressful work environments in which they receive limited

supervision and can be significantly disadvantaged in terms of organizational rewards and support (De Cuyper et al., 2008). Consistent with AET these features of the work environment are likely to drive various negative work events. For example, and in line with Carlson et al. (2011), they may experience more work–family conflict and less enrichment. These events would be theorized to result in poor mood states and emotions and in turn lead to affect-driven behaviors, such that they inhibit the engagement in prosocial behaviors and other citizenship type behaviors (Tenhiälä & Lount, 2013).

Conceptually and methodologically then, AET has much to offer work–family scholars. For example, drawing on AET, work–family scholars can begin to more effectively conceptualize what features of the work environment, such as stressful events, leaders, group characteristics, physical setting, and organizational rewards and punishments, might drive experiences of work–family conflict and enrichment. Furthermore, AET provides a means through which to conceptualize and distinguish between more stable work attitudes (e.g., family-supportive organizational perceptions) and relevant affective moods and emotions (e.g., happy, calm, relaxed, sad, tense, upset). Additionally, AET would help work–family scholars to conceptualize the role of time as it relates to the work–family interface (Dalal, 2013) in that AET is based on the premise that the effects of work-related events take time to manifest (i.e., concurrent designs may fail to capture the manifestation window). By extension, implicit to AET is the notion that given that moods and emotions are more transient than cognitively based attitudes, scholars should employ shorter lags between assessments (i.e., in terms of weeks, not months) to facilitate the capturing of the appropriate manifestation window. Thus, for example, experiences of work–family guilt (i.e., conceptualized generally as an emotional experience; Morgan & King, 2012) is likely to have a relatively short manifestation window in terms of its impact on affectively driven behaviors.

THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR (TPB)

The primary premise of the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1985) is that the participation of people in a behavior is a result of their intention to perform said behavior. Intention is the motivational factor behind a behavior, or put differently, our self-commitment to the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Importantly though the theory states that an individual's intention to perform a behavior is related

to his or her attitude(s) about the behavior and the subjective norms surrounding the behavior. Attitude is defined as our overall evaluation regarding the behavior and subjective norms are described as our belief regarding the importance of the behavior to significant others (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). A third driver of intention is conceptualized in terms of perceived behavioral control (PBC), suggesting that not all behaviors are within our control. PBC has been conceptualized as the perception of our ability to perform a behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Collectively then, the theory of planned behavior suggests that our attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control relate to our intention to perform a behavior, which results in our participation in the behavior (Ajzen, 1985). TPB has the potential to expand work–family research in terms of understanding what motivates individuals to participate in certain behaviors in their work and family roles such as segmenting or integrating their work and family roles, the degree of behavioral investment in each role, their use of family supportive policies, and more.

TPB, for example, could be used to help conceptualize the degree to which our attitudes (e.g., a person's satisfaction with his or her work and/or family roles), subjective norms (e.g., family-supportive work environment and/or work-supportive family norms), and/or perceived behavioral control (e.g., schedule flexibility or control, autonomy) in work and family contexts contribute to the development of stronger boundaries around work and family domains, greater behavioral investment in a role, and/or use of family-supportive policies. In addition, work–family scholars are increasingly interested in the role supervisors play in assisting subordinates in balancing their work and family lives (see, Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, & Hanson, 2009). Leveraging TPB could identify potential antecedents for why supervisors participate in family-supportive supervision. For example, supervisors who have family-supportive attitudes or high levels of perceived behavioral control or within a family-supportive culture might be more likely to participate in family-supportive supervision. In sum, TPB identifies individual (attitudes, perceived behavioral control) and work and family (subjective norms) factors that explain people's behavioral intentions when managing the work–family interface.

General Recommendations to Expand Work–Family Theory

As noted previously, of the work–family scholars we questioned, 69% indicated that as a field, we

are not effective at incorporating theory into our research. Above we have discussed five theories we think are highly relevant to the study of the work–family interface and have provided specific suggestions about how to incorporate them. Beyond these five theories specifically, work–family scholars should continue to strive to more effectively integrate theory into their research. To this end, we conclude this chapter with two final sections that deal with more general thoughts and recommendations. First, we discuss the importance of researchers taking a long-term and comprehensive theoretical perspective. Beyond that, we discuss the notion of theory borrowing as it relates to the leveraging of theories from other fields and disciplines.

Leverage Comprehensive Theory Testing

One potential way researchers can optimize theory is by taking a long-term and comprehensive view. For example, theory is likely to point to personal and situational factors that may be critical drivers of the outcomes of interest. A stronger application of theory would result in a more comprehensive test of the processes by which antecedents, work–family constructs, and outcomes relate to one another. For example, with AET, dispositional characteristics are conceptualized to have both direct effects on affective and attitudinal perceptions, as well as potentially moderate the effects that job environment and job events have on these perceptions (Dalal, 2013). In terms of work–family research, therefore, AET would emphasize the importance of studying not just the direct effect of dispositional characteristics, such as negative affectivity, but also considering the role that negative affective may play in moderating the relationship between, for example, experiences of abusive supervision (as a work event) and experiences of work–family conflict (as a job-related attitude).

Another way theory may be better utilized is by designing studies to test key theoretical propositions rather than developing hypotheses using pieces of one or more theories to support predictions. In such cases, scholars may often use statements such as “based on results reported by” or “grounded in the literature on...” As an illustration, we examined the application of conservation of resources (COR) theory within the work–family literature. First, a citation search using “conservation of resources” and “work” and “family” as key words resulted in almost 150 citations; COR theory is currently the most frequently used theory to frame work–family scholarship. Researchers often invoke COR theory

to support their prediction that fewer resources are associated with greater work–family conflict. Yet, rarely are key propositions of COR theory tested, including systematically examining the categories of resources central to the theory and other corollaries such as the primacy of resource loss (i.e., the loss of resources is more salient than resource gain), resource investment (i.e., to protect against resource loss, to recover from lost resources, or to gain more resources, an individual must invest resources), and the resource gain–loss paradox (i.e., resources gained in a context in which resources have been lost is more salient than when no resources have been lost). Furthermore, as part of our survey of work–family scholars, when asked if there was a theory they believed was misused in the literature, of the responses received, 32% noted COR theory.

Some of the issues with the application of COR theory to the examination of the work–family interface stems from the fact that the concept of “resources,” some have argued, has been ill-defined within the theory (e.g., Gorgievski, Halbesleben, & Bakker, 2011; Thompson & Cooper, 2001). That is “anything good can be considered a resource” (Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014, p. 4). Consistent with responses from our survey of work–family scholars, like many fields drawing on COR theory, work–family researchers often fail to incorporate and frame hypotheses around the stated principals, as well as consider the multiplicative nature of resources.

Potentially more problematic is the tendency for work–family scholars to examine COR theory within single-source cross-sectional designs. COR theory is a motivational stress theory that, based on the core principles and corollaries, forms the base for examining the stressor–strain process as one that unfolds over time (Hobfoll, 2011). As such, scholars cannot effectively capture resource loss and resource gain processes using cross-sectional research designs. Furthermore, it has been argued that to effectively test COR theory scholars must strive to use both observational as well as objective data (Hobfoll, 2011). Specific to the work–family interface, incorporating more objective data may be accomplished in the form of considering the role of community level constructs (e.g., poverty level, employment rate) as assessed through sources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics or the American Community Survey.

In sum, we recommend that work–family scholars work to develop and conduct studies to test key theoretical propositions while also taking into

account the various methodological and analytical implications inherent to the different theories.

Systematically Leverage Theory Borrowing

The reality is that work–family scholars are surrounded by good theories, but many of these theories have not originated with the field. Rather, work–family scholars have “borrowed” theories from other disciplines. Theory borrowing is the process by which researchers remove a theory from the original context in which it was developed and apply it to their own research to help explain some meaningful phenomena germane to that researcher and his or her discipline (Murray & Evers, 1989). Researchers generally participate in theory borrowing in one of two ways, either by applying a theory to a new context (i.e., horizontal borrowing) or by considering a theory at a different level of analysis (i.e., vertical borrowing; Whetten, Felin, & King, 2009). Although the end result of both vertical and horizontal theory borrowing can be beneficial, there are some potential pitfalls as well (Murray & Evers, 1989; Whetten et al., 2009).

Problems can occur with horizontal theory borrowing due to a lack of context sensitivity. For example, in the organizational research literature, researchers often fail to take into consideration the size or culture of an organization. Errors in vertical theory borrowing occur when researchers are not sensitive to levels of analysis. This is an issue of critical concern for researchers who seek to examine individual-level experiences aggregated up to the group or organizational level (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). It has been suggested that theory borrowing can result in errors when researchers fail to consider the substructure of a theory, or the hidden, foundational elements of the theory (Murray & Evers, 1989).

With these caveats in mind, when done correctly theory borrowing can be beneficial. For example, recent developments within COR theory provide grounded arguments for multilevel work–family research. Specifically, Hobfoll (2011) notes that some resources are universally valued (e.g., health and social support). If the tenet is that some resources are universal (e.g., social support), individuals working in the same work environment should be more likely to perceive similar levels of the construct, demonstrating intragroup agreement. Extending other principles of COR theory, work–family scholars may, for example, seek to examine the potential for aggregating perceptions