



## Questions and Answers about GENDER AND USE OF WORKPLACE POLICIES: A Sloan Work and Family Research Network Fact Sheet

### Introduction

The Sloan Work and Family Research Network has prepared Fact Sheets that provide statistical answers to some important questions about work–family and work life issues. This Fact Sheet includes statistics about Gender and Use of Workplace Policies. (Last updated: October 2008)



### How many women are in the workforce? Does this impact the availability of family friendly workplace policies?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “Women in all countries hold 40 percent of full–time jobs, 32 percent of management positions and 20 percent of executive positions” (Straub, 2007, p. 295).
- ✔ **Fact 2** “On average women, for all countries, hold 32 percent of manager positions and only 20 percent of executive positions” (Straub, 2007, p. 296).
- ✔ **Fact 3** “Organizations where women make up over 50% of the employees are more likely to have a high level of flexibility (35%) than organizations where women are less than 24 percent of the workforce (12%)” (Galinsky, Bond, & Sakai, 2008, p. 35).



### Does marital status affect how an employee defines their ideal work hours and therefore influence their use of family friendly workplace policies?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “...married men are significantly *less* likely to know about family leave than men who are not married, a difference in odds of about 32 percent” (Baird & Reynolds, 2004, p. 339).
- ✔ **Fact 2** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “Both women who remain single and women who get divorced...typically have the highest ideal work hours at the second interview (34.97 and 34.05 [hours per week] respectively), while women who remain married and (n = 1,525) the 20 women who get married between interviews tend to have the lowest ideal hours (29.38 and 29.84 respectively)” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 22).
- ✔ **Fact 3** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “...men who get divorced between interviews subsequently report the highest number of ideal hours of work (39.36) for all men” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 22).
- ✔ **Fact 4** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “...men who stay single typically report the lowest ideal hours (29.78)” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 22).



✔ **Fact 5** According to the Ecology of Careers study, "We find the least difference between men's and women's ideal work hours among employees who are younger (under 40 years of age) without children. Within this group, men's ideal is about 37 hours and women's is about 35 hours" (Moen et al., 2004, p. 22).



### Does gender impact employees' access to family friendly workplace policies?

✔ **Fact 1** According to the National Study of Employers, "women on maternity leave (52%) are much more likely than men on paternity leave (16%) to receive some replacement pay during leave" (Galinsky, Bond, & Sakai, 2008, p. 19).

✔ **Fact 2** According to the 2005 NSE, "approximately three quarters responded 'very true' to statements assessing whether men and women who must attend to family matters are equally supported by the organization (76%)" (Bond, Galinsky, Kim, & Brownfield, 2005, p. 19).

✔ **Fact 3** According to the Ecology of Careers study, "...midcourse women (age 50 and over) are the least apt to have paid vacation benefits after leaving the workforce for a brief time (only 51.4% do)" (Moen et al., 2004, p. 18).

✔ **Fact 4** According to the Ecology of Careers study, "...one in twenty (5.3%) of the men and one in ten (10.1%) of the women no longer have paid vacations by the time we interview them the second time" (Moen et al., 2004, p. 17).

✔ **Fact 5** According to the Ecology of Careers study, "...3% of men and 2% of women say paid vacations are available but that they do not take advantage of the vacation time they are eligible for" (Moen et al., 2004, p. 16).



### How many men versus women use their family friendly workplace policies?

#### Flexible Work Schedules

✔ **Fact 1** Within the IBM organization, 35% of fathers and 49% of mothers have had flexible work schedules, while 82% of fathers and 89% of mothers intend to do so in the future (Hill, Hawkins, Martinson, & Ferris, 2003).

✔ **Fact 2** "In May 2004, men continued to be somewhat more likely to have flexible schedules than women (28.1 and 26.7 percent, respectively)" (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005, p. 2).

✔ **Fact 3** "Women are somewhat more likely (79%) than men (68%) to use flextime when it is available" (Galinsky, Bond, & Hill, 2004, p. 6).



✔ **Fact 4** “Men were more likely than women to work an alternative shift (16.7 and 12.4 percent, respectively)” (United States Department of Labor, 2005, p. 3).

### Work from Home

✔ **Fact 5** Of people employed in 2001, 14.8% of males and 15.2% of females worked from home at least once a week. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003)

✔ **Fact 6** Within the IBM organization, 48% of fathers and 63% of mothers have worked at home, while 82% of fathers and 88% of mothers intend to do so in the future. (Hill, Hawkins, Martinson, & Ferris, 2003)

### Part-time Work

✔ **Fact 7** According to the National Study of the Changing Workforce: “Women are much more likely (24%) to have part-time positions in their main (or only) job as defined by their employers than men (9%)” (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p. 9).

✔ **Fact 8** “Fifty-nine percent of men in the United States who were interested in part-time employment were doubtful that they could ever use this policy, whereas only 43% of interested women felt this way” (Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2002, p. 54).

✔ **Fact 9** “Among employees who work part time, 68 percent of women and 51 percent of men do so voluntarily” (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p. 10).

### Others

✔ **Fact 10** “While there are no changes in the maximum length of caregiving leaves offered to new mothers and fathers following childbirth, new adoptive parents and employees caring for seriously ill family members, far fewer employers provide full pay during the period of maternity-related disability, now at 16 percent, down from 27 percent in 1998” (Galinsky, Bond, & Sakai, 2008, p. 6).

✔ **Fact 11** Within the IBM organization, 23% of fathers and 49% of mothers have used childcare referral, while 63% of fathers and 71% of mothers intend to use them in the future (Hill, Hawkins, Martinson, & Ferris, 2003).

✔ **Fact 12** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “...childless men over age 40 are the most apt to have and use their vacations (92.9%)” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 18).

✔ **Fact 13** Within the IBM organization, 8% of fathers and 49% of mothers stated that they had used unpaid leave, while 39% of fathers and 55% of mothers intend to use it in the future (Hill, Hawkins, Martinson, & Ferris, 2003).



### Who is more apt to take family leave, men or women?

- ❑ **Fact 1** “Women (8.57%) are significantly more likely than men (4.21%) to take a leave for most categories—newborns, sick children, and sick parents” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 880).
- ❑ **Fact 2** “Although men overall have a lower rate of leave taking than women, this difference appears to be most pronounced among White men, only 3.75% of whom take a family leave” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 880).
- ❑ **Fact 3** “Non-White men are about twice as likely, White women are 2.3 times as likely, and non-White women are 2.7 times as likely as White men to take family leaves” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 882).



### Who takes longer family leaves, men or women?

- ❑ **Fact 1** “Overall, family leaves taken by women are more than twice as long as leaves taken by men (48 versus 20 days)” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 884).
- ❑ **Fact 2** “Apart from maternity disability which does not apply to men, however, the differences in length of leave for men and women are significant only for newborns and newly adopted children, where women average almost 2 months longer leave than men (76 days versus 17 days)” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 884).
- ❑ **Fact 3** “Considering leaves longer than the 12 weeks allowed by the FMLA, women are about three times more likely than men to take such leaves. This gender difference resides primarily in leave taking to care for a newborn, where women are six times as likely as men to take a longer than allowed leave (29% versus 5%,  $p < .001$ )” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 884).
- ❑ **Fact 4** “Men appear to take longer leaves than women do to care for a sick parent (29 versus 13 days) or a sick child (19 versus 11 days). We should note, however, that these gender differences can be attributed to a few men taking very long leaves” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 884).



### How long are family leaves?

- ❑ **Fact 1** “The mean (average) length of family leave is 38 days” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 883).
- ❑ **Fact 2** “Leaves for sick children, parents, and spouses (which do not differ significantly from one another)... average between two and a little over 3 weeks in length” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 884).
- ❑ **Fact 3** “Overall, only about 15% of family leaves are longer than the 12 weeks permitted by the FMLA” (Armenia & Gerstel, 2006, p. 884).



## How do parents balance paid work and child care?

- ❑ **Fact 1** In a sample of mothers and fathers with a child aged three to fifteen months, 20% of the fathers made changes in the work arrangements to spend time with their baby. 10% reduced hours, 5% used flexi-time, 2% started shift work, 2% changed working hours, 1% worked from home, 1% reduced days (same hours), and 1% changed jobs (Smeaton, 2006).
- ❑ **Fact 2** Within the IBM organization, “58% of all parents reported that mothers were mostly responsible for childcare and only 6% reported that fathers were mostly responsible” (Hill, Hawkins, Martinson, & Ferris, 2003, p. 249).
- ❑ **Fact 3** “In 1996, approximately 18 percent of children ages 0 to 5 had their fathers as their primary caregivers while their mothers were working, attending school, or looking for work. Nineteen percent of preschool boys and 18 percent of preschool girls had their fathers as primary caregivers in 1996” (Halle, 2002).
- ❑ **Fact 4** “In 2002, both men and women in dual-earner couples with children are more likely (42% of men and 48% of women) than those in dual-earner couples without children (32% of men and 34% of women) to believe that men should earn the money and women should take care of the home and children” (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p. 4).

The Network has additional resources related to this topic.

1. Visit a topic page on Gender and Use of Workplace Policies at: <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic.php?id=28>  
Topic pages provide resources and information, including statistics, definitions, overviews & briefs, bills & statutes, interviews, teaching resources, audio/video, suggested readings, and links.
2. Visit our database of academic literature with citations and annotations of literature related to the issue of Gender and Use of Workplace Policies. You can connect to this database at:  
[http://library.bc.edu/F?func=find-b-0&local\\_base=BCL\\_WF](http://library.bc.edu/F?func=find-b-0&local_base=BCL_WF)



## References

Armenai, A., & Gerstel, N. (2006). Family leaves, the FMLA and gender neutrality: The intersection of race and gender. *Social Science Research*, 35, 871–891.

“This paper uses data from a national survey conducted under the auspices of the Congressional Commission on the Family and Medical Leave Act (Commission on Family and Medical Leave, 1996). The Employee Survey randomly sampled the telephone household population of the coterminous US aged 18 years and older who had been employed for pay any time between January 1, 1994, and the time of the interview (a time span of approximately 18 months). The design allowed for more than one respondent to be selected from a household” (p. 876).



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Baird, C.L., & Reynolds, J.R. (2004). Employee awareness of family leave benefits: The effects of family, work, and gender. *Sociological Quarterly*, 45(2), 325–353.

"The analyses use data from the young women's and young men's cohorts of the (1996) National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), a nationally representative sample...The sample is limited to employees who should be covered under the FMLA according to Public Law 103-03 (1993)...The final sample consists of 1,333 women and 1,441 men for a total sample size of 2,774" (pp. 333–334).

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Bond, J., Galinsky, E., Kim, S., & Brownfield, E. (2005). *National study of employers*. Retrieved from <http://familiesandwork.org/eproducts/2005nse.pdf>

This study was designed to build on the 1998 Business Work–Life Study and therefore provides data on changes that have occurred over the last 7 years. "The 2005 NSE sample included 1,092 employers with 50 or more employees, "66 percent are for–profit companies and 34 percent are nonprofit organizations; 44 percent operate at only one location, while 56 percent have operations at more than one location...(The survey was conducted) using telephone interviews with human resource directors. Harris Interactive staff conducted the interviews from September 23, 2004 to April 5, 2005. Employers were selected from Dun & Bradstreet lists, using a stratified random sampling procedure in which selection was proportional to the number of people employed by each company to ensure a large enough sample of large organizations. The response rate was 38 percent, based on the percentage of all companies on the call–list that completed interviews" (Bond, Galinsky, Kim, & Brownfield, 2005, p. 1).

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Bond, J.T., Thompson, C., Galinsky, E., & Prttas, D. (2002). *Highlights of the national study of the changing workforce*. New York, NY: Families and Work Institute.

"The NSCW surveys representative samples of the nation's workforce once every five years (1992, 1997, 2002). Sample sizes average 3,500, including both wage and salaried employees and self–employed workers" (Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce, 2002, p. v). Several of the questions in the National Study of the Changing Workforce were taken from or based upon questions in the Quality of Employment Survey (QES) conducted three times by the Department of Labor from 1969 to 1977. Although the NSCW is more comprehensive than the QES in addressing issues related to both work and personal life and has a stronger business perspective, having comparable data from over a 25 year period has provided a unique opportunity to look at trends over time. The 2002 NSCW uses 25 years of trend data to examine five topics in depth: women in the workforce; dual earner couples, the role of technology in employees' lives on and off the job, work–life supports on the job, and working for oneself versus someone else (Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce, 2002).

To read the Executive Summary or the press release, and to purchase the full report as a PDF E–product, please visit <http://www.familiesandwork.org/announce/2002NSCW.html>.

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Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2005). *Workers on flexible and shift schedules in 2004 summary*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/flex.nr0.htm>

"These findings were obtained from a supplement to the May 2004 Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is the monthly household survey that provides information on national employment and unemployment. In May 2004, the survey also collected information about flexible schedules, shift work, and other related topics. The data presented in this release pertain to wage and salary workers who usually worked full time (35 or more hours per week) on their main job."

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Galinsky, E., Bond, J.T. & Hill, E.J. (2004). *When work works: A status report on workplace flexibility: Who has it? Who wants it? What difference does it make?* Retrieved from <http://familiesandwork.org/3w/research/downloads/status.pdf>

"The research findings reported here are drawn mainly from Families and Work Institute's National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW). The NSCW is conducted every five years, beginning in 1992 and most recently in 2002. This representative sample of approximately 3,500 workers includes wage and salaried employees, self–employed workers, and business owners, although the data presented here pertains only to wage and salaried employees."



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Galinsky, E., Bond, J.T., & Sakai, K. (2008). *National study of employers*. Retrieved from <http://www.familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/2008nse.pdf>

2008 NSE sample includes 1,100 employers with 50 or more employees—77 percent are for profit employers and 23 percent are nonprofit organizations; 40 percent operate at only one location, while 60 percent have operations at more than one location. Interviews were conducted on behalf of Families and Work Institute by Harris Interactive, Inc.

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Halle, T. (2002). *Charting parenthood: A statistical portrait of fathers and mothers in America*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

"The report draws on thirteen federal and privately collected national surveys to present information on more than 40 measures of parenting, family formation, and fertility in a format that is accessible to broad audiences. It is intended to provide a factual foundation to improve public understanding and policymaking in each of these areas, and to inform federal agencies as they work to improve the breadth, timeliness, and quality of data on fathers and mothers."

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Hill, E.J., Hawkins, A.J., Martinson, V., & Ferris, M. (2003). Studying "working fathers": Comparing fathers' and mothers' work-family conflict, fit, and adaptive strategies in a global high-tech company. *Fathering*, 1(23), 239–261.

This study compares working fathers to working mothers from IBM on specific work-family variables. The data is from the IBM 2001 Global Work and Life Issues Survey which randomly selected IBM employees from 48 countries. After the random selection, 25,822 employees responded to the administered survey.

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Moen, P., Dempster-McClain, D., Altobelli, J., Wimonsate, W., Dahl, L., Roehling, P., & Sweet, S. (2004). *The new "middle" workforce*. Life Course Center at the University of Minnesota and the Bronfenbrenner Life Course Center (and Cornell Careers Institute) at Cornell University.

The Ecology of Careers Study involved interviewing, "a random sample of mostly middle-class employees working with various organizations and/or living in certain neighborhoods in upstate [Central and Western] New York. If they were married or living with someone, we also interviewed their partners as well [1764 men and 1712 women; 1653 couples]. The people in this study may be considered -- and consider themselves-- middle-class; most are managers, professionals, technical workers, and almost all have at least some college education. But they are a diverse group, varying by gender, age, life stage, ethnicity and country of origin, marital status, parental status, employment status, income, and ability/disability, as well as by where they live and where they work" (Moen et. al., 2004, p. 2).

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Smeaton, D. (2006). *Dads and their babies: A household analysis*. Manchester: Equal Opportunities Commission.

"This study brings together the findings from two surveys commissioned by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) investigating the use of leave by fathers from the perspective of both mothers and fathers... All the fathers were employees and in two-parent households with a child aged three to fifteen months" (p. v).

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Straub, C. (2007). A comparative analysis of the use of work-life balance practices in Europe. *Women in Management Review*, 22(4), 289–304.

"In total 14 European countries took part in the survey study conducted in 2004 by Great Place to Work. A questionnaire was sent to senior human resource managers asking them to indicate corporate practices and policies linked to human resources and work-life balance. The questionnaire was sent only to companies that had previously voluntarily taken part in a best companies or best workplace selection process. In total, 854 companies took part in the survey" (p. 293).



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U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Division of Labor Force Statistics (2005). *Household data annual averages*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/pop.pdf>

"While the primary purpose of the CPS is to obtain monthly statistics on the labor force, it also serves as a vehicle for inquiries on other subjects. Using CPS data, the Bureau issues a series of publications under the general title of Current Population Reports, which cover population characteristics (P20), consumer income (P60), special studies (P23), and other topics. Estimates of population characteristics based on the CPS will not agree with the counts from the census because the CPS and the census use different procedures for collecting and processing the data for racial groups, the Hispanic population, and other topics. Caution should also be used when comparing estimates for various years because of the periodic introduction of changes into the CPS. Beginning in January 1994, a number of changes were introduced into the CPS that effect all data comparisons with prior years. These changes include the results of a major redesign of the survey questionnaire and collection methodology and the introduction of 1990 census population controls, adjusted for the estimated undercount. Beginning with the 2001 CPS Annual Demographic Supplement the independent estimates used as control totals for the CPS are based on civilian population benchmarks consistent with Census 2000. In March 2002, the sample size of the Annual Demographic Supplement was increased to approximately 78,000. These changes in population controls had relatively little impact on derived measures such as means, medians, and percent distribution, but did have a significant impact on levels" (U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States (2003). *No. 605. Persons doing job-related work at home: 2001*.

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U.S. Census Bureau (2003). *Persons doing job-related work at home: 2001. Table no. 605*. Retrieved from the Statistical Abstracts of the United States Web site: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/labor.pdf>

The chief source of these data is the Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The sample includes employed full-time wage and salary workers 16 years old and over in the US. Excludes the self-employed. Data relate to the primary job.

For description of data sources, see <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/labor.pdf>.

See <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/app3.pdf> for limitations of data.

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United States Department of Labor (2005, July 1). *Workers on flexible and shift schedules in May 2004*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/flex.toc.htm>

These data and other information on work schedules were obtained from a supplement to the May 2004 Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly sample survey of about 60,000 households conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), principally to gather information on employment and unemployment for the nation. Respondents to the May 2004 supplement answered questions about flexible and shift schedules, the reasons for working particular shifts, the beginning and ending hours of work, formal flexitime programs, home-based work, and other related topics. The data in this release cover the incidence and nature of flexible and shift schedules and pertain to wage and salary workers who usually worked 35 hours or more per week on their principal job. The data exclude all self-employed persons, regardless of whether or not their businesses were incorporated.

The May 2001 data presented in this release have been revised to reflect the introduction of Census 2000-based population controls and thus may differ from previously published estimates which were based on population controls derived from the 1990 census. The introduction of the Census 2000-based population controls increased the May 2001 employment levels but had relatively little impact on proportions and percents derived from the employment levels. Sample results from the CPS are weighted up to independent estimates of the population by sex, age, race, and Hispanic or Latino/non-Hispanic ethnicity. The weights, or population controls, are developed using counts of the civilian noninstitutional population derived from the decennial census and are updated using information from administrative records.

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Wayne, J.H., & Cordeiro, B.L. (2003). Who is a good organizational citizen? Social perception of male and female employees who use family leave. *Sex Roles, 49*(5-6), 223-246.

"The study examined perceptions of the citizenship behaviors of male and female employees who took leave to care for a newborn, a sick child, a sick parent, or who did not take leave. Participants were 242 introductory psychology students from a southeastern liberal arts university."





Wharton, A.S., & Blair-Loy, M. (2002). The “overtime culture” in a global corporation. *Work and Occupations*, 29(1), 32–63.

“In 1998, we received permission from International Finance to study work–family policies in their organization...Our respondents are urban, high–level financial professionals in the United States (in three large cities), Hong Kong, and England (London) ...Of the respondents, 160 were in the United States, 38 were in London, and the remainder (62) were located in Hong Kong” (pp. 41–42).

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