



Questions and Answers about SPILLOVER: NEGATIVE IMPACTS

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 Spillover: Negative Impacts. (Last updated: December 2008)



Who is affected by negative spillover?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “College–educated men [are] the group most likely to report work interference with family (36% did so)” (Ammons et al., 2008, p. 4).
- ✔ **Fact 2** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “...men (less than 40 years of age) who don’t have children report the highest negative spillover (2.81 [on a 5–point scale where 1 means ‘never’ and 5 means ‘all the time’])” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 35).



How many employees are affected by spillover?

- ✔ **Fact 1** According to the National Work Life Measurement Project, “27.2 percent of employees experienced negative spillover from work to family; 25.1 percent experienced positive spillover, and 47.7 percent reported neutral or no spillover” (Fried, Litchfield, & Pruncho, 2003, p. 23).



Are men or women more likely to be affected by negative spillover?

- ✔ **Fact 1** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “...women tend to have somewhat higher scores on this negative home spillover scale (an average of 2.38 for women and 2.29 for men [on a 5–point scale where 1 means ‘never’ and 5 means ‘all the time’])” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 39).
- ✔ **Fact 2** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “Women in our sample typically report slightly more negative work spillover than do men (2.71 to 2.66 [on a 5–point scale where 1 means ‘never’ and 5 means ‘all the time’])” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 34).



How does spillover affect desire for more job responsibility?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “Although fully 60% of college educated Gen–Y, Gen–X and Boomer employees who experience low levels of negative spillover from job to home would like to have jobs with more responsibility, only 39 percent



(21 percentage points less) who experience high levels of negative spillover want jobs with more responsibility. Findings are the same for men and women” (Families and Work Institute, 2004, p. 6).



How do flexible work arrangements affect negative spillover?

✔ **Fact 1** In 2002, 34% of wage and salaried employees who have high access to flexible work arrangements report “low levels of negative spillover from job to home” (Families and Work Institute, 2002, p. 39).



What type of employee is most affected by negative spillover?

✔ **Fact 1** “Self-employed independents [32%]—who work significantly fewer hours than owners and employees—experience less negative spillover from their jobs into their lives off the job than small business owners [23%] or wage and salaried employees [26%]” (Families and Work Institute, 2002, p. 60).

✔ **Fact 2** Of wage and salaried employees, 37% of those who have immediate supervisors/managers who are highly supportive of the needs they have in their personal and family lives report no interference between job and family life, compared to only 20% of employees whose supervisors/managers are moderately supportive and 20% of employees whose immediate supervisors/managers offer low levels of support (Families and Work Institute, 2002, p. 40).

✔ **Fact 3** 35% of wage and salaried employees who are employed in workplaces with highly supportive work-life cultures report no interference between job and family life (Families and Work Institute, 2002, p. 42).



What is the impact of marital status on negative spillover?

✔ **Fact 1** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “...single men who subsequently get married and women who are divorced and remain so report the lowest levels of positive home spillover (2.72 and 3.06 respectively [on a 5-point scale where 1 means ‘never’ and 5 means ‘all the time’])” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 41).

✔ **Fact 2** Among married men and women, “increases in marital discord were significantly related to declines in job satisfaction” (Rogers & May, 2003, p. 482).

✔ **Fact 3** According to the Ecology of Careers study, “...single men about to get married ... report the least negative spillover, and the 31 men who get divorced prior to our second interview...see a decline in negative spillover (going from 2.69 at the first interview to 2.15 [on a 5-point scale where 1 means ‘never’ and 5 means ‘all the time’] by the second interview)” (Moen et al., 2004, p. 34).



✔ **Fact 4** According to the Ecology of Careers study, "...women who stay married have the smallest increase in spillover (from 2.68 to 2.69 [on a 5-point scale where 1 means 'never' and 5 means 'all the time']) when compared with other women (this was true for men who stayed married as well)" (Moen et al., 2004, p. 34-35).



How do children impact negative spillover?

✔ **Fact 1** According to the Ecology of Careers study, "It is the absence of children that is associated with the highest levels of negative spillover, especially for women: women who do not have children, regardless of age, score highest (3.0 and 3.1 [on a 5-point scale where 1 means 'never' and 5 means 'all the time']) in terms of negative work spillover into their private lives" (Moen et al., 2004, p. 35).

✔ **Fact 2** "...wage and salaried employees with families (spouse/partner and/or children) in 2002 report significantly higher levels (45% experiencing 'some' or 'a lot') of interference between their jobs and their family lives than did similar employees in 1977 (34% experiencing 'some' or 'a lot')" (Families and Work Institute, 2002, p. 32).

✔ **Fact 3** According to the Ecology of Careers study, "Men who are empty nest parents (fathers whose children are grown and gone) and men who have recently become fathers (or have had another child) have the lowest levels of negative spillover (2.49 and 2.45 respectively [on a 5-point scale where 1 means 'never' and 5 means 'all the time']) when compared to other men" (Moen et al., 2004, p. 35).

✔ **Fact 4** "Mothers [are] more than 1.5 times as likely as fathers to say their work [has] interfered with their relationships with children (23% vs. 14% for fathers)" (Ammons et al., 2008, p. 5).

✔ **Fact 5** "Young women [are] twice as likely to report that work [affects] childbearing decisions (7% vs. 3.6% for men)" (Ammons et al., 2008, p. 5).

The Network has additional resources related to this topic.

1. Visit a topic page on Spillover: Negative Impacts at: <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic.php?id=39>
Topic pages provide resources and information, including statistics, definitions, overviews & briefs, bills & statutes, interviews, teaching resources, audio/video, suggested readings, and links.
2. Our database of academic literature contains the citations and annotations of literature related to the issue of Spillover: Negative Impacts. You can connect to this database at:
http://library.bc.edu/F?func=find-b-0&local_base=BCL_WF



References

Ammons, S. K., & Kelly, E. L. (2008). Social class and the experience of work-family conflict during the transition to adulthood. *New Directions in Child Adolescent Development*, 119, 71–84.

"In addition to reviewing previous research, we analyze data from the Youth Development Study (YDS), a longitudinal study of 1000 adolescents who were sampled from public high schools in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1988. We use survey responses from waves 5 through 15, when young adults were 18–19 to 30–31 years old."

Families and Work Institute. (2002). *Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce* (No. 3). New York: 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" (Families and Work Institute, 2002, p. v).

Several of the questions in the National Study of the Changing Workforce were taken from based or 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 (Families and Work Institute, 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>.

Families and Work Institute. (2004). *Generation & gender in the workplace*. Watertown, MA: American Business Collaboration.

"The research findings reported here are drawn from the Families and Work Institute 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 both wage and salaried employees, self-employed workers, and business owners. The data presented here pertain only to wage and salaried employees, ranging in number from 2,800–2,900 across the three administrations of the survey. In addition to the National Study of the Changing Workforce, we sometimes include data from the 1997 Quality of Employment Survey (QES) conducted by the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, which was commissioned by the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics. A number of questions in the NSCW parallel questions in QES, making historical comparisons possible. The 25-years separating the 2002 NSCW and 1977 QES represents what demographers typically consider a generation" (p. 29).

Fried, M., Litchfield, L., & Pruchno, R. (2003). *The National Work/Life Measurement Project*. Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College Center for Work & Family.

The National Work/Life Measurement Project is a cross-company study that provides data about the impact of flexible work practices. The study includes information from both users and non-users of flexible work arrangements as well as both employees and managers using flexible work arrangements. Data were collected using 59 in-depth personal interviews, 12 focus groups, and 1,609 self-administered surveys. The interviews and focus groups were conducted in 1999 involving employees and managers as well as users and non-users of flexible work arrangements. Survey data were collected from employees in 1999 and from managers in 2000. A total of 1,353 employees and 256 managers participated in the surveys.



Moen, P., Dempster-McClain, D., Altobelli, J., Wimsontate, W., Dahl, L. Roehling, P., & Sweet, S. (2004). *The new "middle" work force*. Minneapolis, MN and Ithaca, NY: Life Course Center at the University of Minnesota and 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 [1,764 men and 1,712 women; 1,653 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).

Rogers, S. J., & May, D. C. (2003). Spillover between marital quality and job satisfaction; Long-term patterns and gender differences. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65, 482-495.

A sample derived from the "Marital Instability Over the Life Course Study (Booth, Amato, Johnson, & Edwards, 1993) was used. This is a multiwave panel study begun in 1980 when telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of 2,034 married individuals (not couples) younger than 55 years of age, selected through the clustered random-digit dialing procedure. The completion rate for the initial survey was 65%. Attempts were made to re-interview these respondents in 1983, 1988, and 1992. Successful re-interviews were achieved with 78%, 66%, and 58% of the original sample in the second, third, and fourth waves. Due to selective attrition, the 1,189 respondents in the fourth wave slightly underrepresent those who were younger, those who were renters, those who were African American or Hispanic, and those who did not have a college education in 1980. [Analyses were conducted using] data from four waves (1980, 1983, 1988, 1992) of the panel for married individuals who were employed in at least two consecutive time points, who were continuously married, and who remained in the panel through 1992. This resulted in a sample of 1,065 individuals (537 women and 528 men) (Rogers & May, 2003, p. 485).