Interpersonal Aspects of Justice in Workplace Flexibility Enactment (2010)

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Date: February 18, 2010

Basic Concepts and Definitions

Workplace flexibility is individuals’ ability to make choices influencing when, where, and for how long they work (Hill et al., 2008). It is an important tool that organizations afford to their employees to help them to manage their work and non-work demands and to reduce work-nonwork conflict. In workplace flexibility enactment, the process through which individuals make use of their workplace flexibility, interpersonal fairness concerns arise that may make the process difficult and/or may lead to negative consequences, potentially offsetting the benefits it could yield. Such fairness concerns are the subject of this entry.

In social and organizational science, justice and fairness are used interchangeably (Colquitt, Greenberg, & Zapata-Phelan, 2005) and are defined phenomenologically - "an act is fair if someone perceives it as fair and reacts to it accordingly (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Although objective standards of fairness exist and may even be regulated by laws, subjective perceptions of fairness tend to more importantly shape individuals' reactions in organizations (Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992). Actions that are perceived to impose negative consequences on others who do not deserve them tend to be seen as unfair (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998) and those that are seen as balanced and correct are seen as fair (Sheppard et al., 1992). Balance is evaluated by comparing an action to similar actions under similar circumstances, and correctness is a property of an action that seems “right”; that is, consistent, accurate, clear, procedurally thorough, and compatible with the morals and values of the time (Sheppard et al., 1992).

Organizational justice is thought to have three related but distinct dimensions. Distributive justice refers to fairness of outcomes individuals enjoy (Homans, 1974), procedural justice has to do with fairness of procedures used to decide the outcomes for each individual (Thibault & Walker, 1975), and interactional justice concerns fairness of how individuals treat one another (Bies & Moag, 1986), not only when resources are distributed but in everyday interactions as well (Bies, 2005; Mikula, Petal, & Tanzer, 1990). Interactional justice has been theorized (Greenberg, 1993) and empirically confirmed (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001) to have two components: informational and interpersonal.
justice. *Informational justice* refers to the explanations that are provided to individuals about the procedures that are used to determine outcomes (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1993). The validated measure of informational justice (Colquitt, 2001) asks questions about candidness, thoroughness, reasonableness, and timeliness of the communication, and about whether the communication was tailored to the individual’s specific needs. *Interpersonal justice* refers to the interpersonal treatment people receive in terms of politeness, dignity, and respect (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1993).

Although we often use the word relationship broadly to mean any kind of association between two things, in this entry I use Hinde’s (1997) definition of a *relationship* as a “series of interactions between two people, involving interchanges over an extended period of time . . . [where] the behavior of each takes some account of the behavior of the other” (p. 37).

I define *interpersonal aspects of justice* as fairness assessments of the relationship or the relationship partner, to differentiate them from fairness assessments of a policy or an organization. Interpersonal aspects of justice by definition entail interactional fairness but also include distributive and procedural justice assessments when the target of the assessment is another person or the relationship with that person (rather than a policy or an organization).

**Importance of Topic to Work and Family Studies**

Understanding what contributes to a sense of justice or injustice - "distributive, procedural, or interactional - "is important because perceived injustice leads to many undesirable consequences for the individual and the organization, such as increased stress, lowered job performance, employee withdrawal including turnover, and deviant behavior including theft (for reviews, see for example: Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Bies, 2001; Grandey & Cordeiro, 2002). Work-family and work-life issues are fraught with potential fairness concerns. When organizations help and support their employees in managing their work and non-work demands, and when individuals help and support one another, distributive justice concerns may arise, challenging or questioning whether the right people are getting the right kind and the right amount of support. When organizations institute and apply processes through which individuals can access organizational support for work-nonwork issues, concerns regarding procedural fairness may arise. And throughout the process - "from the time that policies are being designed, through the time that people are able to sign up for them, through when they finally enact their flexibility - "employees interact with one another and with representatives of the organizations, such that interactional justice concerns may arise.

Fairness is particularly critical when it comes to workplace flexibility because organizations offer flexibility in large part in order to help individuals alleviate work-nonwork conflict and the associated stress. Since
one of the important negative consequences of perceived injustice is stress (Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Vermunt & Steensma, 2001), it behooves organizations to enable a flexibility enactment that is perceived as fair - "otherwise the negative consequences of increased stress may offset the positive consequences of reduced work-nonwork conflict.

Interpersonal aspects of justice are important because of the critical role relationships play in managing work and life outside of work. Most people find relationships to be what matters most in life and what gives life its fullest purpose (Klinger, 1977) as they fulfill our need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and help us to define ourselves (Bateson, 1980). Relationships have also been explored as a source of social support in managing work-nonwork demands (MacDermid, Williams, Marks, & Heilbrun, 1994; Marcinkus, Whelan-Berry, & Gordon, 2007; Seiger & Wiese, 2009) and are implicitly the source of role demands (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Korabik & Warner, 2009; Major, Fletcher, Davis, & Germano, 2008) - "both directly affecting work-nonwork conflict. Work-nonwork issues are often addressed, negotiated, and resolved within relationships (Trefalt, 2008), and relationships provide referents for social comparisons that shape individuals’ satisfaction with their own work-life balance (Poposki & Westring, 2009) and their attitudes toward organizational support for their efforts to balance work and life outside of work (Ollier-Malaterre, 2009). Further, recent work-life research provides evidence that individuals, when they manage work and non-work demands, want not only attend to preferred activities but also to preserve positive relationships at work (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Powell & Greenhaus, 2006; Trefalt, 2008).

With relationships so central to work-nonwork issues, it is important to understand interactional fairness as an integral part of the interactions that constitute a relationship. Other streams of organizational literature also point to the importance of interactional justice compared to distributive and procedural justice. It has been shown, for example, that interactional justice has the strongest impact on return of disappointed customers and negative word-of-mouth intentions (Blodgett, Hill, & Tax, 1997) and that the commitment of those who receive favors to the relationships with those who give favors depends primarily on their judgment of givers’ interactional justice. This is in line with Bies’ (2001) view of interpersonal injustice as a “hot and burning” experience associated with “intense and personal pain” (p. 90).

Centrality of relationships in the work-nonwork arena also suggests the importance of understanding the interpersonal aspects of distributive and procedural justice. Namely, even if decision makers make their decisions affecting others’ workplace flexibility as representatives of an organization (and even more so if they make those decisions on their own behalf in informal interactions), the judgment is likely made about their fairness and the fairness of the relationship with them, not just the fairness of the organization or the policies they are applying. Similarly, those using workplace flexibility are targets of fairness assessments.
People are motivated to act fairly, either in order to avoid negative feelings such as anger and distress (Adams, 1964) or to preserve foundations on which they can count to be treated fairly themselves (Lerner, 1974). Thus, if people are perceived as unfair when using formal policies or when enacting informal flexibility, they are going to be reluctant to do so in the future.

Overall, fairness is essential for maintaining satisfying relationships (Duck, 1991; Hinde, 1997) within which enactment of workplace flexibility takes place. It is therefore important to understand what shapes fairness judgments within relationships and how these judgments affect interpersonal dynamics, which in turn shape further enactment of workplace flexibility and experience of work-nonwork conflict.

State of the Body of Knowledge

In research on fairness in the work-life field, the target of fairness assessments that is most often considered is, explicitly or implicitly, the organization. Researchers explored justice perceptions of organizational policies such as parental leaves (Grover, 1991; Grover & Crooker, 1995), flexible schedules and child-care assistance (Grover & Crooker, 1995), and work-family benefits and policies in general (Grandey, 2001; Parker & Allen, 2001). (For review of this line of research, see Grandey & Cordeiro, 2002.)

Research on interpersonal aspects of workplace flexibility enactment - "that is, fairness assessment of relationships and relationship partners within organizations" - is sparse. Only three studies have directly explored these aspects. In a conceptual paper, Greenberg, Roberge, Ho, and Rousseau (2004) deal extensively with issues of relational aspects of fairness in the case of idiosyncratic deals (i.e., i-deals), "voluntary, personalized agreements of a nonstandard nature negotiated between employers and employees with respect to the terms of employment" (p. 3). Although i-deals can regulate any number of aspects of employment, some have to do with workplace flexibility, such as restricted travel or uneven workload across the year. Greenberg et al. (2004) explore fairness considerations in three types of relationships - "between users of policies and their managers, between users of policies and their coworkers, and between these coworkers and managers. Their point of departure is the fact that i-deals are by definition not standardized but rather exceptions to rules that are in place in part to guarantee fair treatment to all. This, combined with the fact that i-deals are often not publicized, raises concerns about potential injustice. Greenberg et al. (2004) then provide a thorough analysis of issues that may make otherwise fair i-deals seem unfair (from the distributive, procedural, interpersonal, or informational perspective) and theorize about potential ways to address those difficulties. Despite the fact that i-deals are in some sense more general than workplace flexibility (they can regulate any number of aspects of employment) and on the other hand more specific (workplace flexibility can be regulated with
organizational policies, i-deals, or informally), Greenberg et al.'s discussion of fairness concerns in relationships is very informative for considerations of fairness in workplace flexibility enactment.

In an empirical study of 174 faculty employed at 23 U.S. universities, Judge and Colquitt (2004) explored the relationships between all four dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational), stress, and work-family conflict. They found that procedural and interpersonal justice affect stress through work-family conflict, but found no effects of distributive and informational justice on stress or work-family conflict. They concluded that in order to help individuals manage their work-family conflict, organizations should ensure just procedures and fair interpersonal treatment.

In a qualitative study of 70 attorneys in a U.S. law firm, Trefalt (2009) explored the interpersonal aspects of distributive fairness, underscoring the challenges that arise in enactment of workplace flexibility. She found that attorneys expressed three types of fairness concerns in their relationships with others: they wanted to be fair toward others, they wanted to be perceived as fair, and they wanted others to treat them fairly. Notably, those who enacted flexibility and those who made decisions about others' flexibility shared these concerns. In assessing fairness, attorneys used three fairness principles: need, equity, and equality (Deutsch, 1975, 1985). The principle of equality calls for everyone to get the same outcome; equity requires each person’s outcome to be proportionate to that person’s contribution; and the need principle suggests each person should receive benefits in proportion to his or her needs. Many disagreements about fairness derived from the fact that attorneys applied different principles to the same situation. The principle applied in part depended on their self-interest, in part on the nature of the obligations and other circumstances, and in part on the nature of the attorneys’ relationship with the person who was affected by their flexibility enactment. In line with prior research (Mills & Clark, 1982), equity seemed to apply in exchange relationships (where benefits are given with the expectation of receiving a comparable benefit in the future) and needs were more prominent in communal relationships (where benefits are given out of concern for the welfare of others).

Several factors that complicated fairness considerations in enactment of workplace flexibility emerged from the analysis. The first factor has to do with timing and abstraction. Flexibility was often negotiated in advance of its enactment. Employee's needs, such as childcare responsibilities, were considered broadly and in the abstract at the time of the negotiation - "the fact that an attorney had children, for example, was sufficient grounds for granting a part-time arrangement. At the time of enactment, however, those who were negatively affected by others’ flexibility scrutinized those needs and tended to only consider them legitimate grounds for enactment of workplace flexibility if they were unavoidable and out of the attorney’s control. Since attorneys needed to pay for access to many kinds of flexibility (for example, they gave up a
portion of their salary to work part time), they experienced those who scrutinized their needs as unfair. Their coworkers, on the other hand, considered the flexible workers who seemed to have left them in the lurch to be unfair.

The second reason for complications of fairness was the change in the parties to an agreement. Deals were often negotiated with general supervisors, such as department chairs, who acted on behalf of the organization, but flexibility was enacted in interactions with others, such as partners with whom associates worked, coworkers, or even clients. Consistent with the conceptual ideas of Greenberg et al. (2004), Trefalt (2009) found that concerns about fairness arose from the fact that not all parties were privy to all parts of the agreement. She identified three more aspects that complicate enactment of part-time arrangements in particular. First, there is a lack of shared reality. Most individuals do not have the experience of part-time work and, therefore, have a hard time taking the part-time attorney's perspective, when assessing their fairness. Specifically, they likely fail to see the price the attorney paid to the organization for his or her arrangement. Second, while in most other arrangements balance in reciprocity can be achieved over time, that is unlikely in part-time arrangements because those who work on reduced schedules often need to ask others for favors but are rarely in a position to return them. This is exacerbated by the third factor, which is the perceived availability of part-time workers. Because these attorneys are in the office much of the time, they are often asked to do extra work that they must decline if they want to stay within the part-time schedule for which they are paid. Their repeated refusals to help out by accepting additional assignments, however, make others perceive inequity. Moreover, the part-time attorneys themselves feel they are being unfair to their colleagues. Yet, if they accept the additional work, they feel wronged because they have negotiated and are paid for a part-time arrangement of which they are not taking full advantage. Trefalt also explored the different kinds of disagreements about fairness that arose among attorneys and ways in which attorneys avoided such disagreements.

Several studies of the role of justice in work-family issues explore both interpersonal and organizational aspects of justice by operationalizing distributive and/or procedural justice in ways that mix individuals and organization as targets of fairness assessments, which suggests that interpersonal aspects play a role but does not allow us to isolate their effects from those of organizational aspects of justice. Casper, Weltman, and Kwesiga (2007), for example, explored how single people perceived organizational support for their own work-life balance versus work-life balance of people with families. They found that employees with families perceived more equity than single employees, and that managerial and professional employees with higher incomes also perceived the culture of the organizations to be more singles-friendly. Interestingly, the results suggest that when workers are penalized for using work-life policies, more equity between singles and workers with families is perceived. Because the interpersonal and the organizational support were intermixed in each of the five dimensions of their measure of singles-
friendly culture, the effects of each separately cannot be ascertained. Similarly, Siegel, Post, Brockner, Fishman, & Garden (2005) found that procedural fairness moderates the relationship between work-life conflict and employees' organizational commitment, but their operationalization of procedural fairness actually combines procedural and interactional fairness. In a recent qualitative study, Ollier-Malaterre (2010) looked at the role of procedural justice in shaping employees' assessments of organizational work-life initiatives and found that if employees experience procedural injustice, they end up disappointed and resentful - "but it is not entirely clear whether their fairness assessments are targeted at the organization or at specific individuals. Finally, Tepper (2000) found that abusive supervision affects work-family conflict, and the relationship is fully mediated by perceptions of organizational justice. Although Tepper measured distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, he did not make separate predictions or report separate results for each.

Research on backlash against family-friendly policies and against those who use them is also closely related to fairness considerations. Backlash represents one of the possible consequences of perceived injustice - "at the interpersonal and organizational level. Employees who feel they do not have equal access to support may resent the organization for providing the support for others, and employees who feel they need to pick up the slack for those who use organizational support policies may resent those who use those policies (for an excellent review, see Warner, Slan-Jerusalim, & Korabik, 2009).

Implications for Research and Practice

Interpersonal aspects of justice are a relatively new and underexplored area of work-life research. The work that has been done, however, combined with research on interpersonal aspects of justice in organizational studies more generally, suggests several ideas for future research that would benefit our conceptual understanding of the phenomenon, help individuals to better manage their work-nonwork demands, and help organizations and managers to provide more effective support for such efforts.

Many promising research questions concern interactional justice - "perhaps the most prominent of the interpersonal aspects of justice - "or interpersonal aspects of distributive justice. Due to the relational nature of work-nonwork issues, it is important to follow Greenberg et al.'s (2004) lead and continue to explore fairness considerations of both parties to the relationship. Further, it might be important to expand the circle of stakeholders beyond users of workplace flexibility, their managers, and coworkers to include their subordinates, clients, subcontractors, and third parties, who might also be affected by enactment of workplace flexibility (for examples, see Ollier-Malaterre, 2009; Trefalt, 2008).

Further empirical work is needed to understand how perceived (in)justice affects coping and work-
nonwork conflict of users of flexibility. Several negative outcomes may stem from perceived injustice: individuals may stop using flexibility, which may in turn adversely affect their work-nonwork conflict; they may quit their jobs; or they may engage in retaliation against specific individuals. In addition, users may adjust their coping strategies in response to perceived injustice. Identifying the conditions under which different responses are likely to occur and cataloging the adjustments in coping and their effectiveness would be useful for theory and practice.

Inquiry in the spirit of positive organizational scholarship could explore the situations in which fairness considerations facilitate enactment of workplace flexibility, such as times where individuals see it as interpersonally fair to grant requests for flexibility even when organizational policies may not require it.

Interpersonal aspects of justice should be explored in enactment of informal - "not just formal - "flexibility. Trefalt (2009) found that interpersonal fairness concerns spanned formal and informal flexibility, with some additional complications in formal flexibility. But based on recent organizational justice research, which shows that interactional justice is relatively more important in organic organizations while procedural justice is relatively more important in mechanistic organizations (Ambrose & Schminke, 2003), we might expect that interactional justice, and interpersonal aspects of justice more generally, will be more important in enactment of informal rather than formal flexibility.

Finally, future research could explore the role the nature of individuals’ relationships may play in shaping the impact of various behaviors on perceived fairness and other valued outcomes. For example, although it may be expected that one will share relatively detailed information about reasons for seeking work-nonwork support in a close relationship, it might be inappropriate to share such information in a more distant, professional relationship. Since revealing information about oneself can be received negatively if it is seen as inappropriate (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Derlega & Grzelak, 1979) or poorly timed (Archer & Burleson, 1980; Jones & Gordon, 1972), employees might face tradeoffs between staying true to the nature of the relationship and ensuring perceived informational fairness, achieved by disclosure (Greenberg et al., 2004). In addition, self-disclosure at work blurs work-nonwork boundaries. When people share information about their personal lives with people at work, they bring aspects of their non-work lives to work (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; S. C. Clark, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996), which is not everyone’s preferred choice (Rothbard, Phillips, & Dumas, 2005).

Still, employees who self-disclose may experience (and enjoy) more cohesive relationships at work than those who do not (Dumas, Rothbard, & Phillips, 2008). This, in turn, may result in different conceptions of distributive justice. Close and cohesive relationships may more closely resemble communal relationships (M. S. Clark & Mills, 1993), where benefits are allocated according to the need principle, so that
individuals can count on more support when they need it. Conversely, if relationships are based on exchange principles, distributive fairness among individuals is more likely to be judged using equity principle (M. S. Clark & Mills, 1993). In an exchange relationship, reciprocity may be more closely watched such that one person will not be able to continue asking for favors unless he or she returns them. This may be problematic in some enduring arrangements of workplace flexibility, such as part-time work. Greenberg et al. (2004) recommend that employees with nonstandard work arrangements engage in organizational citizenship behaviors toward individuals (OCB-I) who pick up the slack to make such arrangement work, in order to reinforce their appreciation and to restore the sense of fairness. The question can be raised about whether those who use flexible work arrangements have the time and the energy to engage in OCB-I behaviors, such as helping others who have heavy workloads or helping new employees, when they are likely to be struggling to even complete their work in the available time. Empirical research could suggest alternative ways of establishing a sense of fairness under such circumstances.

Given the deeply relational nature of managing work and non-work demands (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Ollier-Malaterre, 2009; Poposki & Westring, 2009; Powell & Greenhaus, 2006; Trefalt, 2008) and the importance of perceived justice for good functioning of relationships (Duck, 1991; Hinde, 1997), considering interpersonal aspects of justice seems essential. Building on the early research on the topic promises to yield conceptual and practical benefits.

References


**Locations in the Matrix of Information Domains of the Work-Family Area of Studies**

The Editorial Board of the Teaching Resources section of the Sloan Work and Family Research Network has prepared a Matrix as a way to locate important work-family topics in the broad area of work-family studies.  

Note: The domain areas most closely related to the entry's topic are presented in full color. Other domains, represented in gray, are provided for context.

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<th>Domain A: Antecedent Descriptives</th>
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<th>Domain C: Covariates</th>
<th>Domain D: Responses to W-F Issues and Experiences</th>
<th>Domain E: Outcomes and Impacts</th>
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Domain F: Theoretical Underpinnings to All Domains
Introduction

It was appropriate that the members of the Founding Editorial Board of the Resources for Teaching began their work in 2000, for their project represented one of the turning points in the area of work and family studies. This group accepted the challenge of developing resources that could support the efforts of teaching faculty from different disciplines and professional schools to better integrate the work-family body of knowledge into their curricula. The Virtual Think Tank began its work with a vision, a spirit of determination, and sense of civic responsibility to the community of work-family scholars.

A fundamental challenge emerged early in the process. It became clear that before we could design resources that would support the teaching of those topics, we would first need to inventory topics and issues relevant to the work-family area of studies (and begin to distinguish the work-family aspect of these topics from "non work-family" aspects).

The members of the Virtual Think Tank were well aware that surveying the area of work and family studies would be a daunting undertaking. However, we really had no other choice. And so, we began to grapple with the mapping process.

Purpose

1. To develop a preliminary map of the body of knowledge relevant to the work-family area of study that reflects current, "across-the-disciplines" understanding of work-family phenomena.

2. To create a flexible framework (or map) that clarifies the conceptual relationships among the different information domains that comprise the work-family knowledge base.

It is important to understand that this mapping exercise was undertaken as a way to identify and organize the wide range of work-family topics. This project was not intended as a meta-analysis for determining the empirical relationships between specific variables. Therefore, our map of the workfamily
area of study does not include any symbols that might suggest the relationships between specific factors or clusters of factors.

Process

The Virtual Think Tank used a 3-step process to create the map of the work-family area of studies.

1. Key Informants: The members of the Virtual Think Tank included academics from several different disciplines and professions who have taught and written about work-family studies for years. During the first stage of the mapping process, the Virtual Think Tank functioned as a panel of key informants.

Initially, the Panel engaged in a few brainstorming sessions to identify work-family topics that could be addressed in academic courses. The inductive brainstorming sessions initially resulted in the identification of nearly 50 topics.

Once the preliminary list of topics had been generated, members of the Virtual Think Tank pursued a deductive approach to the identification of work-family issues. Over the course of several conversations, the Virtual Think Tank created a conceptual map that focused on information domains (see Table 1 below).

The last stage of the mapping process undertaken by the Virtual Think Tank consisted of comparing and adjusting the results of the inductive and deductive processes. The preliminary, reconciled list was used as the first index for the Online Work and Family Encyclopedia.

2. Literature review: Members of the project team conducted literature searches to identify writings in which authors attempted to map the work-family area of study or specific domains of this area. The highlights of the literature review will be posted on February 1, 2002 when the First Edition of the Work-Family Encyclopedia will be published.

3. Peer review: On October 1, 2001, the Preliminary Mapping of the work-family area of study was posted on the website of the Sloan Work and Family Research Network. The members of the Virtual Think Tank invite work-family leaders to submit suggestions and comments about the Mapping and the List of Work-Family Topics. The Virtual Think Tank will consider the suggestions and, as indicated, will make adjustments in both of these products. Please send your comments to Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes at pittcats@bc.edu
Assumptions

Prior to identifying the different information domains relevant to the work-family area of study, members of the Virtual Think Tank adopted two premises:

1. Our use of the word "family" refers to both traditional and nontraditional families. Therefore, we consider the term "work-family" to be relevant to individuals who might reside by themselves. Many work-family leaders have noted the problematic dimensions of the term "work-family" (see Barnett, 1999). In particular, concern has been expressed that the word "family" continues to connote the married couple family with dependent children, despite the widespread recognition that family structures and relationships continue to be very diverse and often change over time. As a group, we understand the word "family" to refer to relationships characterized by deep caring and commitment that exist over time. We do not limit family relationships to those established by marriage, birth, blood, or shared residency.

2. It is important to examine and measure work-family issues and experiences at many different levels, including: individual, dyadic (e.g., couple relationships, parent-child relationships, caregiver/caretaker relationships), family and other small groups, organizational, community, and societal. Much of the work-family discourse glosses over the fact that the work-family experiences of one person or stakeholder group may, in fact, be different from (and potentially in conflict with) those of another.

Outcomes

We will publish a Working Paper, "Mapping the Work-Family Area of Study," on the Sloan Work and Family Research Network in 2002. In this publication, we will acknowledge the comments and suggestions for improvement sent to us.

Limitations

It is important to understand that the members of the Virtual Think Tank viewed their efforts to map the work-family area of study as a "work in progress." We anticipate that we will periodically review and revise the map as this area of study evolves.

The members of the panel are also cognizant that other scholars may have different conceptualizations of the work-family area of study. We welcome your comments and look forward to public dialogue about this important topic.
Listing of the Information Domains Included in the Map

The members of the Virtual Think Tank wanted to focus their map of work-family issues around the experiences of five principal stakeholder groups:

1. individuals,
2. families,
3. workplaces,
4. communities, and
5. society-at-large.

Each of these stakeholder groups is represented by a row in the Table 1, Information Domain Matrix (below).

Work-Family Experiences: The discussions of the members of the Virtual Think Tank began with an identification of some of the salient needs & priorities/problems & concerns of the five principal stakeholder groups. These domains are represented by the cells in Column B of the Information Domain Matrix.

- Individuals' work-family needs & priorities
- Individuals' work-family problems & concerns
- Families' work-family need & priorities
- Families' work-family problems & concerns
- Needs & priorities of workplaces related to work-family issues
- Workplace problems & concerns related to work-family issues
- Needs & priorities of communities related to work-family issues
- Communities' problems & concerns related to work-family issues
- Needs and priorities of society related to work-family issues
- Societal problems & concerns related to work-family issues

Antecedents: Next, the Virtual Think Tank identified the primary roots causes and factors that might have either precipitated or affected the work-family experiences of the principal stakeholder groups. These domains are highlighted in Column A of the Information Domain Matrix.

- Individual Antecedents
- Family Antecedents
• Workplace Antecedents
• Community Antecedents
• Societal Antecedents

Covariates: The third set of information domains include factors that moderate the relationships between the antecedents and the work-family experiences of different stakeholder groups (see Column C in Table 1).

• Individual Covariates
• Family Covariates
• Workplace Covariates
• Community Covariates
• Societal Covariates

Decisions and Responses: The responses of the stakeholder groups to different work-family experiences are highlighted in Column D.

• Individual Decision and Responses
• Family Decisions and Responses
• Workplace Decisions and Responses
• Community Decisions and Responses
• Public Sector Decisions and Responses

Outcomes & Impacts: The fifth set of information domains refer to the outcomes and impacts of different work-family issues and experiences on the principal stakeholder groups (see Column E).

• Outcomes & Impacts on Individuals
• Outcomes & Impacts on Families
• Outcomes & Impacts on Workplaces
• Outcomes & Impacts on Communities
• Outcomes & Impacts on Society

Theoretical Foundations: The Virtual Think Tank established a sixth information domain to designate the multi-disciplinary theoretical underpinnings to the work-family area of study (noted as Information Domain F).
### Table 1: Matrix of Information Domains (9/30/01)

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<td>Workplace Antecedents</td>
<td>Workplace Experiences: Needs &amp; Priorities; Problems &amp; Concerns</td>
<td>Workplace Covariates</td>
<td>Workplace Decisions &amp; Responses</td>
<td>Workplace Outcomes &amp; Impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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**Domain F: Theoretical Underpinnings to All Domains**