

EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION
IN THE WORKPLACE

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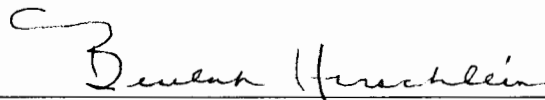
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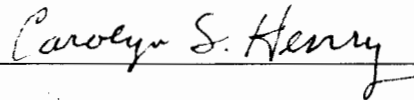
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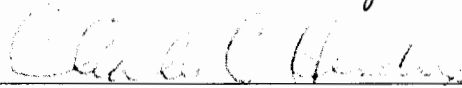
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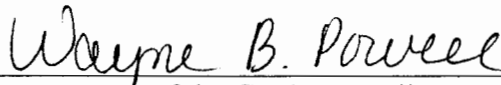
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The difficulties associated with balancing work life and family life for employed men and women have been well-documented in the research literature. Changing demographics in the family and in the workplace, such as the increase in single-parent families and women in the workforce, have drawn attention to the growing need for resources designed to help employees manage the strain of simultaneous work and family commitments.

Growing numbers of employers have begun to recognize the corporate benefits of providing these resources to their employees, and have implemented family-responsive programming in the workplace in hopes of retaining valuable workers, increasing productivity and enhancing their ability to recruit new employees. Along with these employer-related benefits, their employees are able to enjoy having various policies and programs at their disposal to help them balance their work and family lives. Hughes and Galinsky (1988) list 20 different programs that have been developed for employees with children under 18 years of age. The programs are as follows: flextime, compressed work week, part-time job sharing, personal days, time bank, flexiplace, van pools, relocation assistance and counseling, flexible benefits, flexible savings accounts, dependent care assistance plans, reimbursement programs/vouchers, parenting leaves, employee assistance or counseling programs, fitness programs, resource and referral, support for community child care, on- or near-site child care, sick child care/travel care, and work

and family seminars (Hughes & Galinsky). Usually targeted toward those employees who are married and/or have children, these programs are designed to give employees more support in their efforts to maintain healthy and productive work and personal lives.

A report from the Family Policy Panel of the Economic Policy Council of United Nations Association of the United States of American asserts "Since family support structures can have a powerful effect on employee morale and performance, developing these structures is in the self-interest of all companies" (Economic Policy Council of UNA-USA, 1985, p. 59.) Although several employers have come to realize the importance of making some family-responsive programs available to their employees, few employers choose to offer employees the option of attending work/life workshops in the workplace. Work/life workshops can be designed to address a broad range of issues relevant to those employees struggling to balance work and family commitments. Such issues may include time management, problem-solving, interpersonal communication, stress management, and goal-setting. Several of these work/life topics fit into the framework of issues addressed within the field of family life education.

Statement of the Problem

From its inception at the turn of the century, family life education has long been relegated primarily to churches, schools and other community settings, and has only recently been introduced into the workplace on a larger scale. Family life education curriculum can easily be adapted to suit the workplace. Additionally, family life education programs may be helpful in providing employees with valuable information regarding how to more effectively manage combined work and family responsibilities.

Family life education has the potential to be a useful tool in the prevention of many problems commonly associated with work-family conflict. Currently, however, family life education programs designed for the workplace are not as prevalent as other types of family-responsive benefits. Although several empirical studies have explored the effects of and processes behind family-responsive programs offered by employers, most studies examine more commonplace programs, such as alternative work arrangements (Christensen & Staines, 1990; Pierce & Newstrom, 1983; Powell & Mainiero, 1999; Staines & Pleck, 1983), especially flextime, and corporate-sponsored child care (Auerbach, 1990; Goldberg, Greenberg, Koch-Jones, O'Neill, & Hamill, 1989; Greenberger, Goldberg, Hamill, O'Neil, & Payne, 1989; Kossek & Nichol, 1992). There are fewer research studies examining less traditional forms of employee support, such as family life education in the workplace. Family life education may be a viable addition to the list of support services business can offer their employees to alleviate work-family conflict. Including family life education in family-responsive benefits packages can broaden the options offered to employees in respect to how they might choose to cope with the competing demands of work and personal life. Additionally, providing a range of options to employees has benefits for the employer. A study conducted by Grover and Crooker (1995) found that family-responsive policies in the workplace are positively related to the work commitment of employees, regardless of whether the employees benefit from the policies or not. This may suggest that employees value supportiveness of family issues in the workplace, whether or not they need support for their own family issues.

Despite the potential positives for employees and employers, there is little empirical data on family life education for the workplace. Family life educators may find it difficult to effectively market programs to the business sector without information regarding the factors that influence employers' decisions to include family life education in their benefits packages. The lack of information can limit the amount of family life education practiced in the workplace, thus reducing the opportunity for employees to receive additional support that might help them more effectively balance their work and family lives. Consequently, there is a need for more research examining how family life education can be used to meet the needs of employers seeking to provide family-responsive programming for employees. Arcus (1995) expresses the importance of expanding family life education to new settings such as the workplace, and to audiences previously neglected by the field. Additional research in this area can eventually lead to increased interaction between family life education and the workplace, expanding the practice of family life education to broader settings and populations.

Purpose of the Study

The specific purpose of the current study is to provide information to family life educators concerning employers' perceptions of family life education in the workplace. The general purpose of the study is to provide information what will contribute to the expansion of family life education into workplace settings. This study is designed to accomplish four primary objectives: (a) to identify characteristics that might influence employer level of concern for employee well-being, (b) to examine possible relationships between employer self-interest, employer employee-interest and the decision to

implement family life education in the workplace, (c) to assess employer interest in family life education in the workplace, and (d) to assess employer knowledge concerning family life education in the workplace.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses have been formulated for this study:

H_{1a}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will report higher levels of employee-focused concern than other businesses.

H_{1b}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will be more likely than other businesses to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{2a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{2b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{3a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{3b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{4a}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{4b}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

Assumptions of the Study

This study is based on the following three assumptions:

1. The respondents will understand the terminology used in the instrument.
2. The respondents will have some knowledge regarding how their places of business make decisions regarding family-responsive programs.
3. The respondents will have some knowledge of the demographic characteristics of their places of business.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited in the following ways:

1. The sample population is limited to employers in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area.
2. In some cases, the respondent's knowledge about decision-making in regard to family-responsive programs for the workplace may be limited, thus limiting the ability to respond accurately to the questionnaire.
3. A scarcity of empirical research on family life education for the workplace limits the opportunity to utilize previous research designs, instruments and findings.

Definition of Terms

Although several definitions exist, the term *family life education* is somewhat difficult to define, due in part to differing opinions regarding what should be included in or excluded from a unified definition (Thomas & Arcus, 1992). Arcus (1995) states that the goal of family life education is to “assist families and family members with their family roles and tasks through formalized educational programs as a means of improving family living and reducing family-related social problems” (p. 336). In combination with the purpose of family life education provided by Thomas and Arcus, “to strengthen and enrich individual and family well-being” (p. 7), the goal expressed above can be adapted to create a definition of family life education for the purposes of this study. In this study, family life education will be defined as educational programs designed to assist families and individuals with their family responsibilities as a means of enhancing family well-being and reducing family problems.

For the purposes of this study, *work-family conflict* is defined according to the definition proposed by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964). Work-family conflict is a form of interrole conflict in which pressures from work and family are incompatible, such that participation in the work role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family role, and vice versa.

Family-responsive programs is defined by the researcher as employer-sponsored programs designed to assist employees in meeting the demands of their jobs, and the demands of their personal and family lives. Examples of family-responsive programs are flextime, job-sharing, flexible benefits, parenting leaves, and work/life workshops.

Work/life workshops is defined by the researcher as family life education programs presented in the workplace that are designed to help employees better balance their work and family lives. The term “work/life workshops” will be used instead of “family life education programs” when discussing the survey instrument in Chapter III. This term is utilized in the survey instrument because it is easily understandable to business personnel who will be responding to the survey.

Overview of the Chapters

Chapter I provides a brief summary of the current state of affairs concerning work and family interactions. In addition, the statement of the problem, the purpose, objectives, assumptions, and limitations of the study are presented. Chapter I concludes with a definition of the terms applicable to the study.

Chapter II provides a review of the literature related to work and family interactions, motives for employer responsiveness to work-family conflict, the scope and practice of family life education and the rationale for family life education in the workplace. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the theoretical foundation for the study.

Chapter III presents the research design for the study. The sample, instruments, and data collection procedures are identified, along with statistical analyses for the data.

Chapter IV presents descriptive information regarding the sample of respondents, as well as the results of statistical analyses of the data.

Chapter V concludes with a discussion of the research findings, limitations of the research, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Work and Family Interactions

Two of the primary catalysts in the growing recognition of work and family interactions have been the increased number of two-earner households, and the increased number of single-parent households (Hansen, 1991). In 1989, only ten percent of American households included the traditional wage-earning husband and the homemaking wife (Ford Foundation, 1989). Increasing numbers of wives and mothers have become part of the labor market (Piotrowski, Rapoport & Rapoport, 1987; Schvaneveldt & Young, 1992), and mothers of children under 18 years of age account for a significant proportion of working mothers (Ford Foundation). Increases in the divorce rate account for larger numbers of single-parent households (Ford Foundation). Several of these single-parent households are headed by mothers who are forced to work, thereby contributing to the increased participation of women in the American labor market (Arcus, 1992).

As increasing numbers of women struggle with the competing demands of work and family, family research has begun to more closely examine the linkages between work and family. Historically, sociologists have held fast to the "myth of separate worlds" (Kanter, 1977, p. 8), which posits that work and family life are two non-overlapping entities that can be studied apart from one another. As a result of the rising numbers of women in the workforce, men's time in the family has begun to increase, while women's time in the family has begun to decrease (Pleck, 1985). Due to this mixing

of traditional sex roles, the once-established boundaries separating work and family life have become less clearly defined (Friedman, 1987). Solutions initially created to help women relieve the pressures of simultaneous work and family responsibilities, such as alternative work arrangements, have become solutions to help men integrate their work and family roles as well (Staines & Pleck, 1983). In today's society, work life and family life can no longer be viewed as entirely separate entities divided along traditional gender lines.

Friedman (1991) cites several job factors that influence work-family conflict, such job demands, the work environment, and factors related to one's work schedule. Friedman also cites several family factors that can influence work-family conflict, including the marital relationship, spouse support, spouse employment, and the presence of dependents. Studies have revealed that work-family conflict is related to certain negative consequences for emotional and physical well-being. There is a negative relationship between work-family conflict and job and life satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), and spillover between work and home is significantly related to poor emotional health (Boles, Johnston, & Hair, 1997). In examining the reciprocal link between work and family, several studies have documented the ways in which work affects family life, such as influencing the amount and quality of time families spend together (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981; Kanter, 1977; Voydanoff, 1987). Piotrowski and Crits-Christoph (1982) concluded that women's jobs were associated with family adjustment due to the fact that job satisfaction and job-related mood were shown to be predictors of reported family adjustment. In a four-year longitudinal study, Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1997) found that work to family conflict was related to elevated levels of heavy alcohol

consumption for employed parents. Family can also influence a worker's attitude toward the workplace. Kanter (1977) explains that a family's emotional climate "can define work orientations, motivations, abilities, emotional energy and the demands people bring to the workplace" (p. 57). This is supported by research conducted by Orthner and Pittman (1986) in which the authors concluded that employees who believe their families to be adjusting well to work demands receive more family support in regard to work. This results in higher levels of job commitment on behalf of the employee (Orthner & Pittman). Therefore, workplace efforts to accommodate family issues may be rewarded by a more positive family environment, which leads to greater commitment to the workplace.

Research has also suggested several ways in which family responsibilities can affect work performance and job tension. Friedman (1991) reports that the on-going daily stress associated with work-family conflict can result in poor performance on the job. This aspect of the work-family interface is particularly relevant to employers who are concerned about whether their employees' work-family problems can be detrimental to business. Family structure, whether two-earner, single-parent, or families with younger children, can affect the level of work-family conflict experienced by employees (Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985; Voydanoff, 1988). Crouter (1984) found that women with younger children tend to experience more negative spillover from home to work than fathers, which is manifested in tardiness, inattentiveness, inefficiency, absenteeism, or inability to accept new responsibilities at work. Some companies express concern at losing female employees when they drop out of the full-time workforce to cope with conflicts between work and parenting (Ford Foundation, 1989). Although several effects of family to work

spillover may seem to be gender-related, men also experience difficulties when family responsibilities interfere with work. In a study by the Bank Street College of Education Work and Family Life Studies, over 25% of both mothers and fathers reported that they had declined promotions, new jobs or transfer opportunities because of perceived negative impact on family time (Ford Foundation). Frone et al. (1997) state that family to work conflict has health implications for employed parents, including elevated levels of depression, poor physical health, and the occurrence of hypertension. The researchers suggest that employers should consider how family to work conflict has the potential to create stress in the lives of employees, thus resulting in lack of productivity and additional health care costs for employees.

Motives for Employer Responsiveness to Work-Family Issues

The literature supports the notion that employers may benefit from providing programs to help their employees better balance their work lives and family lives; therefore, why do some business choose to offer these programs while others do not? This review of the literature concerning employer responsiveness to employee work-family conflict examines factors that influence employers' decisions regarding family-responsive programming.

Overall, employers appear to be more cognizant of how family difficulties affect the workplace than how corporate policies affect families (Stillman & Bowen, 1985). This finding suggests that family-responsive policies are not necessarily implemented to improve the well being of families. Axel (1985) states that "in the best of circumstances, personnel policies, practices and benefits are constructed to attract, motivate and retain

qualified workers who, it is hoped, will reward their employers with high productivity and strong dedication to their jobs” (p. 15). Magid (1983) found that employers’ primary motivation for creating family-responsive programs was the desire to attract talented workers and to create a stable workforce. Stillman and Bowen report that although little research was done on the impact of services provided to employees and their families, employers considered these services good for business and for the cultivation of a progressive corporate image. Employers appear to be more likely to provide family benefits to their workers when it is in the employers’ self-interests to do so (Selyer, Monroe, & Garand, 1995). In an assessment of executives’ perceptions regarding company-sponsored family benefits, Selyer, Monroe, and Garand (1993) found that cost factors determined whether some family options would be implemented, and employers believed that not offering some benefits would hurt their efforts to remain competitive in recruiting new workers. Powell and Mainiero (1999) discovered that managers make decisions regarding employees’ participation in alternative work arrangements based upon their own short-term self-interest as managers. Friedman (1987) further supports self-interest as motivation by presenting various factors listed by employers as being responsible for their concern about work-family issues. These factors include recruitment of skilled workers, concerns about productivity, reduced absenteeism and tardiness, concern about public image, and pressure from women’s advocacy groups (Friedman). A study of businesses in Taiwan revealed three motives for offering benefit programs to employees: meeting physical and psychological needs of employees in order to ensure productivity, maintaining competitiveness with other companies, and following social and cultural values (Hong, Yang, Wang, Chiou, Sun & Huang, 1995). The above findings

are all consistent with the concept of "enlightened self-interest" (Auerbach, 1990, p. 391), which is described as organizations' acknowledgement that helping their employees balance work and family life, which are no longer separable, is in the organizations' best interests.

Certain characteristics of businesses may make efforts to address the work-family problems of employees more profitable and worthwhile for those businesses than for others. Resources in the literature have found that companies that are large in size (Galinsky, Hughes, & David, 1990; Goodstein, 1994; Selyer, Monroe, & Garand, 1995), have a large percentage of female employees (Axel 1985; Galinsky et al.; Goodstein; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Selyer et al.), and provide services to the consumer market (Axel; Galinsky et al.) are more likely to be responsive to the work-family issues of their employees.

A connection has been found between the size of an organization, and its responsiveness to work-family issues (Ingram & Simons, 1995). Large organizations are more likely than small organizations to be responsive to work-family issues (Goodstein, 1994). Larger companies must answer to numerous constituencies and may become targets for public pressure (Freeman & Gilbert, 1988) more so than smaller companies. Some of this pressure may emphasize the need for employers to be responsive to the family needs of their employees.

Studies have found that the presence of women in the workplace, either as employees or managers may influence employer involvement in work-family issues (Goodstein, 1994; Ingram & Simons, 1995). A study conducted by Selyer et al. (1995) found that the more female workers employed by a company, the more likely the

company was to offer family-friendly benefits and policies. Axel (1985) concludes that employers who manage large female work forces may be more aware of the work-family issues facing employees, and thus regard family-responsive programming more favorably.

Both Axel (1985) and Galinsky et al. (1990) agree that businesses that offer services to the consumer market may be more prone to adopt family-responsive programs. These businesses rely on a positive public image to maintain customers, and perceive responsiveness to work and family issues as affecting the corporate image.

Additionally, a business's attitude toward the effects of work-family issues and how other businesses are addressing them may determine how responsive it will be toward employee needs. The manner in which businesses perceive work-family conflict can affect how worthwhile they view efforts to help employees cope with work-family conflict. Buehler and Shetty (1976) state that a corporation's response to perceived social demands is contingent upon whether the demands are considered important to business, and the available resources within the corporation. If human resource professionals do not view work-family conflict as a relevant organizational issue, they are not likely to devote much attention to helping employees cope with it (Milliken, Dutton, & Beyer, 1990). Goodstein (1995) found that employer involvement in eldercare is associated with the perceived importance of eldercare benefits in relation to employee productivity. These findings suggest that businesses that perceive work-family issues as affecting the bottom line might also perceive more benefits from being responsive to employees' work-family issues. Therefore, they would be more likely to offer family-responsive programming to employees.

The manner in which businesses perceive family-responsive programming in competitor companies may affect their likeliness to assist employees with work-family issues. Milliken et al. (1990) suggest that businesses sometimes make decisions based upon evidence of trends within the population that might support the decisions. Ingram and Simons (1995) found that attention to other organizations' practices have a strong effect on the degree of responsiveness to work-family issues, which indicates that work-family policies not only influence employees, but other employers as well. Work-family assistance can become a concern between competitors, and if an industry leader adopts a certain work-family initiative, other companies within the industry will follow (Friedman & Galinsky, 1992). Milliken, Martins and Morgan (1998) found limited support that businesses vary from region to region and from industry to industry in the types of work-family benefits they offer. A high proportion of organizations within a given industry that adopt certain types of work-family benefits has been shown to significantly increase employer responsiveness in regard to work-family issues within that industry (Goodstein, 1994). This may suggest that businesses that believe competitors within a certain industry or region are offering family-responsive programs may be more likely to offer family-responsive programs as well.

Finally, Auerbach (1988) suggests that the likelihood for employers to resist adoption of work-family benefits is related to the amount of knowledge an employer has regarding work-family benefits. The more uninformed an employer remains about work-family benefits, the greater the likelihood to resist adoption. Goodstein (1994) also concludes that the expectation of benefits from offering family-responsive programs and a high level of knowledge about these programs motivates employers to offer them. This

finding implies that employers may be more prone to considering work-family benefits if they have more information about them.

Scope and Practice of Family Life Education

The field of family life education evolved from efforts begun at the turn of the 20th century to educate families as a means of preventing or reducing family difficulties arising from social change (Arcus & Thomas, 1993). Social change processes such as urbanization and industrialization were perceived as contributory factors in the development of family problems, due to the fact that these processes created an environment in which teachings from previous generations became increasingly inadequate (Kirkendall, 1973). In response to the changing needs of families and the changing social landscape, the family life education movement was created.

Thomas and Arcus (1992) state that the goal of family life education is “to strengthen and enrich individuals and family well-being” (p. 4). As stated in Chapter I, for the purposes of this study, family life education is defined as educational programs designed to assist families and individuals with their family responsibilities as a means of enhancing family well-being and reducing family problems. Certified family life educators are trained to address a wide range of issues in nine topic areas: (a) families in society, (b) internal dynamics of families, (c) human growth and development, (d) human sexuality, (e) interpersonal relationships, (f) family resource management, (g) parent education and guidance, (h) family law and public policy, and (i) ethics (National Council on Family Relations, 1999). Arcus and Thomas (1993) state several operational principles associated with family life education. Four operational principles are

particularly relevant to the practice of family life education in the workplace. The principles state that family life education (a) is based on the expressed and developmental needs of families, (b) addresses issues concerning individuals and families throughout the lifespan, (c) can be offered in a variety of settings, and (d) is educational rather than therapeutic. The first three operational principles demonstrate the flexibility of family life education; curriculum can be tailored to meet the diverse needs of individuals and families as they move through the developmental stages of the life cycle. Family life education curriculum can also be adapted for effective presentation in numerous environments. The last principle illustrates the preventative nature of family life education; programs are designed to provide helpful information that can be utilized by families to enhance well being and avoid potential difficulties. This approach may be particularly appealing for employers, because they can offer a family-responsive program designed to address problems before they have the opportunity to arise. Some employers already offer family life education to employees in the form of work/life seminars and parenting workshops.

Rationale for Family Life Education in the Workplace

Chow and Berheide (1988) present an interactive model conceptualizing the relationship between work and family. The model “recognizes the mutual interdependence between family and work, taking into account the reciprocal influences of work and family” (Chow & Berheide, p. 25). The interactive model supports a holistic approach to work-family problems, which incorporates resources from both the workplace and the home to create solutions (Chow & Berheide). This perspective

provides a theoretical rationale for employer-sponsored family life education programs. As a viable solution to dealing with work-family conflict, family life education is an employer-provided resource that equips the employee with personal resources that can be taken into the home.

Raabe and Gessner (1988) suggest that educational programs in the workplace can improve the coordination of work and family concerns. The authors propose that trends concerning work and family, information on work-family conflict, and problem-solving skills regarding work and family coordination are relevant topics that can be addressed by family life education in the workplace (Raabe & Gessner). Since workplace policies can influence the quality of life families enjoy, family life education seminars within the workplace can directly address some of the issues that might affect family well-being. Magid (1983) states that working-parent seminars can aid parents in relieving the anxiety and guilt associated with trying to manage competing work and family demands. This can be accomplished by providing opportunities for parents to share and discuss their concerns with other parents, and disseminating child development information to parents (Magid).

Fernandez (1986) conducted a study assessing 5000 employees' experiences relating to childcare, work-family conflict, and productivity. More than half of the employees surveyed supported the idea of workplace seminars on parenting issues. Such seminars would provide parents with skills to combat parenting problems, in addition to keeping supervisors and childless co-workers abreast of the issues affecting the work and family lives of employees with children (Fernandez). The study found that a high percentage of men and women expressed interest in workplace seminars dealing with

work-family stress, although some reported relatively low levels of work-family stress (Fernandez). This suggests that stress related to the combined demands of work and family, regardless of its intensity, affects a wide population of employees, and these employees may benefit from family life education programs addressing methods of dealing with work-family stress. The study also showed support for the assertion that family life education programs may prevent certain problems associated with parenting issues, thus contributing to increased productivity and reduced absenteeism on the job. Those employees experiencing high unproductivity rates due to parenting stress, or high absenteeism rates due to child care arrangements may benefit from parenting seminars devised to help them resolve these problems. Fernandez suggests that parenting and work-family training seminars are relatively low-cost, easily adaptable first steps toward a comprehensive strategy to assist employees with work-family concerns.

Social Exchange Perspective

Social exchange theory is an appropriate theoretical perspective for this assessment of employer attitudes relating to family life education in the workplace, because the theory examines the motives behind the various actions of individuals and organizations. This study seeks to identify characteristics that might influence employer level of concern for employee well-being, and to examine possible relationships between employer self-interest, employer employee-interest and the decision to implement family life education in the workplace. Each of these purposes is tied to employer motivation - the motivation to be concerned about employees' well-being and the motivation to emphasize either employer self-interest or employee-interest. Social exchange theory

focuses on motivation for human behavior and offers explanation as to why individuals and organizations might behave as they do.

Tenets of Social Exchange Theory

Homans (1961) conceptualizes exchange relationships as “an exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two persons” (p. 13). Blau (1964) defines social exchange as voluntary actions by individuals that are motivated by reciprocal actions that are expected from others. Exchange theory assumes that individuals are rational beings whose behaviors are guided by self-interest (Nye, 1993). During everyday interactions with others, individuals calculate the costs and rewards associated with their behaviors, and choose from alternative behaviors based upon their ability to provide maximum profit and minimal cost (Nye). Homans presents the “rule of distributive justice” (p. 75), which states that individuals in exchange relationships expect their rewards to be proportional to their costs, and their profits to be proportional to their investments. Some exchange relationships are rewarding because one party strives to provide rewards to the other party (Blau). When this is the case, the rewarded party feels obligated to reciprocate, and thus, a relationship is established in which both parties engage in continued reciprocation. If both parties value the rewards received from the exchange, both will be prone to continue supplying services, and both will continue to feel obligated to reciprocate (Blau). Blau and Homans agree that the rewards in social exchange relationships do not have to be tangible, but may be intrinsic rewards that make individuals feel good about themselves. Although some behaviors can be traced to selfless motives, individuals tend to require some incentive for acting selflessly (Blau).

From a social exchange perspective, employers may perceive benefits such as increased productivity, decreased turnover and tardiness, and increased morale as rewards produced by the presence of family-responsive programs. Similarly, the costs associated with the design and implementation of family-responsive programming may be viewed as necessary costs to produce the desired rewards. If social exchange theory is to be applied to the employer-employee relationship as it pertains to family-responsive programming, one must assume that those employers who offer family-responsive programs perceive the costs of implementation to be less than the rewards produced. If the costs associated with implementation are determined to outweigh the rewards, one must assume that employers will not choose to pursue implementation.

Social Exchange and Organizational Behavior

One aspect of social exchange relationships that has particular relevance to business owners is social approval. Blau (1964) explains that social approval is a basic reward sought by most individuals in their social relationships, and engaging in behavior that is perceived as selfish by others makes obtaining social approval difficult. The idea of social approval can be used to address organizational behavior more specifically by examining the concept of organizational legitimacy. Maurer (1971) states that "legitimation is the process whereby an organization justifies to a peer or superordinate system its right to exist" (p. 361). Organizations attempt to create congruence between the social values implied by their activities, and the acceptable behavioral norms in the larger social system. When the two value systems are congruent, organizational legitimacy exists; however, when incongruency is present, legal, economic or other social

sanctions may result (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975). If an organization or a business does not establish legitimacy, a threat to its continued existence is present.

The literature on employer motivation to provide family-responsive programs supports the notion that businesses may use benefits as a means of maintaining legitimacy. Friedman and Galinsky (1992) cite several social influences that have resulted in corporate responsiveness to work and family issues. These influences range from labor shortages and increasing numbers of women in the workforce, to union pressures, media attention to work and family issues, and work and family legislation. These influences have shaped the prevailing norms of American society such that companies are now expected to take some responsibility for addressing work and family issues. Aside from the perception that family-responsive policies in the workplace may result in measurable rewards such as gains in productivity and recruitment, (Friedman, 1987; Axel 1985), employers also perceive less tangible benefits, such as improved corporate image (Stillman & Bowen, 1985). As employers strive to make their activities fit with new norms pertaining to work and family issues, they improve their image in the eyes of influential social constituencies. The rewards gained through legitimation by public opinion are valuable to employers. Homans (1961) states that people are often rewarded for conformity by social approval. Taking into account exchange perspective, organizational legitimacy is an intangible reward in exchange for conformity to social norms and values. This exchange provides employers with approval by the larger social system. Oliver (1991) asserts that when organizations believe that conformity will enhance social fitness, they will probably conform to social norms. Although there are costs associated with offering family-responsive programs to employees, businesses can

gain social rewards, such as legitimacy and approval, by addressing work and family issues.

Approval is also important in the relationship between employer and employee. Blau (1964) states that individuals tend to communicate approval of their superior and their obligation to him/her when they determine that the advantages from a superior's exercise of power are greater than the disadvantages. A previous study has shown that employed parents who benefit from family-responsive policies in the workplace tend to be attached to the organization, due to the fact that it reduces their work-family conflict (Aryee, Luk, & Stone, 1998). Additionally, research studies examining perceived organizational support (POS), the extent to which employees believe that the organization is concerned with their well-being (Shore & Wayne, 1993), revealed that POS levels are related to organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors within the workplace (Settoon, Bennett & Liden, 1996; Shore & Wayne). This supports Blau's (1964) assertion that social exchange relationships evolve into interactions in which parties tend to engage in reciprocal behavior. These findings indicate that those organizations that show concern for employees, perhaps by implementing family-responsive programs, may reap benefits when employees reciprocate with higher levels of employee commitment and positive behaviors. This demonstrates another exchange between employer and employee in which the employer may receive rewards from addressing work and family issues.

An exchange perspective can be applied to corporate behavior during the decision-making process regarding implementation of family-responsive programs in the workplace. As mentioned previously, employers are motivated by their own self-interests

and tend to implement family-responsive programs only when there is a perceived profit associated with doing so. If the associated costs of a program outweigh the perceived rewards of implementation, the program probably will not be implemented. Aside from measurable rewards gained by the implementation of family-responsive programming, employers may also gain intangible rewards in the form of social approval from employees and from society at large.

Hypotheses of the Study

H_{1a}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will report higher levels of employee-focused concern than other businesses.

H_{1b}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will be more likely than other businesses to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{2a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{2b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{3a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{3b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{4a}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{4b}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research study employed a non-experimental, descriptive research design. The purpose of descriptive research is to "describe systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest, factually and accurately" (Isaac & Michael, 1995). Data were collected for this study utilizing mail survey methods. The specific purpose of this study is to provide information to family life educators concerning employers' perspectives on family life education in the workplace. The general purpose of this study is to provide relevant information that will contribute to the expansion of family life education into workplace settings. The findings will give a better understanding of the factors influencing employers' decisions regarding family life education in the workplace.

Sample

Random sampling methods were used to identify a sample of 200 businesses in Oklahoma City, one of the major metropolitan areas in the state of Oklahoma. Businesses were selected from this metropolitan area due to the fact that it contains the largest concentration of businesses in the state. Ideally, the sample obtained from this area contains businesses representing a diversity of employment sizes and business types. The *1999 Oklahoma Business Directory*, which provides the names and contact information for businesses within the state of Oklahoma, along with ranges for employment size of

each business, comprised the sampling frame for the study. A sampling frame is "a list of the elements of a population from which a sample actually is selected" (Schutt, 1999, p. 615). The researcher used systematic random sampling methods to obtain a sample of 200 businesses from the sampling frame. Schutt defines systematic random sampling as a sampling method in which "sample elements are selected from a list or from sequential files, with every nth element being selected after the first element is selected randomly within the first interval" (p. 617). Businesses with employment sizes of less than 100 were not included in the sample, in order to avoid surveying establishments that were too small to consider a broad range of employee benefits that might include work/life programs due to cost considerations. However, although all businesses listed within the sampling frame were indicated to be businesses with employment sizes greater than 100 employees, several respondents indicated that their establishments employed less than 100 employees. This will be discussed further in the next chapter. Eighty-eight of the 200 businesses sampled responded to the survey, which resulted in a 44% response rate.

Instrument

The survey instrument developed for this study was designed by the researcher in order to assess employers' perceptions of work/life workshops in the workplace. The term "work/life workshop" was used on the survey instrument in place of the term "family life education," which is used throughout the literature review. This change was made in an effort to make the terminology used in the instrument more understandable to business personnel participating in the study. While many of them might have been unfamiliar with family life education, most of them were likely to be more familiar with

work/life workshops. In the presentation of the survey data, "family life education programs for the workplace" and "work/life workshops for the workplace" will be considered equivalents to one another.

The survey instrument created for this study was the Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire (WLWQ), a 30-item questionnaire written by the researcher. (See Appendix D). Divided into six broad categories, the questionnaire measured (a) employers' knowledge regarding work/life workshops (Items 1-4), (b) employers' beliefs regarding the prevalence of work/life workshops in Oklahoma City (Item 5), (c) factors related to employers' motivation to offer work/life workshops in the workplace (Items 6-24), (d) employers' perceptions about the relationship between work and family balance, and productivity (Item 25), and (e) employers' ideas about whether work/life workshops are a reasonable option for their establishments business (Item 26). The last portion of the questionnaire (Items 27-30) provided demographic data about the participating businesses, including primary function of the business, employment size, percentage of females employed, and whether work/life workshops were currently offered to employees. Portions of the WLWQ, particularly the section regarding employer motivation to offer work/life workshops, were modeled after the survey utilized by Magid (1983) in a study of employer initiatives for child care benefits. Items which cited possible employer motivations for implementing child care initiatives and perceived benefits to employers in Magid's study were used in the WLWQ to examine possible employer motivations for offering work/life workshops. The format for mail questionnaires suggested by Dillman (1978) was used in the creation of the WLWQ. A professional in the area of personnel benefits, a professional in the area of employee

assistance programs and a professional in the area of family relations and child development reviewed the questionnaire for content validity and face validity.

Three composite variables were formulated for this study: employer knowledge, employer-focused concern and employee-focused concern. The employer knowledge variable is a measure of how knowledgeable employers are in regard to work/life workshops for the workplace, and was created by combining four items from the survey instrument. Employer knowledge items are indicated by an asterisk in Table 2 of the Results chapter. Possible scores for employer knowledge ranged from 0 to 5, where 0 indicated a low knowledge level and 5 indicated a high knowledge level. Cronbach's alpha for this subscale is .83. The employer-focused concern variable and the employee-focused concern variable measure employer self-interest and employer employee-interest, respectively. Employer-focused concern was created by combining 10 items from the survey instrument, and employee-focused concern was created by combining seven items. Employer-focused items and employee-focused items are indicated by two and three asterisks, respectively, in Table 2 of the Results chapter. Each of these composite variables was scaled from 0 to 5, where 0 indicated a low level of concern and 5 indicated a high level of concern. Cronbach's alpha for these subscales are .88 for employer-focused concern and .85 for employee-focused concern.

The response categories for Item 27, which asks respondents to indicate the primary function of their business, were patterned after response categories utilized in a study by Selyer et al. (1995) which explored the prevalence of employer-supported benefits. The response categories for this item included "financial," "industrial," "service," "medical," "engineering," "oil related," "transportation," and "other." After the

data were collected, the researcher discovered that these response categories were not inclusive of a large percentage of the responses for this item. Over one-third of the responses fell into the "other" category, several without specifying a particular industry. Therefore, the response categories for this item were reworked using the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code categories. SIC codes are used by the United States government to classify businesses by type of activity in which they are engaged. The broad categories for SIC codes are "service," "retail," "financial," "wholesale," "manufacturing," "transportation," and "agriculture." (*Ward's Business Directory*, 1999). The SIC code for each establishment responding to the survey (n=88) was determined by locating each business in either the *1999 Oklahoma Business Directory*, or *Ward's Business Directory of U.S. Private and Public Companies*. These directories provide SIC codes for every business listed. Using the SIC codes for the responding businesses, the researcher divided the sample into the seven SIC code categories listed above. One responding business could not be located within either of the directories. This business was placed in the "other" category.

Data Collection Procedure

A telephone call was placed to each of the 200 businesses in the sample in order to identify the human resources director or personnel director within the organization. In cases where neither a human resources or personnel director could be identified, the researcher asked for the name of someone in charge of employee benefits for the company. The researcher's goal was to identify an employee within each company who would be able to accurately respond to the survey instrument. After identifying personnel

within most of the businesses to receive the survey instrument, a survey packet was sent to all 200 businesses. A modified Total Design Method (Dillman, 1978) was employed to implement the mail survey for this study. Potential study participants received (a) a personalized letter on university letterhead explaining the research project and asking for his/her participation (See Appendix A), (b) a copy of the survey instrument, (c) a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to return the survey instrument, (d) and a brief thank-you note (See Appendix C). This information was mailed in an envelope with the university logo on the front. In some cases, the appropriate personnel to receive the survey information could not be identified. For those cases, the letter and envelope were addressed to "Human Resources Director" instead of being personalized. The personalized letter and survey instrument were designed following the format suggested by Dillman.

The first mailing yielded 52 responses. Approximately one and a half weeks following the first mailing, a personalized follow-up letter was sent to 100 randomly selected non-respondents, along with another copy of the survey instrument. Only 100 of the 148 non-respondents were sent follow-up materials due to cost considerations. The follow-up letter (See Appendix B) was also designed following the format suggested by Dillman's research and was printed on university letterhead. University envelopes were used for the follow-up mailing, and self-addressed, stamped envelopes were included for respondents to return the surveys. The follow-up mailing yielded 36 additional responses, for a total response sample of 88. All materials associated with the data collection were kept in a locked filing cabinet and the only person who had access to them was the researcher. To ensure anonymity of the respondents, no identifying information was

associated with the collected data, with the exception of identification numbers on the front page of each questionnaire. These numbers were used solely to correspond with non-respondents with a follow-up letter. Respondents had the option of including a business card with their returned questionnaire if they were interested in receiving the results of the research study.

Prior to implementation, the procedures used in this study were reviewed and approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (See Appendix E).

Data Analysis

Three items of demographic data comprised three of the independent variables for the study: type of business, size of business, and percentage of females employed. Employer perceptions about how work and personal issues affect productivity, employer perceptions about the prevalence of work/life workshops, and employer level of knowledge regarding work/life workshops comprised the remaining independent variables. Dependent variables for the study consisted of level of employee-focused concern, and likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

The first and second hypotheses for the study are as follows:

H_{1a}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will report higher levels of employee-focused concern than other businesses.

H_{1b}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will be more likely than other businesses to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

These hypotheses were tested by running a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) between each independent and dependent variable to determine the variability between each independent variable response group in relation to the dependent variable. ANOVA was chosen as an appropriate statistical analysis for the data represented by the first two hypotheses because the independent variables were measured in ordinal level or non-continuous data, while the dependent variables were measured in ordinal level or continuous data. These levels of measurement meet the requirements for one-way ANOVA (Cozby, Worden & Kee, 1989).

The last six hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H_{2a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{2b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{3a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{3b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{4a}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{4b}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

Correlational analyses were run between the independent and dependent variables for each of the above hypotheses. This statistical analysis determined the extent to which the variables were associated with one another. Pearson product-moment correlation was determined to be the appropriate statistical analysis for the data represented by these hypotheses because both the independent and dependent variables were measured in ordinal level or continuous data, thus meeting the requirements for product-moment correlation (Isaac & Michael, 1995).

All of the statistical analyses for this study were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS) Version 7.5 (Einspruch, 1998).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the general characteristics of companies responding to the survey. The number of cases in each response category as well as percentages for each category are reported. The largest number of responses came from companies in the service (35.6%), retail (17.2%), financial (14.9%), and manufacturing (11.5%) industries. Less than 20% of the responses came from wholesale, transportation, and agriculture companies.

The majority of companies (60.9%) employed 250 workers or less, with businesses of 101-250 employees representing 47.1% of the respondents. Establishments of 100 employees or less comprised 13.8% of the respondents, which is surprising since the sampling frame utilized for the study consisted of companies with employment sizes of 100 or more. This discrepancy may be explained by either inaccuracies in reporting by respondents, or inaccurate demographic information used to compile the sampling frame. The former is probably more likely, since respondents may not have been clear on whether to report the number of employees at their location or in the company overall. Also, respondents may not have had accurate figures available when responding, and may have relied upon personal estimates of employment size.

Almost 29% of the companies reported that 41%-60% of their employees were female. Only slightly fewer (26.4%) companies reported that 21%-40% of their employees were female. Companies in which females made up a significant majority of the employees (61%-100%) accounted for a little over one-fourth of the respondents, and

companies in which females were a significant minority (0%-20%) accounted for less than one-fifth of the respondents.

Frequencies

The responses to the Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire are presented in Table 2. Findings revealed that employers have little or no information regarding work/life workshops for the workplace. Almost 70% of respondents indicated that they have no information or minimal information regarding either the content or effects of work/life workshops for the workplace. Similarly, 57.9% of respondents felt either very uninformed or uninformed regarding the content of work/life workshops, while 54.5% of respondents felt either very uninformed or uninformed regarding the effects of work/life workshops. A majority (56.8%) of employers reported that they believed none or few of the companies within the Oklahoma City area offered work/life workshops; however, more than one-third reported that they were not sure how many companies within the area offered work/life workshops. Employers have little knowledge of work/life workshops, and a large percentage of employers believe that work/life workshops are not prevalent in the Oklahoma City area. Not surprisingly, less than 20% of employers reported that they currently offer work/life workshops to employees. Nevertheless, 85.1% of employers believe that imbalance between work and personal life affects the productivity of employees, and 56.3% of employers would consider work/life workshops a reasonable option for their business. These findings suggest that although work/life workshops are not a popular benefit for employers to offer currently, the majority of employers may consider offering work/life workshops in the future.

Responses regarding employer factors which affect employer motivation to offer (or not to offer) work/life workshops in the workplace revealed that employers consider both self-interest and employee-interest during the decision-making process. For each of items 6-24, which listed several employer-focused and employee-focused factors related to motivation to offer (or not to offer) work/life workshops, a majority of respondents indicated that each motive was either important or very important. There were few employers who responded that these factors were either unimportant or very unimportant. Two factors in particular, however, received a relatively high percentage of responses in the "no opinion" category. These factors were "lack of interest among employees" (31.4% reported "no opinion"), and "desire not to interfere with employees' personal issues" (27.3% reported "no opinion"). Eight of the factors listed received a large majority (over 75%) of responses in either the "important" or "very important" category. These factors were as follows: (a) desire to help employees balance their work and personal lives, (b) desire to create a more stable workforce, (c) desire to create a work environment that promotes employee well-being, (d) amount of employees' time taken to attend seminars, (e) decreased absenteeism, (f) increased productivity, (g) improved quality of life for employees, and (h) improved job satisfaction for employees. Since each of these received such a high percentage of responses indicating importance, one may assume that these factors are potentially more influential for employers than the rest when deciding whether or not to implement work/life workshops. Interestingly, the cost of work/life seminars was not found to be one of the most important factors. Additionally, an equal number of employer-focused factors and employee-focused factors were represented among those reported to be most important by employers.

Three composite variables were formulated for this study: employer knowledge, employer-focused concern and employee-focused concern. The mean score for the employer knowledge variable was 2.06; the employer-focused concern was 3.48; and the employee-focused concern variable was 3.27. Although employer-focused concern was slightly higher than employee-focused concern, neither variable was notably higher or lower than the other.

Hypotheses

H_{1a}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will report higher levels of employee-focused concern than other businesses.

H_{1b}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will be more likely than other businesses to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

A series of ANOVAs was employed to measure differences on the dependent variables among response categories for percentage of female employees, employment size and type of business. Table 4 presents information regarding the ANOVA conducted which examined differences in employment size in relation to level of employee-focused concern. This was the only ANOVA that revealed significant between-group differences. A post hoc Scheffe procedure revealed significant differences among companies with employment sizes of 251-500 employees and companies with employment sizes of 1,000 employees or more. Companies with 1,000 employees or more reported lower levels of employee-focused concern with a mean of 2.35, as opposed to companies with 251-500

employees with a calculated mean of 3.81. This finding is contrary to the proposed hypothesis, which stated that larger sized companies would report higher levels of employee-focused concern.

H_{2a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{2b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

Table 3 presents the correlational analysis of the relationship between employer levels of employee-focused concern, likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option and the independent variables. Means and standard deviations are also presented. First, a significant positive correlation was found between employers' perceptions that balance between work and personal life affects productivity and the level of employee-focused concern ($r = .29, p < .01$). Employers appear to have higher levels of employee-focused concern when they perceive the balance between work and personal life to strongly affect productivity. Second, a significant positive correlation was found between employers' perceptions that balance between work and personal life affects productivity and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option ($r = .55, p < .01$). This indicates that the more strongly employers perceive the balance between work and personal life to affect productivity, the more likely they are to consider implementing work/life workshops in the workplace.

H_{3a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{3b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

No significant relationship was found to exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent and the level of employee-focused concern. However, a significant relationship was found between employers' perceptions that work/life workshops are prevalent and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option ($r = .30, p < .01$). This supports the notion that employers keep track of and tend to follow trends pertaining to competitor businesses in their area.

H_{4a}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{4b}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

Once again, no significant relationship was found between the independent variable and level of employee-focused concern, but we find a significant relationship between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option ($r = .35, p < .01$). It would appear that employers are more likely to consider work/life workshops an option when they know more about them.

Correlational analyses revealed two additional significant relationships in the data. Although no specific hypotheses were developed in regard to these variables, a significant relationship was found between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops and employers' perception that work/life workshops are prevalent ($r = .29$, $p < .01$). This suggests that employers choose to become more informed about workshops when they believe that their counterparts have them. An alternate interpretation is that employers who are informed about workshops are simply more likely than other employers to believe that their counterparts are using them. Analyses also revealed a significant positive relationship between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops and the level of employee-focused concern ($r = .43$, $p < 0.01$). This may indicate that employers make more of an effort to become informed about workshops when they are concerned about the needs of their employees.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Businesses Sampled

Characteristics	N	%
Type of Business		
Service	31	35.6
Retail	15	17.2
Financial	13	14.9
Wholesale	7	8.0
Manufacturing	10	11.5
Transportation	6	6.9
Agriculture	4	4.6
Other	1	1.1
Total	87	100.0
Employment Size		
0 - 100	12	13.8
101 - 250	41	47.1
251 - 500	15	17.2
501 - 999	10	11.5
1,000 and above	9	10.3
Total	87	100.0
Percentage of Females Employed		
0% - 20%	15	17.2
21% - 40%	23	26.4
41% - 60%	25	28.7
61% - 80%	18	20.7
81% - 100%	6	6.9
Total	87	100.0

Note: Total sample size = 88. Demographic data are missing for one case in sample. Respondent for that case did not complete demographics section.

Table 2
n=88

Responses to Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire

Variable Name (Item #)	Variable Category	N	%
*Information on content of work/life workshops (1)	No information	31	35.2
	Minimal information	28	31.8
	Not sure	5	5.7
	Some information	22	25.0
	A great deal of information	2	2.3
*Information of effects of work/life workshops (2)	No information	35	39.8
	Minimal information	23	26.1
	Not sure	6	6.8
	Some information	21	23.9
	A great deal of information	0	0.0
*How informed do you feel on content of work/life workshops (3)	Very uninformed	15	17.0
	Uninformed	36	40.9
	Not sure	12	13.6
	Informed	22	25.0
	Well informed	3	3.4
*How informed do you feel on effects of work/life workshops (4)	Very uninformed	17	19.3
	Uninformed	31	35.2
	Not sure	18	20.5
	Informed	18	20.5
	Well informed	4	4.5
How many businesses in OKC offer work/life workshops (5)	None	4	4.5
	Few	46	52.3
	Not sure	31	35.2
	Several	6	6.8
	Most	1	1.1
**Economic gain to company (6)	Very unimportant	7	8.0
	Unimportant	5	5.7
	No opinion	14	16.1
	Important	38	47.3
	Very important	23	26.4

* Indicates employer knowledge item

** Indicates employer-focused item

*** Indicates employee-focused item

(table continues)

Table 2 (con't)
n=88

Responses to Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire

Variable Name (Item #)	Variable Category	N	%
***Help employees balance work and personal lives (7)	Very unimportant	6	6.9
	Unimportant	3	3.4
	No opinion	7	8.0
	Important	43	49.4
	Very important	28	32.2
**Create more stable workforce (8)	Very unimportant	6	6.9
	Unimportant	4	4.6
	No opinion	7	8.0
	Important	35	40.2
	Very important	35	40.2
***Employee encouragement (9)	Very unimportant	5	5.8
	Unimportant	3	3.5
	No opinion	18	20.9
	Important	38	44.2
	Very important	22	25.6
**Attract new employees (10)	Very unimportant	4	4.7
	Unimportant	8	9.3
	No opinion	11	12.8
	Important	36	41.9
	Very important	27	31.4
***Environment that promotes employee well-being (11)	Very unimportant	5	5.7
	Unimportant	3	3.4
	No opinion	8	9.1
	Important	32	36.4
	Very important	40	45.5
**Cost of work/life workshops (12)	Very unimportant	4	4.6
	Unimportant	12	13.8
	No opinion	10	11.5
	Important	43	49.4
	Very important	18	20.7

* Indicates employer knowledge item

** Indicates employer-focused item

*** Indicates employee-focused item

(table continues)

Table 2 (con't)
n=88

Responses to Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire

Variable Name (Item #)	Variable Category	N	%
**Employee time to attend workshops (13)	Very unimportant	5	5.7
	Unimportant	5	5.7
	No opinion	8	9.2
	Important	47	54.0
	Very important	22	25.3
Lack of employee interest (14)	Very unimportant	4	4.7
	Unimportant	11	12.8
	No opinion	27	31.4
	Important	35	40.7
	Very important	9	10.5
Lack of information on work/life workshops (15)	Very unimportant	2	2.3
	Unimportant	6	7.0
	No opinion	19	22.1
	Important	49	57.0
	Very important	10	11.6
***Not interfere with employees' personal issues (16)	Very unimportant	6	6.8
	Unimportant	15	17.0
	No opinion	24	27.3
	Important	34	38.6
	Very important	9	10.2
**Advantage in recruitment (17)	Very unimportant	8	9.1
	Unimportant	7	8.0
	No opinion	12	13.6
	Important	39	44.3
	Very important	22	25.0
**Decreased absenteeism (18)	Very unimportant	7	8.0
	Unimportant	5	5.7
	No opinion	7	8.0
	Important	41	46.6
	Very important	28	31.8

* Indicates employer knowledge item

** Indicates employer-focused item

*** Indicates employee-focused item

(table continues)

Table 2 (con't)
n=88

Responses from Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire

Variable Name (Item #)	Variable Category	N	%
***Environment supports employees' personal well-being well-being (19)	Very unimportant	7	8.0
	Unimportant	3	3.4
	No opinion	12	13.6
	Important	41	46.6
	Very important	25	28.4
**Increased productivity (20)	Very unimportant	8	9.1
	Unimportant	4	4.5
	No opinion	8	9.1
	Important	42	47.7
	Very important	26	29.5
**Decreased turnover rate (20)	Very unimportant	8	9.1
	Unimportant	8	9.1
	No opinion	6	6.8
	Important	37	42.0
	Very important	29	33.0
***Improved quality of life for employees (21)	Very unimportant	7	8.0
	Unimportant	2	2.3
	No opinion	8	9.1
	Important	43	48.9
	Very important	28	31.8
**Better public relations (22)	Very unimportant	6	6.9
	Unimportant	9	10.3
	No opinion	10	11.5
	Important	42	48.3
	Very important	20	23.0
***Improved job satisfaction for employees (23)	Very unimportant	7	8.0
	Unimportant	3	3.4
	No opinion	5	5.7
	Important	43	48.9
	Very important	30	34.1

* Indicates employer knowledge item

** Indicates employer-focused item

*** Indicates employee-focused item

(table continues)

Table 2 (con't)

n=88

Responses from Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire

Variable Name (Item #)	Variable Category	N	%
How strongly does imbalance affect productivity (24)	Not at all	1	1.1
	Very little	1	1.1
	Not sure	11	12.6
	Quite a bit	50	57.5
	Very much	24	27.6
Consider work/life reasonable option for business (25)	Definitely not	2	2.3
	Probably not	8	9.2
	Not sure	28	32.2
	Probably yes	41	47.1
	Definitely yes	8	9.2
Business currently offer work/life workshops (30)	No	70	80.5
	Yes	17	19.5

* Indicates employer knowledge item

** Indicates employer-focused item

*** Indicates employee-focused item

Table 3

Pearson Correlations of Level of Employee-Focused Concern, Likelihood to Consider Work/Life Workshops a Reasonable Option, and the Independent

Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	M	SD
(1) Imbalance Affects Productivity	1.000	.089	.138	.292**	.554**	4.09	.74
(2) Prevalence of Workshops		1.000	.291**	.013	.300**	2.48	.74
(3) Employer Knowledge			1.000	.163	.352**	2.06	1.15
(4) Employee-Focused Concern				1.000	.438**	3.27	1.14
(5) Considers Workshops an Option					1.000	3.52	.87

**p < .01

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Employee-Focused Concern Levels by Employment Size

Employment Size	0 - 100	101 - 250	251 - 500	501 - 999	1,000 and above
Employer-Focused Concern	Mean = 3.24 SD = 1.03 n = 10	Mean = 3.27* SD = 1.04 n = 39	Mean = 3.81 SD = 0.81 n = 15	Mean = 3.63 SD = 1.01 n = 10	Mean = 2.35* SD = 1.38 n = 9

*Designates significant between-group differences as based on post-hoc analyses conducted subsequent to one-way ANOVAs. Differences are reported as significant at $p < .05$.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

Family life education in the workplace has the potential to assist employees in balancing work and family responsibilities, and may be a feasible addition to the list of family-responsive programs offered by employers. However, lack of information regarding how employers perceive family life education could hamper attempts to market family life education programs that satisfy the needs of employees and employers. The purpose of the present study was to provide information to family life educators concerning employers' perceptions of family life education in the workplace. This study was undertaken due to the scarcity of empirical research in the professional literature on family life education designed for the workplace. The researcher sought to accomplish four objectives related to the purpose of the study: (a) to identify characteristics that might influence employer level of concern for employee well-being, (b) to examine possible relationships between employer self-interest, employer employee-interest and the decision to implement family life education in the workplace, (c) to assess employer interest in family life education in the workplace, and (d) to assess employer knowledge concerning family life education in the workplace.

The following hypotheses were created for this study:

H_{1a}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will report higher levels of employee-focused concern than other businesses.

H_{1b}: Businesses that report higher percentages of female employees, are larger in size, and are service-oriented will be more likely than other businesses to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{2a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{2b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{3a}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{3b}: A positive relationship will exist between employer perception that work/life workshops are prevalent, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

H_{4a}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the level of employee-focused concern.

H_{4b}: A positive relationship will exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option.

No support was found for either Hypothesis 1a or 1b; however, the post hoc analyses for the ANOVA conducted on Hypothesis 1a did reveal an interesting finding. Significant differences in level of employee-focused concern were found for companies with employment sizes of 251-500 employees and companies of 1,000 employees or more. However, the larger companies reported lower levels of employee-focused concern than the smaller companies, which is contrary to the proposed difference between groups. Friedman and Galinsky (1992) offer one possible explanation for this finding. Small and mid-sized companies that fit certain profile characteristics have begun to offer family-responsive programs that meet the needs of their employees. These characteristics, which include being run by progressive management, being very profitable, and being in a tight labor market are similar to characteristics exhibited by larger companies that offer family-responsive programs (Friedman & Galinsky). Although larger companies were thought to have greater ability to fund family-responsive programs, smaller companies that are highly profitable may be equally capable of funding programs. Additionally, the smaller companies in this study may be more aware of employees' work-family concerns than larger companies, due to the fact that managers may work in closer conjunction with the other employees. Perhaps Hypotheses 1a and 1b were not supported by the data because work-family initiatives have become so widespread across the board that all categories of business sizes, types and constituencies are now paying closer attention to the work and family lives of employees.

Hypotheses 2a and 2b both received limited support from the data. A low positive correlation was found between employers' perceptions that balance between work and personal life affects productivity, and the level of employee-focused concern. A moderate

positive correlation was found between employers' perceptions that balance between work and personal life affect productivity, and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option. This agrees with the literature stating that organizations are more likely to help employees cope with work-family conflict if they perceive it to be a relevant organizational issue that affects the bottom line (Goodstein, 1995; Milliken, Dutton, & Beyer, 1990). Given that employers are motivated by self-interest, Statuto (1984) asserts that research must demonstrate how the work environment affects the home, which in turn, has an effect on work outcomes. In conjunction with the present research findings, demonstrating the link between work/life workshops, employees' family lives and employee productivity may be one way to present work-family issues in relation to the self-interests of employers. This approach may be instrumental in convincing employers that having a range of family-responsive programming can yield corporate benefits, and should be an important, legitimate business concern (Friedman, 1987; McNeely & Fogarty, 1988).

The data failed to provide significant support for Hypothesis 3a, which sought to find a positive relationship between employers' perceptions that work/life workshops are prevalent and level of employee-focused concern. However, a low positive correlation was found between employers' perceptions that work/life workshops are prevalent and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option. These findings indicate that while trends regarding work/life workshops in the workplace may not affect employers' actual level of interest in employee needs, they may have some bearing on employers' tendency to consider workshops for their businesses. Furthermore, while some businesses may believe that work/life workshops are prevalent and worth adopting,

this does not necessarily mean that there is a connection between the existence of these programs and the level of concern for employees.

Hypothesis 4a was not supported by the data. There was no significant relationship between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops and the level of employee-focused concern. Hypothesis 4b did receive limited support in the data. A low positive correlation was found to exist between the level of employer knowledge regarding work/life workshops and the likelihood to consider work/life workshops a reasonable option. Auerbach's (1988) contention that the more uninformed an employer remains about work-family benefits, the greater the likelihood to resist adoption explains why higher levels of employer knowledge were related to increased likelihood to consider work/life workshops and vice versa. Although few employers in the study reported that they felt informed regarding work/life workshops, they appeared to be more apt to consider workshops when they had more information on them.

Four hypotheses related to employers' level of concern for employees were proposed, along with four hypotheses related to employers' likeliness to consider work/life workshops for their business. By proposing hypotheses in this manner, the researcher sought to make connections between certain employer perceptions and characteristics, and employer beliefs about employee needs and work/life workshops. For instance: Is the perception that work/life workshops are prevalent related to the importance of employee needs for employers? Is the size of a business related to its likeliness to adopt work/life workshops? The researcher proposed these hypotheses based on the assumption that certain characteristics might motivate employers to be less self-interested and more employee-focused, and that the same characteristics might motivate

them to be more likely to consider work/life workshops for the workplace. Only one of the hypotheses pertaining to level of concern for employees was supported by the data, whereas three of the hypotheses pertaining to likeliness to consider workshops were supported. Although a modest relationship was found between employer characteristics and likeliness to consider work/life workshops, little support was found for the assumption that certain characteristics relate to employee-focused concern on behalf of the employer. Perhaps this indicates that social exchange theory is an accurate lens through which to interpret employer behavior. While certain employer characteristics were related to employer likeliness to consider work/life programs, the same characteristics were usually not related to employer level of concern for employee needs. Therefore, just because certain factors motivate employers to respond to work-family issues within the workplace, one cannot necessarily assume that the same factors motivate employers to be less self-interested and more interested in employee needs.

Several interesting results were found in the data aside from the statistical analyses. Employers reported very low levels of knowledge regarding both the content and effects of work/life workshops for the workplace, and the vast majority of businesses did not offer work/life workshops to employees. This is not unusual, given that work/life workshops are typically not included in the list of "traditional" family-responsive benefits, such as parental leave or alternative work arrangements. These findings suggest that employers might choose to remain uninformed about work/life workshops because they do not perceive workshops as an important benefit to offer, and therefore, not worth the effort required to become better informed about them. On the other hand, employers may have chosen not to consider workshops for their employees, not because they

perceive the workshops as unimportant or ineffective, but simply because they are unaware of their potential benefits. Despite their lack of knowledge, however, a majority of employers in the study do consider work/life workshops a reasonable option for their business. Combined with the finding that a substantial percentage of employers were unsure about whether they would consider work/life workshops for the workplace, the responses indicate that employers are not against implementation of workshops, but rather seem to be waiting for more information before making a decision. A very high proportion of employers believe imbalance between work and personal life strongly affects productivity, signifying that employers do see connections between their employees' work and personal lives. Information on how work/life workshops can help employees balance the two might be the type of additional information employers need in order make the decision to implement work/life workshops.

Employers indicated that eight factors related to motivation to offer (or not to offer) work/life workshops were quite important. Of the eight, four factors were employer-focused and four were employee-focused. Although most of the hypotheses relating to level of employee-focused concern were not supported by the data, the fact that employers consider a number of employee-focused factors to be important is meaningful. Employers do consider employee-related factors in the decision-making process with regard to work/life workshops. Despite this study's inability to find relationships between certain employer characteristics and levels of employer concern for employees, the findings mentioned above support the notion that employers' motivation to offer work/life workshops does not rely solely on factors based in self-interest. In keeping with social exchange theory, while self-interest might be the primary

consideration for making business decisions, the needs of employees are considered as well.

Limitations

Several limitations to this study must be acknowledged. First, although random sampling techniques were utilized, the sample size in this study was relatively small due to cost considerations on behalf of the researcher. Therefore, the sample may not be representative of all businesses of 100 employees or more in the Oklahoma City area. Further research is needed before generalizability can be applied to all businesses with these characteristics, and to businesses outside of this region of the country.

Second, when utilizing self-report methods to collect data, there exist risks associated with inaccuracy in reporting. Respondents participating in the study may have been, in some cases, unqualified to respond to the survey questions. Although the surveys were addressed to persons who seemed appropriate for participation, there is no way to verify who actually responded to the survey questions. Similarly, there is no way to verify the accuracy of information reported. Social desirability bias is also a consideration when using self-report data collection methods. These drawbacks to using self-report methods can be lessened by conducting similar research on another sample. Such information could be compared to the current research in order to check the accuracy of self-report.

Third, this study utilized a survey instrument that was designed by the researcher. As this was the pilot study utilizing the survey instrument, issues concerning its validity are important. Possible shortcomings in the validity of the instrument may have affected

the results of the study, thus limiting their generalizability. The findings obtained in this study may be used as pilot test results with regard to the survey instrument. In this manner, measurements of validity may be established.

Recommendations

The results of the present study have several implications for the practice of family life education in the workplace, and for future research regarding employer responsiveness to work-family programs. Although the strength of the relationships found in the study were moderate to low, they do open up possibilities for further investigation, and the descriptive data reveal information that has yet to be obtained from employers regarding work/life programs for the workplace.

There appears to be substantial interest in family life education for the workplace on behalf of employers, however, many businesses have chosen not to offer these programs to employees, and many employers feel uninformed in regard to family life education. Practitioners can assume that there is a need to disseminate more information to the business sector regarding family life education programs for the workplace. Indicators suggest that the more information employers have, the more likely they are to offer family life education as a benefit option for employees. Therefore, one of the first steps toward incorporating family life education programs into the workplace is to increase their visibility so that employers will have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of what the programs offer. The research findings and the literature suggest that finding ways to link family-responsive programming with the bottom line is an effective tool to get employers' attention. Consequently, practitioners will need to

demonstrate to employers that family life education can improve work-family balance for employees, and can thereby improve employee work performance. This requires professionals to be accountable for the effectiveness of the family life education programs they design and implement. An emphasis on evaluating and documenting the effectiveness of various programs will allow practitioners to "sell" employers on the idea that family life education produces results and is worth the cost of implementation.

The study reveals that although certain characteristics were thought to be associated with increased responsiveness to work-family issues, a new trend may be emerging among employers. Given the widespread attention to work-family issues in the workplace, employers who may not have implemented work-family programs ten years ago may be more prone to implementing them now. This broadens the population of businesses family life educators can target to distribute information about educational programs for the workplace. Practitioners should not feel limited to those business populations traditionally labeled "responsive" by the work-family literature. Likewise, additional research on traditionally "unresponsive" business populations may be warranted. For instance, the parameters specified in the current study excluded businesses of less than 100 employees. Conducting the same study on businesses previously excluded due to size would result in a more comprehensive understanding of employers' perceptions concerning work/life programs.

Research examining how employer self-interest and employee-interest relates to the decision to adopt family-responsive programs can be of great benefit to family life educators seeking to practice in a business setting. This study attempted to make connections between certain employer characteristics and employers' level of employee-

focused concern, as opposed to employer-focused concern. Although few connections were made, this area of investigation may be relevant to the successful marketing of family life education programs to employers. If practitioners are able to determine the processes involved in the decision to adopt family-responsive programs, they will be better able to dialogue with employers concerning practical uses for educational programs in the workplace.

An important factor in the decision to adopt any family-responsive program for the workplace is the influence of corporate culture. Corporate culture refers to the set of norms and values which dictate appropriate behavior within the workplace. Although a measure of corporate culture was beyond the scope of the current study, future research should attempt to incorporate assessments of culture along with information about employers' perceptions of various work-family policies. This may provide researchers with a clearer picture of how self-interest and employee-interest are manifested in business philosophy and practice, and how these may be related to decisions about the adoption of different family-responsive programs.

Lastly, a few modifications may be made to the survey instrument in order to obtain more information about the study participants and their interest in work/life workshops. Including items about the characteristics of the respondents, such as age and gender, may provide a means of assessing whether these characteristics are related to the responses of the participant. Additionally, exploring whether a business has ever implemented work/life workshops in the past or plans to implement workshops in the future may give higher quality information in regard to how interested business are in work/life workshops.

Family life education has yet to be included in employee benefits packages on a wide scale. However, employers are interested in learning more about how this particular benefit might assist them and their employees. As practitioners and researchers, family professionals need to further investigate how they can create new solutions to help employers and employees get the most out of their work and family lives.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Cover Letter to Business Sample: First Mailing

June 5, 1999

«First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Company_Name»
«Company_Address»
«City_State» «Zip_Code»

Dear «First_Name» «Last_Name»:

Growing numbers of employers are recognizing that employees' personal lives have an effect on their work performance. Research suggests that job performance may be enhanced by having programs in the workplace to help employees balance their work and personal lives. However, little information is known about employers' perspectives on these programs.

You are one of a small number of business personnel selected from Oklahoma City to give your opinions on work/life workshops in the workplace. These are instructional workshops that are designed to help employees balance their work and personal lives. Your response is very important, because your opinions will reflect those of business personnel throughout the Oklahoma City metro area.

Your responses will be kept confidential, and will be used for research purposes only. The only identifier associated with your questionnaire will be a number. This number will be used only to determine whether we have received your completed questionnaire. You will never be required to write your name anywhere on the questionnaire. By completing and returning your questionnaire, you have consented to participate in this research project; however, please keep in mind that your participation is voluntary. You are free to refuse participation, or withdraw your consent and participation at any time by contacting me, LaKisha Carter, at (405) 372-8827, or Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, telephone (405) 744-5700.

The results of this research may be useful in helping businesses become more informed about their options concerning work/life workshops in the workplace. You may receive a summary of the results by enclosing a business card with your completed questionnaire in the return envelope **by Wednesday, June 16, 1999**. Please do not write this information on the questionnaire. Results will be sent to you as soon as they become available.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please call me at the number listed above.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

LaKisha Carter
Graduate Student

APPENDIX B

Cover Letter to Business Sample: Second Mailing

June 17, 1999

«First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Company_Name»
«Company_Address»
Oklahoma City, OK «Zip_Code»

Dear «First_Name» «Last_Name»:

About a week ago I sent you a questionnaire on your opinions regarding work/life workshops in the workplace. As of today, I have not yet received your questionnaire. If you have recently mailed your questionnaire and I have not received it yet, please accept my sincere thanks. If you have not mailed your questionnaire, please do so today.

I have undertaken this research study because I believe that the business perspective on work/life workshops is important. We can utilize your opinions to help businesses become better informed about their options concerning work/life workshops.

I am contacting you again because of the importance of each questionnaire sent out as part of this study. Only 200 businesses were randomly selected to participate in this study from the thousands of business in the Oklahoma City area. Your response is essential in order to make this study representative of all the businesses throughout the city.

If you have misplaced your questionnaire, a replacement questionnaire has been enclosed for your convenience. Please return it in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by **Friday, June 25, 1999**. If you have any questions, you may contact me at (405) 372-8827.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Cordially,

LaKisha Carter
Graduate Student

APPENDIX C
Thank You Card

Thank You.

Please accept my sincere thanks for sharing your opinions on work/life issues in the workplace. Your responses will help Oklahoma businesses to build a healthier, more productive workforce.

(Researcher's signature)

APPENDIX D

Work/Life Workshop Questionnaire

WORK/LIFE WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

The term “**work/life workshops**”, as used within this questionnaire, refers to educational programs specifically designed to help employees balance their work lives and personal lives more effectively. Examples of topics that may be addressed by work/life workshops are stress management, time and money management, interpersonal communication skills, goal-setting and problem-solving, parenting issues, and health and fitness.

DIRECTIONS: Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible, regardless of whether your business currently offers work/life workshops to employees. **DO NOT** write your name or any other identifying information on this questionnaire. All responses will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. Thank you for your assistance.

1. **How much information have you received regarding the content of work/life workshops for the workplace? (Circle one.)**

- 1 NO INFORMATION
- 2 MINIMAL INFORMATION
- 3 NOT SURE
- 4 SOME INFORMATION
- 5 A GREAT DEAL OF INFORMATION

2. **How much information have you received regarding the effects of work/life workshops for the workplace? (Circle one.)**

- 1 NO INFORMATION
- 2 MINIMAL INFORMATION
- 3 NOT SURE
- 4 SOME INFORMATION
- 5 A GREAT DEAL OF INFORMATION

3. **How informed do you feel regarding the content of work/life workshops for the workplace? (Circle one.)**

- 1 VERY UNINFORMED
- 2 UNINFORMED
- 3 NOT SURE
- 4 INFORMED
- 5 WELL INFORMED

4. **How informed do you feel regarding the effects of work/life workshops for the workplace? (Circle one.)**

- 1 VERY UNINFORMED
- 2 UNINFORMED
- 3 NOT SURE
- 4 INFORMED
- 5 WELL INFORMED

5. **How many businesses within Oklahoma City do you believe offer work/life workshops to their employees? (Circle one.)**

- 1 NONE
- 2 FEW
- 3 NOT SURE
- 4 SEVERAL
- 5 MOST

Listed below are several reasons why your business might choose to hold work/life workshops in the workplace. How important is each of these reasons to you? (Circle your answers.)

- 1 VERY UNIMPORTANT
- 2 UNIMPORTANT
- 3 NO OPINION
- 4 IMPORTANT
- 5 VERY IMPORTANT

6.	Economic gain to the company	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Desire to help employees balance their work and personal lives	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Desire to create a more stable workforce	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Encouragement from employees	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Improved position to attract employees	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Desire to create a work environment that promotes employee well-being	1	2	3	4	5

Listed below are several reasons why your business might choose NOT to hold work/life workshops in the workplace. How important is each of these reasons to you? (Circle your answers.)

- 1 VERY UNIMPORTANT
- 2 UNIMPORTANT
- 3 NO OPINION
- 4 IMPORTANT
- 5 VERY IMPORTANT

12.	Cost of work/life seminars	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Amount of employees' time taken to attend seminars	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Lack of interest among employees	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Lack of information on work/life seminars	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Desire not to interfere with employees' personal issues	1	2	3	4	5

Listed below are several possible effects of having work/life workshops available to employees in the workplace. How important is each of these effects to you? (Circle your answers.)

- 1 VERY UNIMPORTANT
- 2 UNIMPORTANT
- 3 NO OPINION
- 4 IMPORTANT
- 5 VERY IMPORTANT

17.	Advantage in recruiting new workers	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Decreased absenteeism	1	2	3	4	5
19.	More supportive environment for employees' personal well-being	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Increased productivity	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Decreased turnover rate	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Improved quality of life for employees	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Better public relations	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Improved job satisfaction for employees	1	2	3	4	5

25. How strongly do you think imbalance between work and personal life affects productivity for employees?
(Circle one.)

- 1 NOT AT ALL
- 2 VERY LITTLE
- 3 NOT SURE
- 4 QUITE A BIT
- 5 VERY MUCH

26. Do you consider work/life workshops a reasonable option for your business? (Circle one.)

- 1 DEFINITELY NOT
- 2 PROBABLY NOT
- 3 NOT SURE
- 4 PROBABLY YES
- 5 DEFINITELY YES

27. Circle the item that best describes the primary function of your business. (Circle one.)

- 1 FINANCIAL
 - 2 INDUSTRIAL
 - 3 MEDICAL
 - 4 SERVICE
 - 5 ENGINEERING
 - 6 OIL-RELATED
 - 7 TRANSPORTATION
 - 8 OTHER (Please specify.)
-

28. What is the total number of people employed at your business site? (Circle one.)

- 1 0 – 100
- 2 101 – 250
- 3 251 – 500
- 4 501 – 999
- 5 1,000 and above

29. Of the total number in item 27, what percentage is female? (Circle one.)

- 1 0% – 20%
- 2 21% – 40%
- 3 41% – 60%
- 4 61% - 80%
- 5 81% - 100%

30. Does your business currently offer work/life workshops to employees? (Circle one.)

- 1 No
- 2 Yes

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSES!

APPENDIX E

Institutional Review Board Permission Form

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Date: May 25, 1999 IRB #: HE-99-098
Proposal Title: "EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION IN THE
WORKPLACE"
Principal Investigator(s): Beulah Hirschlein
LaKisha Carter
Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt
Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Signature:



Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance

May 25, 1999

Date

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

VITA

LaKisha A. Carter

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION IN THE
WORKPLACE

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on December 19, 1973, the daughter of Sidney and Barbara Carter.

Education: Graduated from Putnam City North High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in May 1992; received a Bachelor of Science degree in Family Relations and Child Development from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May 1997. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December 1999.

Experience: Assistant to Coordinator for African American students, Oklahoma State University from 1995-1997; Coordinator for African American students, Oklahoma State University 1997-1998; graduate research assistant in Department of Family Relations and Child Development, Oklahoma State University from 1998-1999.

Professional Memberships: Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Oklahoma State University, 1997 to present; Kappa Omicron Nu National Honor Society, Oklahoma State University, 1996-1997; National Council on Family Relations, 1998 to present.