

Research Discussion Series

Working Fathers

Earning and Caring

Margaret O'Brien
Ian Shemilt
University of East Anglia



Women. Men. Different. Equal.
Equal Opportunities Commission

RESEARCH DISCUSSION SERIES

WORKING FATHERS: EARNING AND CARING

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION

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First published 2003

ISBN 1 84206 039 2

EOC RESEARCH DISCUSSION SERIES & WORKING PAPER SERIES

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to Darren Howell, Sally Wilkinson and Julia Warner of the Centre for Research on the Child and Family, UEA for their valuable support towards the production of this report.

In addition we wish to thank Peter Moss and Charlie Owen of the Thomas Coram Research Centre, Institute of Education for sharing their 1984-1997 LFS data set for the time trend analysis of parental working hours in Chapter 2. Very helpful technical guidance on the Labour Force Survey was also provided by Annette Walling (Office of National Statistics) and Stephen Hicks (Employment Market Analysis Research, Department of Trade and Industry). We are also grateful to Terence Hogarth (Institute for Employment Research, Warwick University) and Jack Kneeshaw (User Support, UK Data Archive, Essex University) who provided technical advice on the Work-Life Balance 2000 Baseline Survey datasets.

Finally we would like to thank members of the Advisory Group which was set up by the EOC for this project: Tom Beardshaw, Tony Burnett, Diane Houston, Gill Keep, John Park and Susan Taylor, and EOC staff including David Darton, Helen Lindars and especially Liz Speed for their comments on an earlier draft, which have helped to create a more readable and accessible document through improvements in style and presentation of content.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In Britain there is increasing appreciation of both the importance and diversity of fatherhood. Changes in parental employment patterns and family structures are creating new socio-economic and cultural contexts for negotiating what it means to be a father. Whilst academic inquiry into work and fatherhood is not new, these developments, together with current public policy conditions, have highlighted the need to understand more closely working fathers and the nature of their dual involvement with both work and family.

In March 2002, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) commissioned this report from the University of East Anglia to provide a review of recent literature on fathers in employment focusing on both their ability to balance work with family life and the role they play within the family. Alongside this, a secondary analysis of the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Work-life Balance 2000 datasets (Hogarth et al., 2000, see Endnote 1) explores provision, demand and uptake of family-friendly employment practices amongst fathers.

KEY FINDINGS

Literature Review

Family Life

- Whilst the volume of research on fathers is increasing, debate about the integration of work and family life still tends to be focused predominantly around mothers.
- Aspirations for more involved active fatherhood are high, especially amongst younger men. International time budget studies show an increase in the time fathers spend caring for their children since the mid-1970s, with the increase in father involvement greatest where partners are in employment.
- Time spent by fathers with children accounts for about one-third of total parental childcare time. Increases in fathers' work hours and earnings have a negative effect on father involvement during the week and those fathers working long hours tend to compensate with more childcare at weekends.
- Whilst some studies have found greater father involvement in families where mothers work full-time, other studies have shown that high maternal income is a stronger predictor of father involvement. Where fathers share nurturing and

supportive activities that serve children, they are also more likely to take part in household tasks.

- The quality of a father's job (satisfaction, levels of stress), as well as the quantity of hours worked, has an important influence on family relationships.

Work-life

- Fathers are more likely to be economically active and in full-time employment than non-fathers and economic activity rates are highest for fathers with dependent children. The vast majority of fathers work full-time which highlights the continued importance of breadwinning to the fatherhood role.
- EU data show that UK fathers work the longest hours in Europe and in 2001, the mean number of usual weekly hours worked by fathers was 46.1. In the same year, mothers' average weekly hours of work were 27.8.
- Around one in eight fathers work excessively long hours of 60 or more per week. Less than two per cent of mothers work such long hours.
- Overall, there has been relative stability in the economic activity and hours of work of parents in recent years, but with a slight trend towards work intensification in households.

Government and Employer Perspectives

- The current UK government's inclusion of fatherhood in public debate on the future of the family has stimulated further academic, policy, and practitioner enquiry. The broadening of policy initiatives on fatherhood into the area of employment has been a feature of their latter term in office. Whilst these advances have highlighted the aim of supporting employed fathers' involvement in parenting and family life, the government's view of fatherhood remains unclear, in part reflecting the continued emphasis which policy places on the economic role played by fathers.
- The introduction of paid paternity leave for the first time in Britain in April 2003 will signal the recognition of fathers' caring responsibilities by Government.
- The Nordic experience indicates that fathers' uptake of parental leave is greatest under four key conditions: when parental leave includes a designated paternal quota; where there is high wage compensation; where there is flexibility in the way leave can be used by couples and where male provision is publicised through government awareness campaigns. Other important factors

in successfully encouraging active fatherhood through policy initiatives include establishing the ‘business case’ for its provision, modelling by political and organisational leaders and presenting policies within a *gender collaborative* context.

- Whilst research evidence increasingly highlights the business benefits of introducing policies which can assist the reconciliation of work and family life, messages concerning the cost benefit of such policies remain mixed, with some employers reporting problems, even where take up has been encouraged as in Nordic countries.
- Swedish fathers, who take up higher than average amounts of leave, report more engaged family commitment, working fewer hours and more involvement with family and childcare.

Secondary Analysis

Attitudes and expectations

- There is a high level of support from fathers and mothers for work-life balance. Eighty per cent of fathers and 85 per cent of mothers agreed or strongly agreed that everyone should be able to balance their work and home lives in the way they want.
- Although three-fifths of employers also supported work-life balance this was at a lower level than amongst parents. Promotion of family-sensitive policies through formal communication and consultation mechanisms was variable.
- Fathers’ expectations about whether specific work-life balance practices could be made available in their current workplace were low. Mothers’ expectations of access to specific work-life balance practices were higher than those of fathers.
- Fathers had higher expectations about being allowed to take various forms of leave if required. Eighty per cent of fathers believed they would be able to take paternity leave and 85 per cent thought that they would be allowed time off to care for children if they were sick. In reality, the availability of leave was not quite as extensive as that anticipated by employees.

Experience

- Fathers’ actual use of flexible working practices was generally low. Flexitime, part-time/reduced hours and job-sharing were used by 20 per cent, 6 per cent and 2 per cent of fathers respectively. Mothers’ use of flexible working practices was always higher than fathers except in the case of shift work, which was used

by 25 per cent of fathers and 18 per cent of mothers. Compared to non-fathers, fathers used fewer flexible working practices.

- Amongst fathers, flexitime was used most highly by those in the public administration sector, the transport and distribution sector and in community, social and personal services and both in small and very large organisations. Managerial grades also had high usage. In addition, workforces that were more female dominated were associated with high levels of fathers' usage.
- Sixty-one per cent of fathers with a dependent child less than one year of age had taken paternity leave in the last year. This proportion provides an important national baseline prior to the introduction of paternity leave in April 2003. Fathers in non-manual, rather than manual, occupations were more likely to take paternity leave.
- Twenty-two per cent of fathers reported taking leave in the last year to care for children, for example, who were sick. This rose to 28 per cent for fathers whose youngest child was less than 11 years. Comparative figures for mothers were 29 and 41 per cent, suggesting that maternal responsibility for the care of children when they are sick continues to remain high.
- Fathers' and mothers' satisfaction with the absolute hours worked, the flexibility of the hours and the extent to which work and non-work interests were balanced was high, except in the case of the provision of childcare facilities, where satisfaction was low.
- Fathers' and mothers' satisfaction with their job overall, the number of hours worked, their flexibility over hours of work and the extent to which work and non-work interests could be balanced, declined markedly amongst those working the longest hours. The decline was sharpest amongst mothers.
- Despite satisfaction with working hours there was substantial *unmet* demand for flexible working conditions amongst parents, although fathers and mothers preferred different types of arrangements.
- A majority of employers felt that the impact of work-life balance practices and policies on the organisation was positive, although concern was expressed about costs and workload involved.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

National debate on the role of the father in family life

An informed public debate about how fathers balance their economic and emotional commitments to children and partners is required. The introduction of paternity leave could act as a catalyst for an ‘active fatherhood’ debate.

In order to facilitate this debate an Active Fatherhood Working Party could be developed early in 2003 with representation from, for example: government departments (including the Department of Trade and Industry, Department for Education and Skills, Department of Health and The Treasury), EOC, fathers’ organisations (e.g. Fathers Direct), women’s and mothers’ organisations (e.g. Fawcett Society; The Women’s Institute, The Maternity Alliance), children’s organisations (e.g. National Children’s Bureau), business (e.g. Confederation of British Industry, The Work Foundation), Trade Unions and academia.

Fathers and excessive working hours

The impact of fathers’ long working hours on family life should be considered in deliberations on the future of UK’s current opt-out of the Working Time Directive. British fathers continue to work long hours: over a third of fathers usually work 48 hours or more per week and a minority, 12 per cent, continue to usually work 60 hours or more per week. Whilst the economic dimension of fathering is still vital to men’s behaviour and identity as parents, excessive working hours begin to reduce work-family balance satisfaction and fathers’ involvement with children.

Fathers and paternity leave - the case of manual workers

Evidence from the analysis of the DfEE Work-Life Balance data set shows that nationally, fathers uptake of paternity leave (paid and unpaid) prior to the introduction of a flat rate paid provision in 2003 is already moderately high, particularly amongst those in non-manual occupations. To encourage uptake amongst fathers in manual occupations, targeted advertising and educational promotion will be required.

Fathers and parental leave schemes

The Nordic evidence suggests that fathers uptake of parental leave will be higher if income replacement levels are high and if a special dedicated paternal quota is adopted. In the light of this European evidence the Government should undertake monitoring of father uptake and satisfaction after the introduction of the new paternity leave, maternity leave and parental leave provision. Maternal and paternal levels of satisfaction should be compared and infant health and psychological welfare outcomes monitored. Consideration should be given to piloting a designated paternal quota period during the six months parental leave to encourage greater father uptake.

A gender collaborative approach

The evidence shows that fathers can act as supportive co-parents to their partners. From a working mother's perspective, enlisting paternal support is one useful strategy in the negotiation of work/family time. However a *gender collaborative* approach to the role of fathers in work-life balance policy is important since any further new policies which appear to subtract from current maternal provision could create extra strain for mothers.

Incorporating children's perspective

Parental leave and flexible working time arrangements should balance parent's and children's perspectives with the understanding that the needs of both groups vary over the life course. For example, in the first year of life sensitivity to the nutritional benefits of breast-feeding is an important factor and should be taken into account in any future debate about the relative lengths and flexibility of maternal leave and parental leave.

Fathers' preferred flexible working arrangements and the gender pay gap

Whilst fathers are asking for more flexibility in their working arrangements, they do not wish to reduce their working hours if this means a considerable reduction in income. However, the evidence suggests that fathers are more able and willing to alter their economic activity if any deficit in household income can be replaced by their partner to an equal or greater level. The cash vs. care negotiation in contemporary households cannot be separated from the current national gender differentials in income.

The business case

A significant proportion of employers support the principle of work-life balance but they need further encouragement and incentives to develop organisational policies which support fathers and mothers. Consideration should be given to developing an information pack on fathers' new responsibilities and obligations to children, and their families in light of changing legislation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In Britain there is increasing appreciation of both the importance and diversity of fatherhood. Changes in parental employment patterns and family structures are creating new socio-economic and cultural contexts for negotiating what it means to be a father. The growth of maternal employment, particularly in the early child-rearing years, has resulted in increasing numbers of fathers sharing the economic provider role with their partners (Brannen, Moss, Owen and Wale, 1997, 1997a). As a consequence, during the 1990s concerns have been increasingly expressed about the impact of work intensification on the welfare of children, mothers and fathers, particularly in dual earner families where both parents work full-time (e.g. Brannen and Moss, 1998; Galinsky, 1999; Green, 2001). A new vocabulary has developed to describe the time pressures under which contemporary families live - 'the time squeeze', the 'second shift', the 'time crunch', 'the time famine', and 'juggling work and family' have become common currency (Hochschild, 1989; Daly, 1996).

Accordingly there are greater expectations on men to become involved as fathers, active in the upbringing of children and supportive co-parents with their partners. Indeed, many men themselves, especially younger cohorts, wish to participate more fully in family life (Henwood, 2001; Lewis, 2000). At the same time higher levels of maternal employment can mean that working fathers are not looked after in the same way that they may previously have been in earlier generations (Reeves, 2002). As expectations for active fatherhood have become heightened, the compatibility of fathers' working and family life has come under increasing scrutiny.

Whilst inquiry into work and fatherhood is not new (Bell, McKee and Priestly, 1983; Moss, 1980; O'Brien, 1982; Pleck, 1979; Rapoport and Rapoport, 1976), until recently policy debate in Britain has still tended to focus on working mothers. With the growth of dual earner families there is a growing awareness of the limitations of a policy approach which concentrates only on mothers. A fuller appreciation of the relevance of understanding more closely working fathers and the nature of their involvement with both work and family is developing. Similarly, studies of workplace culture are incorporating a family dimension (e.g. Haas, Hwang and Russell, 2000; Lewis and Lewis, 1996). Higher levels of maternal employment can mean that working men are not looked after in the same way that they may previously have been in the household.

At a national level the Government has shown support for working fathers' parental responsibilities through the recognition of the EU Working Time Directive, paternity leave provision and the Work-Life Balance initiative (DfEE, 2000). These

developments are particularly important given that long working hours have often been cited as a major limiting influence on fathers' involvement with children. By the late 1990s British fathers were working the longest hours in Europe and fathers were working longer hours than non-fathers (Deven, Inglis, Moss and Petrie, 1998). Similarly over the same time period men and women's satisfaction with the hours they work has declined (Taylor, 2002, 2002a) leading employee organisations to call for an end to the long working hours culture (*About Time*, 2002).

This report presents principal findings from a literature review and secondary analysis of fathers in the workplace. The overall aims of the research were:

- To review currently available recent literature on fathers in employment in terms of their ability to balance work and family life and the role they play within the family, examining individual, family, governmental and organisational perspectives.
- To conduct further secondary analysis of the DfEE Work-life Balance 2000 Employee Survey and Employer Survey datasets (Hogarth, Hasluck, Pierre, Winterbotham and Vivian, 2000) in order to explore provision, demand and uptake of family friendly practices for fathers, making direct comparisons with mothers and highlighting differences between the perspectives of parents and employers. These data allow the first large-scale study in the UK of fathers in the workplace from the perspectives of both employers and parents.

1.2 Systematic literature review

A review of recent key research literature has been conducted on fathers in the workplace and within the family. As there is a burgeoning research literature on fatherhood, particularly from America (Marsiglio, Amato, Day and Lamb, 2000; Clarke and O'Brien, in press), the review was selective and organised around the following questions:

- **Fathers in the UK**

What is known about fathers in employment in the UK (including socio-economic characteristics, hours worked, regional differences)? What are the main differences between the characteristics of working fathers and working mothers? How do working fathers compare with other European and American working fathers?

- **Fathers' involvement in family life**

What is the contemporary role of British fathers in the home? How do fathers conceptualise their role? What is known about fathers' involvement in domestic responsibilities and childcare? What do we know about how mothers and fathers in

diverse family and employment contexts share and manage their childcare responsibilities and family commitments?

- Father-sensitive governmental and organisational policies

What are the main UK policy initiatives and examples of good practice both within individual companies and at governmental level, which have assisted men in combining employment with caring responsibilities? How have current policy and practice initiatives helped or hindered participative fatherhood? What is known about employers' attitudes to and provision of 'family friendly' employment practices in relation to men who are fathers?

For all these areas *opportunities* for and *constraints* on involved fatherhood have been highlighted.

Methodology

This involved a systematic review of literature sources from 1995 (and key texts prior to 1995) including a general search of electronic databases including Web of Science, EBSCO, PsychLit, PubMed, Medline, Eurostat and databases more dedicated to fatherhood issues which have been developing particularly in America.

Findings from surveys, in-depth case studies, cross-sectional, longitudinal work and mapping of existing services were evaluated in light of the research questions. Initiatives from key governmental departments (e.g. Department of Trade and Industry, Department for Education and Skills, The Home Office, The Cabinet Office) were analysed through inspection of public available web resources. Company and trade union level initiatives were reviewed through a range of information sources (e.g. The Work Foundation, Confederation of British Industry, Institute for Employment Research, Institute for Employment Studies, Tavistock Institute, Federation of European Employers, the TUC, the International Labour Organisation).

Interpretation of the data was guided by the following questions:

- What are the organisational driving factors which promote father-sensitive family-friendly employment practices and policies (e.g. gender equity concerns; recruitment/retention issues)?
- What are the constraints on the development and success of father-sensitive family-friendly employment practices and policies (e.g. a culture of long working hours; managerial and peer attitudes)?

1.3 Secondary analysis

The second element of the research was a secondary analysis of the DfEE Work-Life Balance 2000 (WLB2000) Employee Survey and Employer Survey datasets (Hogarth et al., 2000).¹ The aim of the secondary analysis was to describe the family-sensitive employment practices and policies available to fathers and to assess fathers' perceptions of, use of, and demand for such services, making comparisons between working fathers' and mothers' and examining the perspective of employers. Whilst the *gender dimension* of work-life balance was a key area in the initial analysis conducted by Hogarth et al. (2000) a comparative *parental dimension* was not a specific focus.

Methodology

Both surveys covered Great Britain and interviews were conducted by telephone between April and July 2000. The samples were independently drawn; that is, employees interviewed in the Employee Survey were not exclusively selected from the workplaces participating in the Employer Survey (Hogarth et al., *ibid*).

Employee Survey dataset

The WLB2000 Employee Survey dataset comprises data from a nationally representative survey of 7500 persons in employment in workplaces with five or more staff. For the purpose of secondary analysis of this dataset, working fathers (and mothers) have been defined as employed males (or females) with responsibility for one or more children within the household. This definition generated a sample of 1486 working fathers and 2260 working mothers, the vast majority of whom had co-resident dependent children (see Appendix 1).

Descriptive analysis involving the comparison of all fathers with all mothers used data weighted for sex, employment pattern (full-time or part-time), employment sector and size of workforce. Regression models were also constructed in order to identify driving factors associated with working fathers' (and mothers') expectations of access to, uptake of, satisfaction with and demand for family-sensitive employment practices and policies.² This form of analysis allowed further examination of the data by dimensions of variation such as age of father (or mother), employment status, age of youngest dependent child, usual hours of work, ethnicity,³ employment sector and other factors. This statistical procedure enables the impact of each factor to be determined whilst holding constant the other factors.

Characteristics of fathers and mothers within the Employee Survey sample are summarised as tables in Appendix 1. The proportion of fathers and mothers were fairly equally distributed across workplaces of different sizes, over 40 per cent were aged between 35 and 44, a quarter 25 to 34 and a further quarter 45 to 54, a majority

had either one or two dependent children and over 90 per cent were white. Just over half of the fathers within the sample were employed in managerial occupations and half of the mothers were employed in non-manual occupations. There was variation in the degree of representation across employment sectors, with just over a quarter of the fathers working within the 'manufacturing, agriculture, mining and utilities' sector and almost half of the mothers working within the 'health, education and other services' sector.

Employer Survey dataset

The WLB2000 Employer Survey dataset contains data from a nationally representative survey of 2500 workplaces with five or more employees. Appendix 1 also contains tables summarising selected characteristics of the Employers Survey sample. For the purposes of secondary analysis, data have been weighted to control for the size of workforce and the proportion of fathers and mothers within the workforce.⁴

1.4 Structure of the report

Chapter 2 reviews what is known about the lives of employed fathers in the UK at work and at home, drawing on data from the Labour Force Survey and literature focusing on the contemporary role of fathers in family life.

In Chapter 3, governmental and employer perspectives are examined, tracing recent moves towards a consideration of family-sensitive policies for working fathers in Britain and placing this within the wider European context. Current research on employers' attitudes to these policies is also reviewed.

Chapter 4 presents secondary analysis of the WLB2000 datasets. It examines patterns of provision of family-sensitive employment practices and policies and the information flows and consultation processes used to promote engagement with them. Uptake of flexible working time arrangements, forms of leave amongst fathers compared to mothers and parental and employer attitudes towards these practices and policies are also examined. Finally in Chapter 5, policy implications arising from the research are reviewed.

2 FATHERS AT WORK AND AT HOME

This chapter reviews what is known about the lives of employed fathers in the UK at work and at home.

- The first part of the chapter considers the characteristics of employed fathers with dependent children drawing on several waves of the Labour Force Survey Quarterly Household Survey (LFS) dataset and making direct comparisons with the working lives of mothers.
- In the second part of the chapter we review and summarise what is known about the contemporary role of fathers in family life, drawing mainly on the growing research literature from UK but also from the US. A particular focus is on how fathers and mothers in diverse family and employment contexts share and manage their childcare responsibilities and family commitments.

Despite the increasing volume of research on fathers, particularly in the US (Marsiglio, Amato, Day and Lamb, 2000; Clarke and O'Brien, in press), debate about work and family life still tends to be focused around mothers. The relationship between fathers' work and home life is rarely explored in detail (Brannen, Moss, Owen and Wale, 1997a). Whilst the recent *ONS Social Focus on Men* (Matheson and Summerfield, 2001) is a welcome contribution, in line with American attempts to improve national statistical data collection and analysis on fatherhood (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1998), demographic analysis by men's parental status is not routine in Britain.

Working fathers

The data presented in this section come mainly from secondary analysis of the Labour Force Survey Household dataset, Spring 2001 but also draw on the parallel dataset from Spring 1998. Where appropriate, comparison of 1998 and 2001 data allows examination of emergent trends over the period since the arrival of the Labour Government in 1997. The analysis has aimed to update knowledge about fathers in employment in the UK and to highlight differences between the characteristics of working fathers and mothers.

The analysis focuses on men and women aged sixteen and over with one or more co-resident dependent child (aged under 16 or under 19 and in full-time education) within their family unit and who may be biological, step or adoptive parents. It does

not include fathers (and mothers) absent from the household where their children live.⁵ Findings are organised around the following questions:

- How many fathers work and what do they do?
- What hours do fathers work?

2.1 How many fathers work?

In 2001 90 per cent of fathers in the UK were in employment compared to 67 per cent of mothers. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 show a breakdown of the economic activity of fathers and mothers in 2001 compared with 1998 and contrast the situation of working fathers and mothers with men and women who are not parents, and with lone parents.⁶

Comparing fathers and mothers

Economic activity rates of both fathers and mothers have increased slightly between 1998 and 2001. This upward trend is accounted for by an increase in full-time employment since part-time employment has remained stable (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2). The figures also show a marginal decline in the rate of unemployment amongst both fathers and mothers and in the rate of economic inactivity amongst mothers. Fathers and mothers continue to have different employment patterns: a far higher proportion of fathers than mothers work full-time and a much smaller proportion of fathers than mothers are economically inactive.

Comparing parents and non-parents

Comparisons of economic activity levels between parents and non-parents reveal different patterns for men and women. Whilst fathers are more likely to be economically active than men without children, mothers are less likely to be economically active than women without children. In 2001, 89 per cent of fathers were in employment compared with 76 per cent of men without children. By contrast, 67 per cent of mothers were in employment compared with 74 per cent of women without children.

Thus, within each gender group there is a parental status association with economic activity: for men, parenthood is associated with higher levels of economic activity whereas for women, parenthood is associated with lower levels of economic activity. Comparing full-time employment rates between parents and non-parents reveals similar trends: 86 per cent of fathers worked full-time compared with 72 per cent of men without children and 31 per cent of mothers worked full-time compared with 55 per cent of women without children. At this general level therefore, the impact of parenthood on economic activity operates in a different manner for men and women. The relatively higher rate of economic activity for fathers compared with non-fathers

across all age ranges can be seen in Table 2.4 suggesting that, for men, selection and cohort effects need to be considered alongside the impact of parenthood itself for a comprehensive analysis of male economic activity over time.

Comparing lone parents and couple parents

Economic activity rates of both lone fathers and lone mothers have also increased between 1998 and 2001 but remain at a lower level than for parents in couple households. During this time unemployment and economic activity rates also declined for both lone fathers and lone mothers, although economic inactivity remained at high levels in comparison to parents in couple households. The additional childcare responsibilities of lone fathers is an important factor in explaining their higher level of economic inactivity when contrasted to that of fathers in couple households (29 as opposed to 7 per cent). Previous comparable research also suggested that domestic obligation has a major effect on lone fathers' employment (Brannen et al., 1997a). In 1994, 54 per cent of lone fathers were employed compared with 64 per cent ten years earlier, showing a marked decline in the employment rate.

Table 2.1 Fathers' economic activity, 1998 – 2001

Economic Status	Per cent							
	All fathers		Non-fathers		Couple fathers		Lone fathers	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
Full-time employed	85	86	70	71	86	87	53	55
Part-time employed	3	3	5	5	3	3	7	7
Unemployed	4	3	5	4	4	3	10	9
Economically inactive	8	8	20	20	7	7	30	29

Notes: All fathers of working age, 16-64, figures are weighted estimates for the whole population
Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 1998 and 2001, Office for National Statistics

Table 2.2 Mothers' economic activity, 1998 – 2001

Economic Status	Per cent							
	All mothers		Non-mothers		Couple mothers		Lone mothers	
	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001	1998	2001
Full-time employed	28	31	53	55	30	32	21	25
Part-time employed	35	36	20	19	38	38	24	25
Unemployed	4	3	35	2	3	2	9	7
Economically inactive	32	30	24	23	28	27	46	44

Notes: All mothers of working age, 16-59, figures are weighted estimates for the whole population
Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 1998 and 2001, Office for National Statistics

In line with parental employment trends more generally, the most significant rise in economic activity for lone parents was in the proportions working full-time: from 53 to

55 per cent for lone fathers and from 21 to 25 per cent for lone mothers between 1998 and 2001. Lone fathers have an older age profile than lone mothers and more commonly care for older children, two structural factors which account for the gender difference in employment patterns between them (Employment Service, 1999).

Comparisons across Europe

Fathers' employment behaviour across Europe has rarely been analysed with the notable exception of the innovative work of the EC Network on Childcare (1993a, 1993b, 1996) and the EC's review on *The Reconciliation of Work and Family Life for Men and Women and the Quality of Care Services* (Deven, Inglis, Moss and Petrie 1998) which commissioned secondary analysis of the European Labour Force survey (see Table 2.3). The most recent analysis of the 1997 dataset showed that fathers' employment is usually at a higher level than that of non-fathers in each European nation. Similarly, nearly all fathers across Europe work full-time rather than part-time.

Table 2.3 Employment status of parents with children under 17, 1995, EU15⁷
Per cent

Country	Total Employed		Full-time Employed		Part-time Employed		Unemployed		Economically inactive	
	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers
Austria ⁸	93	65	91	38	2	27	3	4	3	30
Belgium	92	61	90	38	1	23	4	9	4	29
Denmark ⁹	88	74	86	49	2	25	6	10	6	15
Germany	91	54	89	27	2	28	5	7	4	36
Finland	82	60	79	52	3	8	11	12	7	25
France	90	61	88	40	2	21	7	11	3	26
Greece	90	47	88	43	2	4	7	5	3	48
Ireland	82	38	79	23	3	14	10	6	8	55
Italy	90	42	90	36	2	6	4	6	6	50
Luxembourg	95	44	95	31	<1	13	2	2	3	53
Netherlands	91	50	83	6	7	44	4	6	5	43
Portugal	92	69	91	62	2	7	4	6	4	25
Spain	84	35	83	29	1	6	11	15	5	50
Sweden ¹⁰	85	75	82	35	3	40	8	7	7	19
UK	86	57	84	20	2	37	8	6	6	36

Source: adapted from Deven et al. 1998¹¹

Other characteristics

Age of father and dependent children

Recent data show that the mean age of fathers at the birth of a first child is 30 (Matheson and Summerfield, 2001), representing a gradual rise over the 1990s. The employment rate amongst fathers peaks during the prime child rearing years (see

Table 2.4) and research evidence has long highlighted that overall economic activity rates are particularly high amongst the age group of men most likely to have dependent children (Moss, 1980).

Table 2.4 Employment rates by age, 2001

Per cent

Age	Couple fathers	Lone fathers	Non-fathers*	Couple mothers	Lone mothers	Non-mothers**
16-24	77	-	62	42	23	67
25-29	90	42	89	58	41	90
30-34	92	44	89	68	47	91
35-39	93	56	86	73	58	88
40-44	92	78	85	78	61	82
45-49	90	71	85	79	66	78
50-54	86	60	83	70	64	72
55-59	74	50	73	55	45	57
60-64	50	37	48	30	25	27
65+	24	-	7	-	-	3

Notes: *Defined as men over the age of 16 with no dependent children

** Defined as women over the age of 16 with no dependent children

- Insufficient data

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 2001, Office for National Statistics

The data also show that compared to non-fathers, fathers tend to remain in employment to an older age, perhaps reflecting the higher financial responsibility associated with having dependent children. It is also highest amongst fathers when the youngest dependent child is at pre-school and primary school age, declining thereafter (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 Employment rates by age of youngest dependent child, 2001

Per cent

Age	Couple fathers	Lone fathers	Couple mothers	Lone mothers
0-3	91	50	60	30
4-10	91	53	74	53
11-18	87	67	80	65

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 2001, Office for National Statistics

The economic activity of lone fathers peaks at an older age compared to couple fathers and increases as the age of the youngest dependent child increases. This pattern is similar to that of couple and lone mothers, again reflecting the greater responsibility for childcare amongst lone fathers.

Similarly, the employment rate amongst mothers peaks at an older age than amongst the corresponding group of fathers. It was found to be lowest immediately following the birth of the youngest dependent child and increases as the age of the youngest dependent child increases (also the case amongst lone mothers) and only reaches parity with the rate amongst non-mothers as women's age reaches 45-49. Compared with previous cohorts, more women take shorter gaps away from work after the birth of children and more mothers are working full-time, as is the case across Europe (Rubery, Smith and Fagan, 1999).

Amongst both fathers and mothers employment rates are lower for those with higher numbers of dependent children, in particular for those with four or more children. In part, this reflects the greater caring responsibilities of larger families (see Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 Employment rates by number of dependent children, 2001

Number of children	Per cent			
	Couple fathers	Lone fathers	Couple mothers	Lone mothers
1	89	62	74	54
2	92	63	74	51
3	88	55	60	36
4+	77	-	41	23

- insufficient data

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 2001, Office for National Statistics

Regional variation

Parental employment rates were highest in England, followed by Scotland and then Wales, with Northern Ireland having the lowest rate (Table 2.7). Employment rates amongst fathers resident within England were highest in the South West, South East and Eastern regions and lowest in Merseyside, London and the North East. Similarly, employment rates amongst mothers resident within England were highest in the South West, South East, Eastern and North West and lowest in London, Merseyside and the North East.

Table 2.7 Employment rates by government office region of residence, 2001

Region	Fathers		Region	Mothers	
	Fathers	Mothers		Fathers	Mothers
North East	85	63	London	85	54
North West	90	70	South East	93	70
Merseyside	84	61	South West	93	72
Yorkshire & Humberside	88	68	England	90	67
East Midlands	89	69	Wales	84	63
West Midlands	89	66	Scotland	89	69
Eastern	92	70	Northern Ireland	81	62

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 2001, Office for National Statistics

The impact of qualifications

A marked relationship was identified between employment rates and academic qualification level amongst both fathers and mothers (see Table 2.8, below). In general, as the level of qualification increases, the employment rate also increases. This pattern reflects previous research evidence, showing that almost all fathers with degree level qualifications are engaged in employment (Brannen et al., 1997a).

Table 2.8 Employment rates by highest qualification obtained, 2001

Qualification	Per cent	
	Fathers	Mothers
Degree or equivalent	96	81
Higher Education	95	83
GCE A-level or equivalent	92	72
GCSE Grades A-C or equivalent	91	69
Other qualifications	85	60
No qualification	71	41

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 2001, Office for National Statistics

Ethnicity

Employment rates in 2001 were highest amongst white fathers and mothers and lowest amongst those of Asian or Asian British ethnicity and those in the 'other' category (see Table 2.9). Such broad classifications of minority ethnic groups hide a more complex picture. For example amongst the Asian groups, a far higher proportion of Indian parents are in employment than either Pakistani and Bangladeshi fathers and mothers, who have the lowest employment rates of all the ethnic groups. However, small cell sizes within the Labour Force Survey in relation to ethnic minorities may lead to unreliable results, a point noted by previous research (Brannen et al., 1997a).

Table 2.9 Employment rates by ethnicity, 2001

Ethnicity	Per cent	
	Fathers	Mothers
White	90	68
Mixed	87	51
Asian or Asian British	76	40
Black or Black British	87	56
Chinese	86	55
Other ethnic group	71	38

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 2001, Office for National Statistics

Fathers' occupations

The majority of fathers and mothers are employees but a far higher proportion of fathers than mothers are self-employed (13 and 6 per cent respectively). Table 2.10 reveals some striking differences between fathers' and mothers' employment classifications.

Table 2.10 Employment by NS-SEC¹² class in main job, 2001

NS-SEC Class	Per cent	
	Fathers	Mothers
Higher managerial and professional	20	7
Lower managerial and professional	25	28
Intermediate occupations	5	21
Small employers and own account workers	13	6
Lower supervisory and technical	15	7
Semi-routine occupations	10	23
Routine occupations	11	9

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 2001, Office for National Statistics

In particular, comparatively high proportions of fathers, compared with mothers, are employed within higher managerial and professional occupations, as small employers or own account workers or within lower supervisory and technical occupations. A higher proportion of mothers than fathers are employed within intermediate occupations and within semi-routine occupations such as administrative and secretarial work. These findings suggest that well-recognized patterns of gender segregation in occupation are amplified when parental status is considered (Crompton and Mann, 1986). Whilst recent analysis has shown an improvement in women's labour market position, there is evidence that the majority of employed women work in a narrow range of occupations which is confirmed by the data in this study (see Appendix 1, Table A1.1 and Social Trends, 2002). In anticipation of motherhood, women may trade-down in their occupational choice and career development in order to accommodate parenthood in their lives. The anticipation or impact of parenthood does not appear to operate on men in the same manner.

2.2 What hours do fathers work?

Between 1998 and 2001 there was a small decrease in the working hours of fathers and a small increase in those of mothers. By 2001 the mean number of usual weekly hours worked by fathers was 46.1 whilst for mothers it was 27.8 (Table 2.11). The mean number of working hours for fathers and mothers employed part-time increased over the time period, whereas the hours of fathers employed full-time decreased slightly and those of mothers remained stable.

Table 2.11 Parents' usual weekly hours of work, 1998-2001

Hours of work	Fathers			Mothers		
	1998	2001	% change	1998	2001	% change
Full time employees	47.6	47.0	-1.3	39.3	39.8	-0.3
Part-time employees	18.7	19.4	+3.7	17.0	17.7	+4.1
Mean number of hours	46.7	46.1	-1.3	27.2	27.8	+2.2
Percentage working:						
41 hours or more	66.3	64.8	-1.5	13.6	13.8	+0.2
48 hours or more	41.5	38.7	-2.8	6.1	6.1	0
60 hours or more	14.0	12.3	-1.7	1.4	1.7	+0.8

Notes: Figures are weighted estimates for the whole population. Full-time employees work 31 hours or more per week, part-time employees work 30 hours or less

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 1998 and 2001, Office for National Statistics

In 2001 the proportion of fathers working long hours remained at a high level with nearly two-fifths usually working 48 hours or more per week and around one in eight usually working longer hours of 60 or more. A more detailed examination of the pattern of long working hours for fathers is available from La Valle, Arthur, Millward, Scott and Clayden's (2002) national survey of working families with children aged 16 and under. They found that fathers were much more likely than mothers to work during 'atypical' times: 41 per cent of fathers and 21 per cent of mothers worked early morning (6a.m. – 8.30a.m.) or late afternoon (5.30p.m. – 8.30p.m.) several times a week; 17 per cent of fathers and 14 per cent of mothers worked during the evenings or night (8.30p.m. - 6a.m.) several times a week; and 6 per cent of fathers and 4 per cent of mothers worked every Saturday and Sunday.

Table 2.12 Fathers' usual weekly hours of work, 1998-2001

Hours of work	Couple fathers			Lone fathers		
	1998	2001	% change	1998	2001	% change
Mean number of hours	46.7	46.2	-1.1	43.5	42.5	-2.3
Percentage working:						
41 hours or more	66.5	65.0	-1.5	52.8	53.8	+1.0
48 hours or more	41.7	38.8	-2.9	30.0	31.8	+1.8
60 hours or more	14.0	12.4	-1.6	14.2	9.2	-3.0

Notes: Figures are weighted estimates for the whole population

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 1998 and 2001, Office for National Statistics

Long working hours were also found amongst mothers but were far less common than amongst fathers. Overall, the trends in long working hours between 1998 and 2001 show a small decline for fathers and relative stability for mothers. Fathers in couple households were working longer hours than lone fathers in both 1998 and

2001, whereas by 2001, lone mothers in employment were, on average, working slightly longer hours than mothers in couples (see Tables 2.12 and 2.13).

Table 2.13 Mothers' usual weekly hours of work, 1998-2001

Hours of work	Couple mothers			Lone mothers		
	1998	2001	% change	1998	2001	% change
Mean number of hours	27.2	27.7	+1.8	27.2	28.5	+4.7
Percentage working:						
41 hours or more	13.5	13.7	+0.2	14.3	14.5	+0.2
48 hours or more	6.1	5.9	-0.2	6.2	7.2	+1.0
60 hours or more	1.4	1.7	+0.3	1.3	1.5	+0.2

Notes: Figures are weighted estimates for the whole population

Source: Labour Force Survey, Spring 1998 and 2001, Office for National Statistics

Earlier EU data (from 1995) show that UK fathers worked the longest hours in the EU at 46.9 hours a week, about 15 per cent longer than the average working week for Belgium and Danish fathers (Deven et al. 1998). Whilst European working hours are not as high as in the US, where fathers and mothers work an average of 50 hours and 41 hours a week respectively (Polatnik, 2000), the aggregate increase in parental working hours for fathers and mothers combined adds impetus to policies promoting the reconciliation of work and family life, in particular, the wish to reduce working hours.

Table 2.14 Average weekly hours of work of parents with children under 17, 1995, EU15 (excluding Sweden)

Region	Fathers	Mothers	Region	Fathers	Mothers
United Kingdom	46.9	25.8	Luxembourg	41.0	30.6
Portugal	45.5	39.3	Denmark*	40.8	34.0
Greece	45.1	39.5	Netherlands	40.8	19.3
Spain	42.6	36.4	Ireland	40.0	29.3
Austria	41.8	34.0	Finland	39.6	35.8
Italy	41.6	34.5	Belgium	37.7	30.7
Germany	41.5	29.6	France	35.5	31.6

Notes: * Parents with child under 10 years

Source: adapted from Deven et al. (1998) Eurostat analysis of 1995 European Labour Force Survey

In summary, between 1998 and 2001 there has been a slight increase in economic activity for fathers and mothers in both couple and lone households. There has been a gentle upward trend in full-time employment for all groups and a small increase in the prevalence of long working hours amongst mothers, but not amongst fathers. However, a significant minority of fathers, around one in eight, continue to work 60 hours or more a week. These employment trends suggest that the past few years

have seen relative stability in the economic activity and hours of work of parents, nevertheless, with an apparent tendency towards greater work intensification.

Comparisons over a longer period

Figure 2.1 compares 3 yearly data for all economic activity amongst fathers and mothers over the period 1992-2001.¹³ In 1992, overall employment rates were on the brink of a downward turn following a peak, and in 2001, employment rates were levelling out, following a sustained period of increase. This makes a comparison of 1992 and 2001 data useful, since the two time points were situated at a similar point of the economic cycle. In 1995 and 1998, overall employment rates were on an upward trend following a trough and so provide interesting comparator years.

Working hours have been sub-divided into shorter part-time employment (less than 16 hours a week), longer part-time hours (16 to 30 hours a week), shorter full-time hours (31 to 40 hours a week) and longer full-time hours (41 or more hours a week).¹⁴ The data show increasing proportions of mothers employed in full-time work (both longer full-time hours and shorter full-time hours) and an increase in the proportion of mothers working longer part-time hours. The proportion of fathers working longer full-time hours fluctuated over the period 1992 to 2001 with little absolute change, although the level is always at a significantly higher point than that of mothers.

The *trend* in the proportion of fathers and mothers working longer full-time hours (over 41 hours a week) over the period 1984-1997 is shown in Figures 2.2 and 2.3. Together with Figure 2.1, these suggest that patterns of long working hours amongst employed fathers are likely to have been cyclical in nature and relatively stable over time. In 2001, the proportion of fathers working over 41 hours a week was close to levels identified during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Amongst mothers, whilst the pattern of change over time also appears to have been cyclical, the overall trend in long working hours shows a small yet consistent rise since the mid-1980s (see Figure 2.3).

Comparing employment rates with hours worked, whilst employment rates in 2001 were around a third higher amongst fathers compared with mothers, the volume of paid work undertaken by employed fathers (as measured by hours of work) was, on average, two-thirds higher than the volume undertaken by employed mothers. Overall, this greater 'volume' of employment reflects both higher levels of participation and higher rates of full-time employment amongst fathers.

Figure 2.1 Fathers' and mothers' economic activity status, 1992-2001

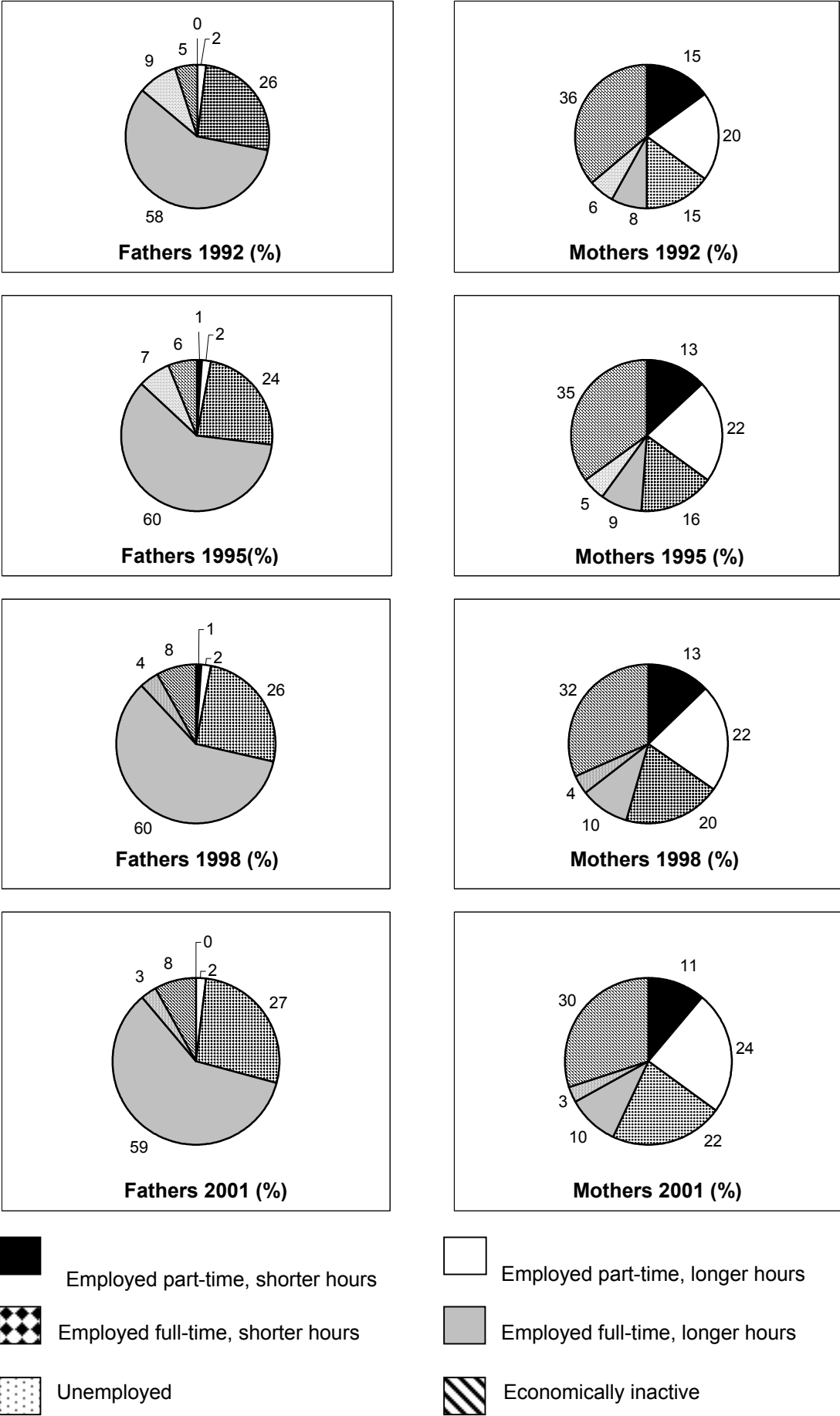
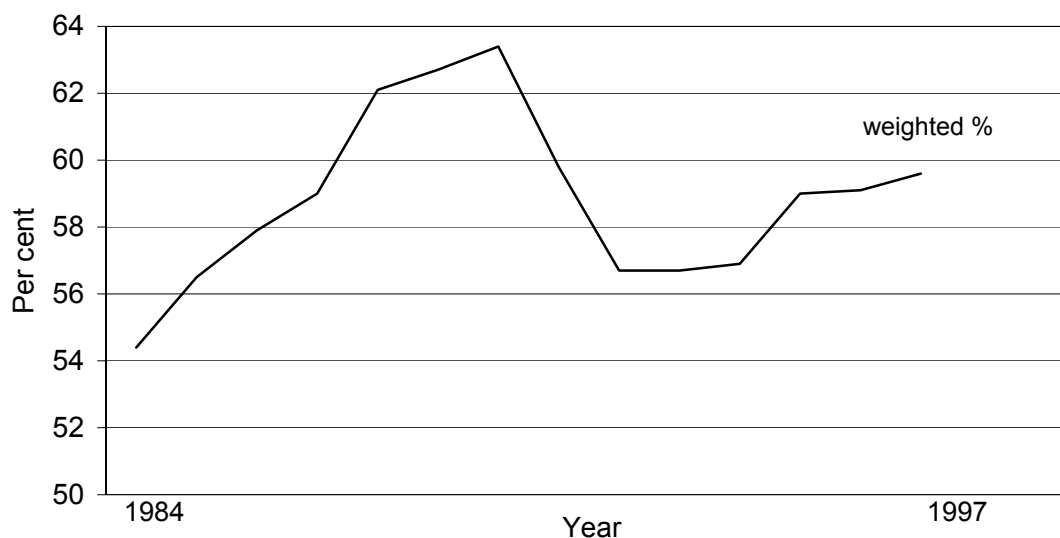
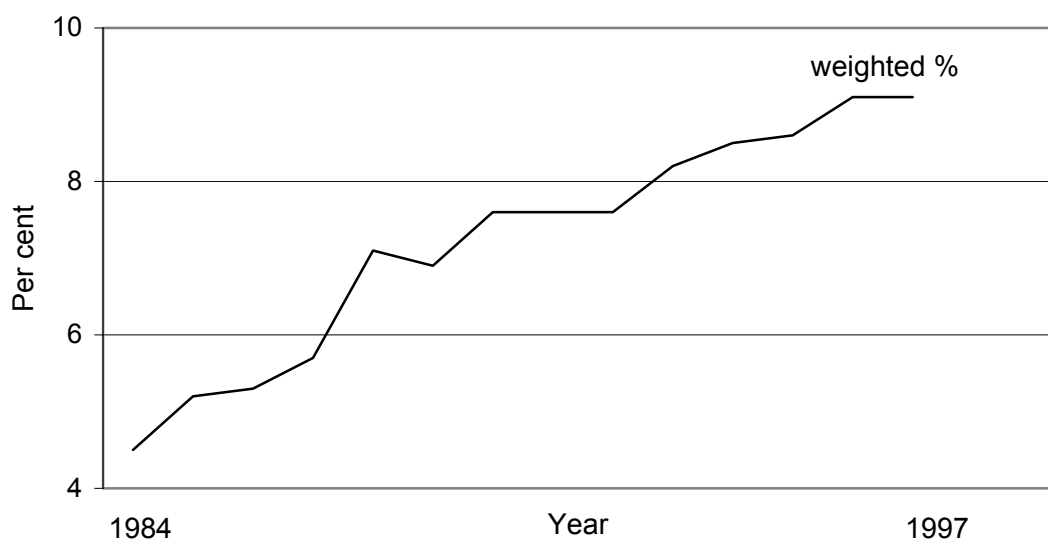


Figure 2.2 Trends in fathers working 41 or more hours a week



Source: adapted from Owen (1997)

Figure 2.3 Trends in mothers working 41 or more hours a week



Source: adapted from Owen (1997)

2.3 Fathers at home

Since the first wave of fatherhood research in the late 1970s and early 1980s the role of fathers in family life has been under debate and scrutiny (Lamb, 1976; McKee and O'Brien, 1982; Lewis and O'Brien, 1986). Whilst some commentators portray a model of 'fatherhood in transition' through the erosion of patriarchal fatherhood and an emergent caring father ideal (Björnberg, 1992), others focus on the idea of 'fatherhood in crisis', a state where men are unable to either care or provide cash for their families (Hobson, 2002).

Fathers are not a homogeneous group and policy analysis is still hampered by the surprisingly low amount of empirical investigation into fatherhood in Britain and other European countries, unlike the growing evidence base in the US (Clarke and O'Brien, in press; Marsiglio et al., 2000). A summary of key research literature on fathers within the family follows, focusing on the issue of how mothers and fathers manage their childcare responsibilities and family commitments.

Fatherhood: attitudes and roles

There are greater expectations on men to become involved fathers, active in the upbringing of children, and indeed many men themselves, especially younger cohorts, wish to participate more fully in family life (Henwood, 2001; Lewis, 2000). Scott, Braun and Alwin (1998) have found evidence that young British adults endorse less traditional gender roles than their European contemporaries, however the effect is strongest in relation to the role of women in society. As Daly (1996a: 474) has argued:

This generation [of fathers] expresses a strong, family-based temporal conscience that keeps them vigilant in their fathering commitment. The value of spending time with the children has not been inherited from their own fathers but, rather, has been embraced in response to a new set of cultural conditions.

Recent empirical research shows that despite ideals of caring fatherhood, father as provider and breadwinner remain powerful sources of identity, particularly for working class men (Warin, Solomon, Lewis and Langford, 1999). Fatherhood is therefore in the process of reconstruction and transformation. In every-day life traditional dimensions of the good father, such as providing for the material welfare of the family, take place alongside activities, previously considered solely maternal, such as bathing infants. Negotiating tradition and change is at the heart of contemporary fatherhood. However, whether they be 'good dads' or 'bad dads' (Furstenberg, 1988) research evidence shows that fathers matter in families.

Economic support

US studies show that for two-parent families, fathers' earnings are positively associated with children's educational attainment and their psychological well being, even when mothers' earnings are controlled (Marsiglio et al., 2000). A UK review of evidence also indicated that fathers' earnings are uniquely linked to many positive outcomes for children, even when mothers' earnings are taken into consideration. (e.g. Burghes, Clarke and Cronin, 1997). For *non-resident fathers*, the amount of child support paid to children is positively associated with educational attainment and psychological well being.

Psychological support

In general, psychologists suggest that the gender of the parent is less important in affecting child development than broader parenting style. A review of 72 US studies of father-child relationships in *two-parent families* (Marsiglio et al., 2000) concludes that child outcomes are best when fathers and mothers show an 'authoritative' parenting style. This is one where parents:

- spend time with the child;
- provide emotional support;
- give every-day assistance;
- monitor child's behaviour;
- use non-coercive discipline.

For *non-resident fathers*, parenting style is a more important predictor of good child outcomes than frequency of visits, especially if 'authoritative' parenting is shown in the context of a co-operative relationship between the parents. Buchanan and Flouri's (2002) new British evidence, examining the impact of father involvement¹⁵ on later adult outcomes (through a secondary analysis of 17,000 children in the National Child Development Study born in the UK in 1958 and followed up at ages 7, 11, 16, 23, 33 and 42), supports much of the American research on fatherhood. The key findings from the study show that when fathers were involved with their children when the child was 7 years of age:

- it was positively related to their later educational attainment;
- children were less likely to be in trouble with the police;
- this was associated with good parent-child relationships in adolescence and also with later satisfactory partnerships in adult life;
- it protected against an adult experience of homelessness in sons of manual workers;
- it protected children in separated families against later mental health problems.

Buchanan and Flouri also found continuity over the life course, in that early father involvement with a child was associated with continuing involvement with that child throughout childhood and adolescence.

Father involvement

The impact of the rise in maternal employment on fathers' family roles has been a central area of inquiry. Researchers have been interested to explore whether fathers have become more involved in childcare to compensate for maternal employment outside the home. Time use surveys have been an important quantitative indicator of father involvement, displaying the amount of daily or weekly time devoted to

childcare activities (with the advantage of charting change over time where the survey has been longitudinal). By contrast, qualitative indicators of father involvement have focused on fathers' feelings about and perceptions of family relationships, parenting styles and family processes (Pleck and Stueve, 2001).

Time use

Quantitative measures of fathers' involvement in childcare can be examined in *absolute* and *relative* terms. Absolute measures cover the actual time a father directly interacts with a child (the amount of paternal engagement, Pleck, 1997). In time budget diaries the amount of time spent on child-related activities as the 'main activity' is the typical measure adopted. Relative measures of father involvement estimate the proportion of time spent in childcare by fathers in comparison to mothers.

In terms of absolute measures of father involvement, most estimates have indicated an upward trend since the 1970s (Bianchi, 2000; Gershuny, 2001; Fisher, McCulloch and Gershuny, 1999; Sandberg and Hofferth, 2001; Yeung, Sandberg, Davies-Kean and Hofferth, 2001). Gershuny (2001), using international time budget diary comparisons, has shown increased childcare time spent by British fathers since the mid-1970s, with increases especially sharp since 1985 and in particular for those men with children under age 5 years, mirroring similar trends in father childcare in the USA. As shown in Figure 2.4, fathers of children under the age of 5 years devoted less than a quarter of an hour per day to child-related activities (as their main activity) in the mid-1970s in contrast to two hours a day by the late 1990s.

Over the same time period absolute levels of maternal involvement in childcare also increased, although the level of increase has not been as steep as that of fathers (Figure 2.5). Once again the increase is most pronounced for mothers of children under the age of 5 years, increasing from just under 100 minutes per day in the mid-1970s to over four hours a day in the late 1990s.

This trend towards an absolute increase in child-related activities for both fathers and mothers over recent time periods has been a repeated finding in time budget studies and puzzles commentators concerned about time pressures in contemporary family life. A range of factors are relevant in understanding this phenomenon including: the growth in time-saving domestic technology reducing time devoted to housework, which indeed also shows a decline over time (for mothers, but not fathers (Gershuny, 2001)); the subjective over-estimation of mothers' direct interaction time with children in the past (Bianchi, 2000); a growth in more child centred approaches to parenting influencing mothers' and fathers' behaviour (Newson and Newson, 1974) and finally, a greater awareness of children and investment in child-related activities so that

children are more likely to figure in contemporary parents' diaries as 'a main activity' when accounting for their day.

Figure 2.4 Fathers' time spent on childcare

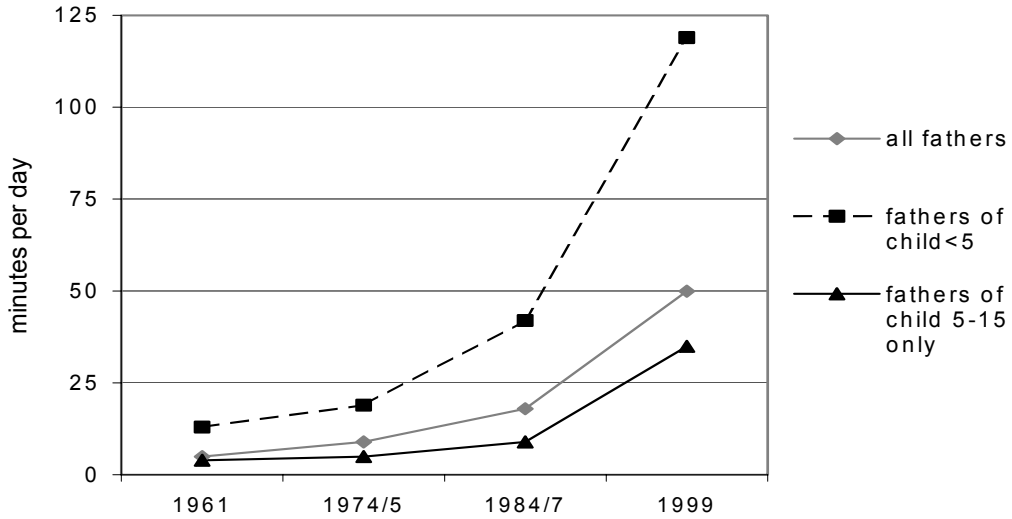
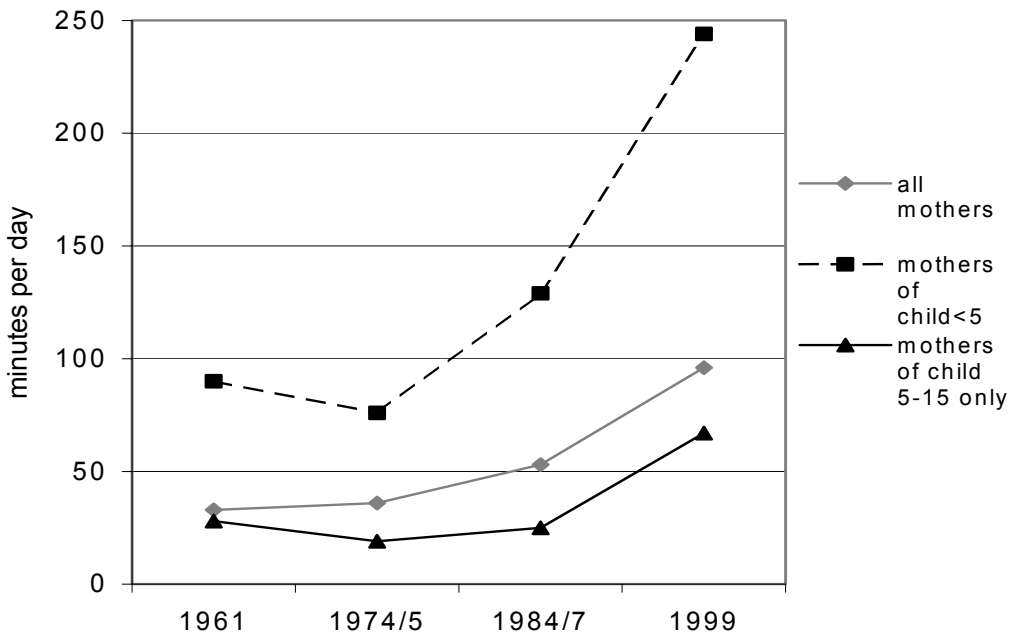


Figure 2.5 Mothers' time spent on childcare



Source: Fisher, McCulloch and Gershuny, 1999

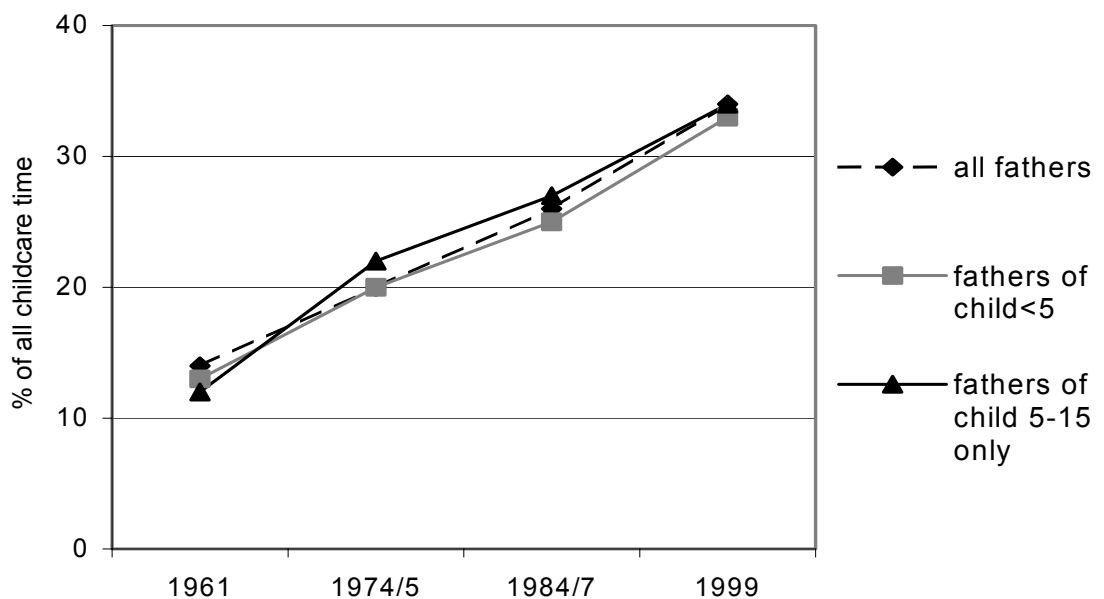
In terms of absolute levels of father involvement there is great behavioural variation. The British time use diaries show that even in the late 1990s, whilst average levels of father involvement had increased, a substantial proportion of fathers recorded no daily direct interaction time with their children. This polarised pattern of father involvement reflects the complex condition of contemporary fatherhood; just as some fathers are spending more time caring for their children, other fathers, for instance

through the growth of single motherhood and divorce, are reducing contact (Furstenberg, 1988).

In terms of *relative* measures of father involvement, Gershuny's analysis shows a continued growth in fathers' proportion of overall childcare time for younger and older children alike (see Figure 2.6, below). However, time spent by fathers still only accounts for about *one third* of total parental childcare time, which is comparable to US estimates (Yeung et al., 2001). Fathers continue to do less direct childcare but more paid employed work than mothers. Thus, a complementary gender division of labour in overall family work is still apparent. When time engaged in paid employment, childcare and housework are summed together as 'total work time', Pleck (1985) found that the average total work time for both fathers and mothers was equivalent.

Recent analysis has looked more closely at when children spend time with their fathers and found that in two-parent intact families, fathers are more engaged with their children during weekends than weekdays (Yeung et al., 2001). For American children under 13 years the average time spent directly interacting with their father was 1 hour and 13 minutes on a weekday and 3.3 hours on a weekend day. When the other time periods during which fathers are *accessible* to children were included, the total involvement time increases to 2.5 hours during the week and 6.5 hours on weekend days.

Figure 2.6 Parental childcare undertaken by fathers



Source: Fisher, McCulloch and Gershuny, 1999

As found in many US studies, the largest proportion of father-child time is spent on play and companionship activities (39 per cent of direct engagement). However during the weekends, personal care (eating together), social activities (visiting relatives and religious visits) and household activities (shopping together) increase. The time fathers spend in outdoor play and sports coaching/attending sporting events with older children at weekends is five to six times greater than that spent by mothers.

2.4 Impact of maternal employment on father involvement

Whilst both absolute and relative time spent by fathers in childcare has increased over the last thirty years, what impact has maternal employment had on father involvement? A question of great interest has been whether fathers increase their share of childcare time when mothers increase their hours of paid work or move from part-time to full-time employment.

Yeung et al., (2001) looked at the period between 1981 and 1997 and the amount of time children spent with their father, comparing whether the mother was working or non-working. Their findings suggest that in 1997, fathers took more responsibility for childcare when their partners worked than they did at the earlier time period. The difference in father involvement in households where mothers were not in paid work showed a similar trend but at a significantly lower level. As Bianchi (2000: 411) concludes in her analysis of American trends between 1965-1999:

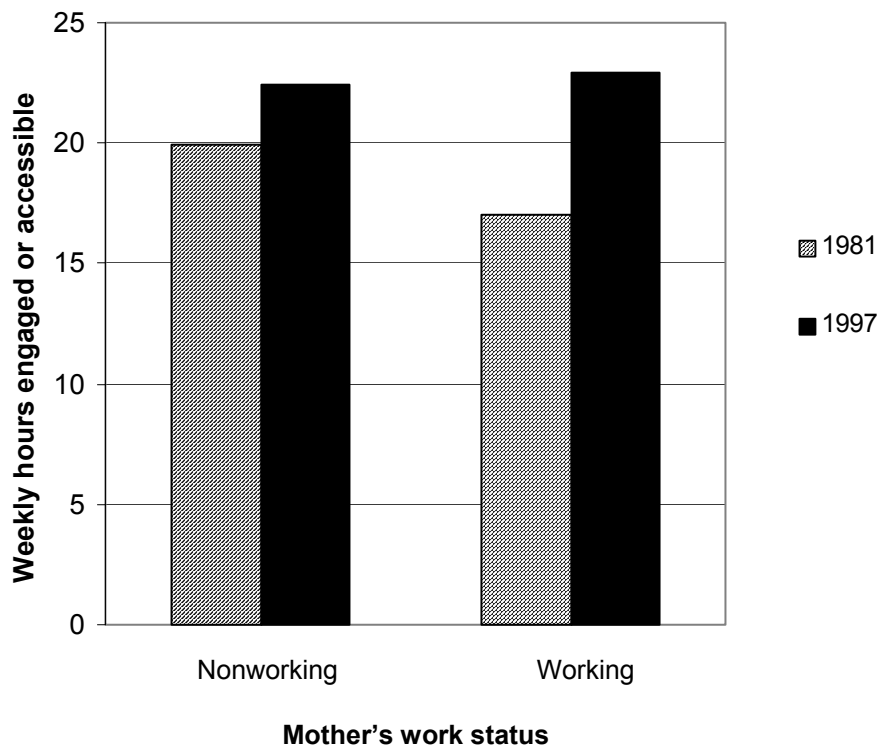
In two parent families, children's time with mothers and fathers increased sufficiently to counteract any decrease of time in the home associated with increased maternal employment.

Shift working is another type of work schedule adopted by parents to ensure childcare cover, particularly in the US (Presser, 1999). Similarly, Gershuny (2001: 198) suggests that men's involvement in childcare gradually rises as the stock of employed women increase in the pattern of a 'lagged adaptation'. This pattern of paternal compensation at the macro level has been confirmed by two nationally representative longitudinal American studies, although it should be noted that this only applies to two-parent married households. Both investigations show that single motherhood has had a greater impact than maternal employment on children's time with parents. Sandberg and Hofferth (2001: 434) argue that:

Although parents may be able to make up for time with children because of maternal employment, they cannot compensate for the absence of a parent in the home.

Any analysis of paternal involvement in family life must therefore be sensitive to the diversity of families in which children grow up. Within two-parent households the exact level of paternal compensation for maternal employment is difficult to assess, not least because of the complex relationship between maternal employment and maternal involvement with children. Most studies show that in general, maternal employment does reduce children's time with their mothers. For instance, Sandberg and Hofferth's (2001) analysis indicates that employed mothers spend about 86 per cent of the hours non-employed mothers spend directly interacting with their children. But maternal employment can influence fathers' behaviour. Fathers with working wives took more responsibility for childcare in 1997 than similar fathers in 1981 (see Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7 Children's mean time spent with fathers in two-parent families, by mother's work status



Source: adapted from Sandberg and Hofferth, 2001

However, as Bianchi (2000) traces, the childcare time difference between working and non-working mothers, particularly over a child's lifetime, is not as great as is sometimes expected. She argues that working mothers tend to 'shed load' (e.g. reduce housework, leisure, sleep, volunteer work) or adjust work investment (e.g. forego long working hours and promotion opportunities) to maximise the time available for childcare. From a working mother's point of view, therefore, enlisting paternal support is one further strategy in the negotiation of work/family time. Moreover, once children start attending school the available time they have to

actually interact with parents tends to standardise across households, irrespective of parental employment patterns.

Interestingly, research has shown that the actual timing of maternal hours of work rather than the number of hours worked *per se*, impacts greatly on the time mothers spend with children. Nock and Kingston (1988) have calculated that children lose twice as much time with their mother when she works between 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. than when she works between 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m.

Assessments of levels of father involvement in relation to mothers' hours of work have produced mixed results. In general, significant increases in paternal responsibility and direct engagement tend to occur in households where both partners are in full-time employment. Ferri and Smith (1996) examined British fathers' involvement in childcare and household tasks using the 1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS) birth cohort. Marked variation in the employment situation of cohort mothers and fathers was found by the age of 33, although the majority (59 per cent of mothers and 53 per cent of fathers), were in dual earner households, primarily where the mother worked part-time. When mothers worked, over a third cited fathers as the main child-carer, followed by grandparents or other kin. The most egalitarian sharing of childcare tasks (mainly cooking for children, bathing and dressing) was found for dual earner families where both parents worked full-time: two-thirds of cohort mothers and three-quarters of cohort fathers reported sharing these tasks. However, dual earner fathers who worked more than fifty hours a week lowered their participation in childcare.

By contrast, some American studies have found maternal working hours *per se* to have less impact on the extent of fathers' involvement in childcare than mothers' income. Fuligni and Brooks-Gunn's (2001) nationally representative study of parenting in couple-households with a child under three shows that fathers spend more time with children during weekdays when mothers' income is higher. Although longer maternal working hours was associated with increased father childcare time, the trend was not statistically significant. The findings suggest, they argue:

A bargaining type of interpretation: that it may not be just having to work that warrants increased care giving from fathers, but the monetary value of that work.

(Fuligni and Brooks-Gunn 2001: 14).

Interestingly this pattern was only observed for mothers who actually earned more than their partners. A relative increase in maternal to paternal wage did not have the same impact.

Other studies have broadened the examination of the impact of maternal employment on father involvement to consider the wide range of routine repetitive activities involved in running and servicing a household. Core activities include: buying and preparing food; cleaning the house and maintaining its fabric, appliances and contents; washing, organising and ironing clothes; accompanying children to and from school; maintaining social, kin and children's school and friendship associations; attending to children's medical and dental visits and maintaining a car, animals or garden.

In a recent US national survey of families over a five-year period between 1987-1993, Coltrane and Adams (2001) were able to measure changes in father involvement in both childcare and housework. The survey identified 5 tasks as the most regular and time consuming in households with young children: meal preparation/cooking; housecleaning; shopping for groceries and household goods; washing dishes/clearing up after meals; and laundry; thereby creating a routine housework participation index. At both time periods women tended to do the bulk of routine housework, although men's involvement increased from 19 to 22 per cent of all tasks by 1993. Fathers' routine housework participation index increased by a significantly greater amount when wives worked long hours and earned more than husbands, resonating with Fuligni and Brooks-Gunn's (2001) finding above. An interesting additional finding was the significant trend for fathers who were highly participant in more 'child-centred parenting' (defined in this study as helping with homework, having private talks and driving children to activities) to share more in the routine household tasks. Fathers' involvement with their children in leisure and sporting activities or watching TV together did not have the same effect, suggesting to Coltrane and Adams (2001: 92-93) that:

When men participate in the more nurturing and supportive activities that serve children, they are also more likely to share in child and home maintenance activities.

2.5 Impact of fathers' work on family life

Despite the general increase in father involvement in childcare identified so far, increases in fathers' work hours and earnings (Yeung et al., 2001) have a negative effect on their involvement levels on weekdays. As indicated in Ferri and Smith's (1996) British study, fathers in dual earner families who worked more than fifty hours a week lowered their participation in childcare and housework. Similarly, the recent study by La Valle et al. (2002) found that fathers 'atypical' working limited family activities with children and partners. Fathers working atypical hours were less likely to: share evening family meals; to read, play and help the children with homework; to be involved in children's recreational activities and sport; to visit relatives or to go

shopping with the family. However, there is American evidence that this negative effect may not carry over to weekends, in fact both Yeung et al. (2001) and Fuligni and Brooks-Gunn (2001) found that fathers who work long hours were significantly more likely to spend a greater amount of time with their children at weekends than fathers working shorter hours. It appears that fathers may be attempting to compensate during weekends for the squeeze on family time created by work during the week. Weekends are emerging as special times for many working families, providing opportunities for both children and parents to sustain family relationships in the face of increasing work hours.

As well as time pressures, the quality of fathers' work can impact on family life. Crouter, Bumpus, Head and McHale (2001) examined the separate influences of long work hours (overwork) and role overload (feelings of being overwhelmed by multiple work commitments) on fathers' relationships with both their children and their wives. This American study included working and middle class families with adolescent children. Overwork had a greater impact on fathers' relationships with their children than on their marriages. Long working hours and less time together appeared not to effect wives' evaluation of their marriage but when the ingredient of role overload was added, wives tended to report partners being less loving and couple relationships as being more conflictual. In contrast, role overload emerged as a more significant influence on father-child relationships, even when fathers worked shorter hours. As the authors reflect:

Indeed, when fathers worked long hours but (miraculously) reported low overload, relationships with sons and daughters were as positive as those of fathers who worked fewer hours.

(Crouter et al., 2001: 13).

During the adolescent years when children spend less time with their parents anyway, the amount of time a father is away from his child might be less important than his capacity to be emotionally available when he is *present* in the home. The authors suggest that feelings of workload may be associated with fatigue, stress and a 'turning inwards'.

Other studies of high-stress occupations have indicated a negative impact on family interaction. For instance, Repetti's (1993) study of air-traffic controllers has shown them to be more emotionally and behaviourally withdrawn from interactions with children and partners after difficult shifts. However, this transfer process or 'spill over effect' can also be beneficial, for instance when fathers have high levels of job satisfaction. Parke's (2002) review of studies exploring the impact of paternal occupation on father-child relationships found strong evidence for more emotionally

responsive and intellectually supportive parenting styles when fathers had stimulating and challenging occupations. Job attributes and work cultures create 'emotional climates' which clearly fathers do not leave at the workplace.

2.6 Summary

- Between 1998 and 2001 there have been small increases in the rate of full-time employment, amongst both fathers and mothers, whilst working hours and the prevalence of long working hours have shown little change for fathers but slightly increased amongst mothers. Thus, there has been a period of relative stability but with a tendency towards work intensification amongst parents. The longer-term trend shows fluctuating rates of long working hours amongst fathers compared to a small yet steady increase amongst mothers.
- The proportions of lone fathers and lone mothers in full-time employment has increased between 1998 to 2001. Working hours have remained stable for lone fathers but have increased slightly for lone mothers.
- Whilst the gender gap in levels of economic activity over the life-cycle continue to close, the volume of paid work undertaken by employed fathers remains two-thirds higher than the volume undertaken by employed mothers.
- Aspirations for more involved active fatherhood are high, especially amongst younger men.
- In two-parent families, fathers' earnings are positively associated with children's educational attainment and their psychological well being, even when mothers' earnings are controlled. For *non-resident fathers*, the amount of child support paid to children is positively associated with educational attainment and psychological well being.
- Father involvement with children at an early age is associated with later positive educational and emotional outcomes.
- Time spent by fathers with children accounts for about one-third of total parental childcare time.
- Increases in fathers' work hours and earnings have a negative effect on father involvement during the week but fathers working long hours tend to compensate with more childcare at weekends.

- Whilst some studies have found greater father involvement in families where mothers work full-time, other studies have shown that high maternal income is a stronger predictor of father involvement.
- Where fathers share nurturing and supportive activities that serve children, they are also more likely to take part in household tasks.
- Whilst the volume of research on fathers is increasing, debate about the integration of work and family life still tends to be focused predominantly around mothers.

3 GOVERNMENT AND EMPLOYERS' PERSPECTIVES

This chapter traces governmental and employers' perspectives on fathers in the workplace.

- In the first part of the chapter the recent move towards a consideration of family-sensitive policies for working fathers in Britain is placed in a wider European context. Current statutory family-sensitive employment provision is presented.
- In the second part of the chapter, current research on employers' attitudes to family-sensitive policies for working fathers is reviewed.

3.1 Early father-sensitive family policy

The early 1970s saw the beginnings of father-sensitive family policies in modern industrial societies. Sweden, with its advanced social welfare system, was the first country to introduce a paid parental leave scheme in 1974 that included an option for fathers to take paternity leave after the birth of children. The philosophy behind the Swedish innovation and much of the Nordic parental support developments since has been an equal opportunities one: the wish to create a social environment where women and men have the same access to employment, familial and personal fulfilment.

The attention given to fathers by national family policies can be seen as a signifier of the importance placed on the involvement of men in the care of children and of their spousal or partnership role in the household. At a very basic level, a family policy that makes reference to fathers allows for the possibility that they may have childcare and home-related responsibilities. Family policy provisions for fathers can also implicitly and explicitly prescribe the actual expectations of male caring; particularly concerning the amount of time they should spend with children both routinely and during more special family life transitions such as childbirth. The idea of *paternity leave* marked the arrival of a legal right that a father could be absent from work for a period of time when a child is born. The inclusion of fathers in subsequent leave, after the initial early maternity and paternity leave (typically called *parental leave*) indicated that fathering and partner support was also significant during the early years of a child's life. Before 1974 any form of employment leave to look after babies and older children had been awarded only to mothers.

Sweden, not then a member of the EU, has always been a pioneer in father-sensitive family policy innovation, through its inclusion of fathers as well as mothers in

interventions to support work-family balance. Similarly, implicit in Sweden's parental leave legislation has always been the child's perspective, still lacking in the highly employment driven agenda at the pan EU level, designing leave arrangements which enhance children's well-being and their relationships with both parents.

Amongst sub-groups within the European Community, discussion about the importance of sharing family duties was publicly aired from the early 1980s (Crawley, 1990) and was influential in setting up the EC Equal Opportunities unit in that period. By the early 1990s the role of men as parents and carers moved forward on the Unit's agenda, becoming a prioritised policy theme. An important early EU development (1992) was a public statement by the Council of Ministers on childcare, which included a commitment to encourage more male participation in the rearing of children in their respective countries:

It is recommended that Member States should promote and encourage, with due respect for freedom of the individual, increased participation by men [in the care and upbringing of children], in order to achieve a more equal sharing of parental responsibilities between men and women and to enable women to have a more effective role in the labour market.

(Article 6, Council of Ministers Recommendation on Child Care (1992 in EC Network on Childcare, 1993b).

Some EU countries reacted positively to the challenge posed by the 1992 Council of Europe's Ministers Recommendation. For instance, the Danish government hosted several national conferences and encouraged a public debate on fatherhood (Carlsen and Larsen, 1993; Fathers in Families of Tomorrow Conference, 1993; Moss, 1993). This debate fed directly into policy change: in 1994 Denmark's 10 week paid parental leave (at the time already open to fathers and mothers in addition to a maternity and paternity leave of 18 weeks and 10 days respectively) was increased to 6 months paid leave for each parent, with a second six months dependent on employers' endorsement. By contrast, the UK government of the time was not enthusiastic about implementing any further EU driven employment regulation, so the UK remained the only EU country not to have any parental leave provision (apart from maternity leave around the time of childbirth) until a change of policy was initiated by the arrival of the Labour Government in 1997.

The Nordic and UK examples illustrate the diversity of family policy practices with regard to fathers in the European Union and show the need to take each nation's cultural and political history into account when examining its response to EU initiatives. European governments develop their parental leave policies in the context of national issues, with their own historical legacies and welfare state models

regulating the relationship between the market and family. Writers have characterized Britain and Ireland as examples of 'strong' male breadwinner welfare systems, with governments historically emphasizing private rather than public responsibility for dependents (Lewis, 1992).

3.2 UK Government perspective

With the arrival of the new Labour Government in 1997 came the creation of Britain's first *explicit* national family policy (*Supporting Families*, 1998), which included some consideration of the place of fatherhood in family life. While the Government's current view on fatherhood is still unclear, in part reflecting the emphasis to date on the economic role of fathers within Government policy, its inclusion of fatherhood in public debate on the future of the family has stimulated further academic, policy, and practitioner enquiry (Clarke and O'Brien, in press).

The broadening of policy initiatives on fatherhood into the area of employment has been a distinctive feature of the latter part of Labour's term of office. Support for working fathers' parental responsibilities has received recognition at the macro-economic level, with the Labour Government's acceptance of two European Union-level directives. In 1999, the Parental Leave directive for fathers to be able to take unpaid leave to cope with family responsibilities was introduced, shortly followed by implementation of the EU Working Time Directive in 2000, regulating the number of hours worked by employees. These policy changes have brought Britain more in line with its European partners. The incorporation of the directives has highlighted the wider issue of fathers' nurturing role in families and men's "work-life balance" (DfEE, 2000).

A significant proposal for paid paternity leave after childbirth went out for public consultation during 2000 (*Work and Parents, Competitiveness and Choice*, Department of Trade and Industry, 2000), with the tension between family support and economic competitiveness highlighted in the proposal. A theme in the consultation document was how to make paternity leave both good for families and good for business. Public policy and private lives became somewhat interwoven during 2000 with the birth of the Prime Minister's son, promoting further national discussion.¹⁶ Consultation was also supported through the Work and Parents Taskforce (Work and Parents Taskforce, 2001).

The results of the consultation announced in 2001, indicate that from 2003 all new fathers will be entitled to two weeks paid paternity leave (to be taken within the first two months of the child's birth). As the Minister (Department of Trade and Industry, 2001: 2) announced:

Employers and parents have asked for paternity leave to be simple, to follow a light-touch and be as easy as possible to administer. This is what we are delivering. Women are more likely to return to work if their partner has taken paternity leave, this new right will give fathers the opportunity to support their partner when they most need it but in a way that supports the businesses employing them.

The Labour Government has also initiated a Challenge Fund and Partnership Fund (2001-2005) to foster new attitudes amongst employers on work-life balance and also a ministerial Advisory Committee on Work-Life Balance.

3.3 Statutory provision of family-sensitive employment policies in the UK

Current provision

Statutory Maternity Leave

This was introduced in 1978, although not all women were initially eligible. The right to maternity leave was extended to all women in 1994, although this was not necessarily paid. Currently, women are entitled to up to forty weeks leave, eleven of these before the birth and twenty-nine after. Eighteen weeks are paid (six weeks on 90 per cent income and twelve weeks at £75 per week) and twenty-two weeks are unpaid.

Statutory Parental Leave

Since 1999, fathers and mothers with children under five years of age (or under eighteen in the case of disabled children) have each been entitled to up to thirteen weeks of unpaid leave. Where individual employers have not chosen to negotiate their own arrangements with employees, the length of leave allowed within one calendar year is limited to four weeks. The minimum length of parental leave allowed is one week (although parents of disabled children may take individual days).

Working Time Directive

This was introduced throughout the European Union in 1998 and limits the maximum number of hours worked per week to forty-eight. The legislation also provides for four weeks paid annual leave. Currently the UK is the only EU member state which retains an opt-out allowing employees to volunteer to work in excess of the forty-eight hour limit.

Time off to care for dependants

Introduced in 1999, this legislation entitles employees who are parents of dependants (children or otherwise) to a short period of leave to deal with an emergency, such as illness, injury, birth, death or breakdown in care arrangements.

Forthcoming new provision and the development of existing provision

The UK government's new Employment Bill is due to come on stream in April 2003. This contains a battery of legislative measures which are intended to:

- combat the culture of long working hours;
- create a 'partnership culture' between employers and employees which is conducive to the retention of skilled employees;
- facilitate basic minimum standards for employment, offering rights and entitlements to the most vulnerable employees, including the provision of choice in work-life balance for employed parents.

Statutory Paternity Leave

Whilst paternity leave, paid or unpaid, is currently available at the discretion of the employer, fathers whose children are born on or after April 6th 2003 will be entitled to up to two weeks paid leave during the first eight weeks of the child's life at £100 per week.

Statutory Maternity Leave

From April 2003, statutory maternity leave entitlement will increase to fifty-two weeks: twenty-six of these paid with six weeks on 90 per cent income and twenty weeks at £100 per week; twenty-six weeks unpaid.

Statutory Parental Leave

Back-dating of existing parental leave provision to children born or placed for adoption on or after 15 December 1994 (see below).

Parental Leave for parents of disabled children

Parents of disabled children will become entitled to 18 weeks parental leave (previously 13 weeks) for each disabled child up to the child's 18th birthday provided they have completed one year's service with their employers. This provision is being back-dated for parents of disabled children born on or after 15 December 1994.

Adoption Leave

From April 2003, a new right to twenty-six weeks paid and twenty-six weeks unpaid parental leave will be conferred on adoptive parents at a rate of £100 per week or 90 per cent of average weekly income (whichever is the lesser amount). The parental leave provision is being back-dated for parents of adopted children placed on or after 15 December 1994.

Flexible working

From April 2003, employers will have a legal 'duty to consider' requests for flexible working time arrangements from employees who are parents with responsibility for children aged under six (or under 18 in the case of disabled children) and who have worked for an employer for six months or more. The onus will be on the parent to set out their desired pattern of work prior to a meeting with the employer to consider the request. Employers will only be able to reject a request on business grounds, such as increased costs or reduced productivity. If a request is rejected, the parent will be entitled to appeal and should the request be rejected once again, then a process of mediation and arbitration should follow. A tribunal would consider only whether the correct procedure had been followed and if it had not, the case will be returned to the employer. The introduction of the duty to consider will be facilitated by support provided at regional level through Business Link organisations, Regional Development Agencies and nationally through employers' associations, Trade Unions, parenting organisations and the dissemination of information and advice to employers, with additional support for small businesses.

Working Time Directive

In November 2002, the government plans to review the opt-out held by the UK which currently allows employees to voluntarily work in excess of a forty-eight hour week.

3.4 Current paternity and parental leave in Europe

By the late 1990s most EU member states provided statutory parental leave, including paternity leave for some, and the adoption in 1996 of the EU Directive on Parental Leave made parental entitlement universal in the EU by the end of 1999 (see Table 3.1 for a summary of current provision, including Norway). Currently eight of the fifteen EU nations have a paternity leave entitlement ranging from two days in Spain to three weeks in France (Deven and Moss, in press). In most countries paternity leave is paid at a relatively high proportion of earnings.

As far as parental leave is concerned, there is great variety in leave entitlements from 6 months in Belgium, Greece and the UK to 3 years per family in Germany and France (see Table 3.1; Moss and Deven, 1999; Deven and Moss, in press). Whilst most countries have some provision for economic compensation, again this varies considerably from flat rates, often at a lower than average salary compensation level, to earnings-related entitlements, generally compensating at a higher level than the flat-rate approach. However, in the Netherlands, Portugal, Greece, Spain, the UK and Ireland parental leave remains unpaid.

Table 3.1 Paternity and parental leave in Europe, 2002

Austria	No paternity leave. Maternity leave: 8 weeks. Parental leave available as family entitlement* until child is 24 months. Paid at a flat-rate allowance.
Belgium	Paternity leave: 2 weeks, earnings-related allowance (100%). Maternity leave: 8-14 weeks. Parental leave available as an individual entitlement until child is 6 months (3 months for father, 3 months for mother). Paid at a flat-rate allowance.
Denmark	Paternity leave: 2 weeks, earnings-related up to a low maximum. Maternity leave: 14 weeks. Parental leave available as a family entitlement until child is 8 months. Paid at earnings-related up to a low maximum.
Finland	Paternity leave: 1 week, to below 70% of earnings. Maternity leave: 9.5-12.5 weeks. Parental leave available as a family entitlement until child is 26 weeks (with an additional Care Leave up to 36 months). Paid part flat-rate and part earnings-related.
France	Paternity leave: 3 weeks, earnings-related allowance (100%). Maternity leave: 10-12 weeks. Parental leave available as a family entitlement until child is 36 months (flat-rate dependent on number of children).
Germany	No paternity leave. Maternity leave: 8 weeks. Parental leave available as a family entitlement until child is 36 months (flat-rate and flexible income related).
Greece	No paternity leave. Maternity leave: 7-11 weeks. Parental leave is available as an individual entitlement until child is 6 months (no payment).
Ireland	No paternity leave. Maternity leave: 4-14 weeks. Parental leave is available as an individual entitlement until child is 6.5 months (no payment).
Italy	No paternity leave. Maternity leave: 13 weeks. Parental leave is available as a family individual entitlement until child is 11 months (if father takes 3 months, otherwise 10 months). Paid to below 70% of earnings.
Luxembourg	No paternity leave. Maternity leave: 8 weeks. Parental leave is available as an individual entitlement until child is 12 months (flat-rate payment).

Netherlands	No paternity leave. Maternity leave: 10-12 weeks. Parental leave is available as an individual entitlement until child is 12 months (must be taken part-time). No payment.
Norway	Paternity leave: 2 weeks, no payment. Maternity leave: none (6 weeks of parental leave must be taken by mother). Parental leave available as part family and part individual entitlement until child is 12 months. Paid at part earnings-related and part flat-rate. Further 12 months-unpaid parental leave available.
Portugal	Paternity leave: 1 week, earnings-related allowance (100%). Maternity leave: 8.5-13 weeks. Parental leave available as an individual entitlement until child is 12-48 months (no payment).
Spain	Paternity leave: 2 days, earnings-related allowance (100%). Maternity leave: 6-16 weeks. Parental leave available as an individual entitlement until child is 36 months (no payment).
Sweden	Paternity leave: 2 weeks, earnings-related up to more than 70% of earnings. Maternity leave: only available before birth for un-well women. Parental leave available as part family and part individual entitlement until child is 16 months. Paid at part earnings-related and part flat-rate (13 months at 80% of earnings up to a maximum and flat rate for 3 months). Further 18 months unpaid parental leave available.
UK (from April 2003)	Paternity leave: 2 weeks, universal flat rate. Maternity leave: up to 52 weeks, part earnings-related, part flat-rate and part unpaid (see p.35). Parental leave available as an individual entitlement until child is 6 months (no payment).

*Family entitlement can be shared by father and mother
(Adapted from Deven and Moss, in press)

A recent trend in Nordic countries has been to mark a proportion of paid parental leave to be *devoted exclusively to fathers* (first implemented in Norway in 1993, Sweden in 1995 and Denmark in 1999). These designated 'daddy periods', occurring after early paternity leave when a child is born, have been developed to strengthen fathers' caring role with their infants and also to encourage more fathers to take leave (Björnberg, 1994).

In Norway this father-sensitive measure, a special father's quota of four weeks, has been very popular (Liera, 1999). As is the case in Denmark and Sweden the period of leave is lost to the family if not taken up by fathers. Up until this change only 2 to 3 per cent of Norwegian fathers took any share in parental leave on a voluntary basis. However, nearly 70 per cent of eligible fathers took the father's quota in 1997, rising

to 85 per cent in 2000 (Rostgaard, in press). This direct policy intervention into paternal participation in family life was greeted as a great success:

Any fear that fathers might reject being 'forced' into fatherhood have, so far, been proved wrong... the legislation clearly states that the family loses four weeks of parental leave if the father does not use it. This reduces parental bargaining concerning the use of these weeks, and greatly improves the fathers' position negotiating with reluctant employers.

(Liera, 1999: 278-279).

Moreover, the policy was introduced in a gender collaborative context, as the father quota was an expansion of parental leave and was not subtracted from maternal leave. The introduction of a similar scheme in Sweden in 1999 called 'daddy month' had a less dramatic impact as the levels of father uptake were already quite high. Evidence from Swedish cohorts of children born in the early 1990s showed that by 30 months, parental leave had been shared by 50 per cent of parents. In 49 per cent the remaining leave days were used by the mother only and in 1 per cent by the father only (Haas and Hwang, 1999). On average fathers had taken around 2 months leave in all (an average of 59 days), about one-fifth of the possible available time. As Björnberg (1994: 64-65) comments:

There is a clear tendency over the years for more and more fathers to exercise their right to take parental leave, and the number of days taken is increasing...In public discourse there is a high degree of agreement about the necessity for fathers to share parental responsibility.

Data from other non-Nordic European countries, particularly those without 'father targeting', show lower levels of parental leave take-up by men. Overall, about 5 per cent of fathers make use of this entitlement (OECD, 1995). However, paternity leave take-up rates are generally high. Father-targeting is part of a general process of allocating parental leave as an individual, non-transferable entitlement rather than as a family, gender-neutral entitlement. Bruning and Plantenga (1999) have shown that when parental leave is a family entitlement mothers generally use it. For instance in Belgium, where parental leave was only introduced in 1998 following the implementation of the EU Directive, 95 per cent of leave takers in 1999 were mothers (Deven and Nuelant, 1999). Similarly, in Germany 1998 data show that only 2 per cent of eligible fathers take up parental leave (Rost, 1999).

In a recent EU wide analysis, Smith (2002) examined national and institutional factors that operated to promote fathers taking parental leave and male care giving during the period 1994-1996. Smith concluded that male parenting was greatest in countries under four conditions, when: parental leave was an individual non-transferable entitlement; where there was high wage compensation; where there was flexibility in the way leave could be used by couples and finally, where male provision was publicised through government awareness campaigns. Sweden, which was ranked as the country with the most father-friendly parental leave provision, has, since the inception of paternity leave in 1974, sustained cultural support and campaigning on active fatherhood at all levels of the political and administrative process. Interventions have included advertising and educational campaigns and modelling by political leaders, many of whom have taken parental leave themselves.

3.5 Fathers' take-up of parental leave

An early important Danish study of a nationally representative sample of parents with children born between 1984-1989 examined why fathers did not take up parental leave when it was available to either themselves or their partner during their child's third to sixth month (Christoffersen, 1990). Four main reasons were identified. Firstly, respondents reported that leave was not possible as the mother was still breastfeeding regularly; secondly, respondents felt it would not have been economically viable for the family if the father rather than the mother took time out from paid work; thirdly, respondents felt that the father's work did not allow him to be on parental leave; and finally, respondents reported that the family had not even considered the possibility of letting father rather than mother take leave.

One strong dimension of this study was that both mothers and fathers were questioned independently. Christoffersen found that mothers were more likely than fathers to mention the issue of breast feeding and economic problems and fathers were more likely than mothers to highlight that the family had not considered the option of father taking parental leave. The investigator was able to examine more closely the minority of cases where fathers had taken part of the parental leave and compare these parents on socio-economic factors to the rest of the sample. As with other studies (e.g. Carlsen, 1993), high maternal education levels and high attachment to employment increased the probability of fathers taking parental leave. In addition, workplace factors were important: paternal leave take up was higher when fathers worked in the public sector and in predominately female workplaces, suggesting a more economically and culturally supportive milieu within working environments with these characteristics.

Unfortunately the study did not clarify patterns of breast-feeding between the groups and whether breast-feeding rates varied for infants in predominately maternal or

paternal leave contexts. Sensitivity to breast-feeding in the first year of life may be an underlying factor influencing the timing of male parental leave uptake. In Denmark, the proportion of men taking parental leave is highest when children are in the 3 to 5 age group and lowest for infants under one year of age (Rostgaard et al., 1999).

Couple negotiation about who should take leave has been subject to some recent investigation in Sweden and Norway (Haas and Hwang, 1999; Brandth and Kvande, 2002). Haas and Hwang (1999: 60) report on Swedish qualitative research on couples in the process of making a decision about parental leave and suggest that, 'men get the solution they want: their wishes and arguments tend to hold sway over those of women, who adapt themselves to men's values'. They argue that fathers working in organizations with a long work hours culture and insensitive family-life policies will have a strong negotiating position to withdraw from leave-taking. However, little detail is given about the nature of the samples used in this research and clearly more work is required.

In a more comprehensive Norwegian study Brandth and Kvande (2002) found a complex process of couple negotiation and bargaining. The study involved a survey of 2194 men becoming new fathers between May 1994 and April 1995 in central Norway (response rate 62 per cent) and interviews with 30 couples from the sample who had used the parental leave system. They found a range of typologies from fathers embracing all the new entitlements with high levels of motivation to spend time with the child even if it resulted in financial loss, to a group operating a 'rights-using practice'. This latter group of fathers was characterized by only taking the leave because it was available but nonetheless using the time for the intended purpose of childcare and child bonding. The study shows the importance of couples' parenting values and preferences as well workplace factors in influencing fathers' use of parental leave.

Other studies have shown the relevance of the 'parental pay gap' (both perceived and actual) when calculations are made about whom should take leave. The higher the father's salary in comparison to the mother's, the less likely he is to take parental leave (e.g. Haas and Hwang, 1999). In most European countries it appears that a family's immediate loss of income is less if mothers rather than fathers take up parental leave. This structural factor may operate to create a barrier to father take-up, although the Swedish government has challenged the 'size of income loss argument' by showing that continued engagement of mothers in the labour market after parental leave will tend to off-set short-term costs linked to men taking leave (Haas and Hwang, 1999). The importance of high income replacement compensation benefits in addition to the imperative for couples to take a longer term view on family income

assets has been timely, but is less compelling to households where fathers are absolute or relatively high earners.

Timing and length of parental leave may be important too (Ronsen, 1999). Her analysis of the impact of different leave provision on women's employment in Sweden, Finland and Norway shows that women who take up parental leave entitlements return to work more quickly than those who do not. However, the analysis also suggests that when maternal leave provision is prolonged and combined with benefit (e.g. Finland's Home Care allowance for parents with a child up to 3 years), this can have a negative impact on women's career progression and earnings potential.

3.6 Employers' perspectives and attitudes

As well as governmental initiatives discussed above, employers have worked independently and in partnership with Government to promote good work-life balance initiatives and practices. During the 1990s there has been increased awareness of quality of life issues amongst employers in most advanced economies (Rapoport et al., 2002; Haas, Hwang and Russell, 2000; Lewis, 2001). Research evidence on health and safety associated with long working hours has influenced human resource managers and employer/employee negotiation (Spurgeon et al., 1997; Sparks et al., 1997; Cooper, 2001; *Changing Times*, 2001). Recent research on Japanese men has shown that high weekly working hours are related to progressively increased risk of heart disease, particularly when weekly working hours exceed 61 (Liu and Tanaka, 2002).

Similarly, concerns about staff retention and its economic and psychological costs have heightened. In a recent survey, over a third of managers reported believing that employee turnover was the primary cause of workplace stress (Ceridian Performance Partners, 2001). Research by Ernst & Young suggests that the cost of losing an employee amounts to four times that employee's yearly salary,¹⁷ whilst The Hay Group UK, a management consultancy organisation with 150 employees, has calculated that employee turnover could cost them up to 40 per cent of their annual profit (Hay Group, 2001).

Employers have also expressed concerns about stress-induced absenteeism. For instance, in a recent survey workplace stress has been identified as the main cause of longer-term absence amongst non-manual staff. (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2001). Similarly, 705 respondents to an Industrial Society survey cited a lack of balance between work and family life as a major factor in occupational stress (Industrial Society, 2001).

Empirical research on the business benefits of family-sensitive employment practices is still rather limited. However, recent UK research evidence has identified a range of employer reported business benefits associated with particular family-sensitive employment practices and policies (Dex and Smith, 2002). Benefits include: above average financial performance and labour productivity, improvements in quality performance, rising sales values and reduced percentage labour turnover. However, certain practices and policies were found to be related to poorer business outcomes as well as to business benefits. For instance, flexitime was associated with a reduction in financial performance; emergency leave was associated with increases in labour turnover and term-time only working was associated with increased absenteeism.

The average number of days of absence was not found to be statistically associated with any family-friendly employment practices or policies. However, earlier research at Johnson & Johnson revealed that absenteeism amongst employees who used flexible working time arrangements and family-sensitive employment practices was, on average, 50 per cent less than for the workforce as a whole (Families and Work Institute, 1993)

There is a more developed stream of European research evidence on employers' attitudes to fathers taking parental leave. In Denmark private sector managers were found to be less accepting of fathers taking parental leave and across both the public and private sectors, employees reported male managers to be less sympathetic than female managers to paternal leave taking (Andersen et al., 1996). In some countries, parental leave had very negative associations for employers. In Germany, for instance, the literal meaning of parental leave is 'vacation for raising children'. For a number of the employers in Rost's (1999) German study, men's access to parental leave implied a licence to be idle.

A cross-national study of employers' attitudes to providing parental leave in the Netherlands, Sweden, UK and Italy (Den Dulk, 1999) found that family-friendly provisions are more likely to develop in large public sector organisations with some female employees. He suggested that employers with large proportions of female employees might be more sensitised to the need to retain valuable female employees. Moreover, he argued, large public sector organisations are vulnerable to media attention and so it is in their interest to offer work-life balance support to employees.

Swedish research (Haas and Hwang, 1999) suggests that there are few systems in place to facilitate fathers negotiating their workload and tasks during periods of leave, and that some fathers are left to make their own arrangements. Replacements can

be found if appropriate planning is in place and in some cases, fathers can keep in touch and even remain working at home, albeit at a slower pace, through the use of fax, e-mail and telephone.

There have been no systematic economic cost-benefit analyses calculating the financial impact of maternal or paternal leave policies on organisations in Nordic countries, although regular claims are made by individual employers for financial losses and benefits alike. In terms of losses, Nasman's (1997) study reported that only a tenth of private sector and one-third of public sector employers reported long-term economic productivity gains. In small private firms (under 50 employees) more employers anticipated a reluctance to take on mothers with young children.

Employer surveys in Sweden in the early 1990s have also shown that between 40 to 70 per cent reported that parental leave schemes had caused problems for their organisation. Large public sector organisations, presumably with a greater number of individuals wanting leave, had higher levels of reported problems, but also arguably more economies of scale. However, as part of their recruitment strategy some Swedish firms have begun to use extra financial incentives for fathers taking leave claiming enhanced retention and loyalty, although such policies are rare (Haas and Hwang, 1999). The recent approach of the Swedish Government has been to regard parental leave as a labour market asset for fathers:

Benefits that are often mentioned include the development of interpersonal and communication skills, enhanced ability to do multiple tasks simultaneously and the chance to become a 'whole human being'.

(Haas and Hwang, 1999: 51).

In general, Swedish research has shown that leave does not appear to have a negative impact on fathers' work prospects in the longer term. They are rarely replaced on return or lose significant income (Haas, 1992). Haas and Hwang (1999: 64) argue that more positive workplace attitudes to men taking parental leave are essential if take-up rates are to be improved, in particular a move from *encouraging* men to become more engaged in child-care towards an *expectation* that they are involved fathers. However, workplace attitudes cannot shift in isolation; the interaction of the feelings, attitudes and behaviours of the parental couple in interaction with the workplace is a crucial dynamic to be considered in future research.

3.7 Impact of parental leave on father involvement

In a national evaluation of parental leave in Denmark (Andersen et al., 1996) parents reported overwhelming benefits; notably more time with the family (particularly when the child is young) and a less stressful family environment overall. Swedish research on fathers' perceptions of parental leave benefits points to similar findings, with the majority reporting satisfaction and enjoyment (Haas, 1992).

Swedish fathers who take up a higher proportion of leave than average (20 per cent or more of all potential leave days) appear to sustain a more engaged family commitment, working fewer hours and being more involved in childcare tasks and household work at least in the short-term (Haas, 1992). Similarly Huttunen's (1996) survey of Finnish fathers who had taken parental leave found that the opportunity it gave to develop a closer relationship with infants was valued most. However, when fathers on parental leave were asked directly about their experience of problems about a quarter described feeling lonely, missing work or feeling stress associated with home-life, at slightly higher levels than mothers (Haas, 1992)

There are no other studies aside from Haas's which examine whether parental leave makes a difference to the quality of family relationships, in particular father involvement, beyond retrospective self-reports. As parental leave tends to be longer and more sustained than paternity leave it could be predicted that paternity leave, would have less impact on father involvement, as suggested by Salmi and Lammi-Taskula (1999: 114):

The short (6-18 days) paternity leave, which the majority of fathers use, does help the mother in the first days after birth. But it is a short period for the mother to recover, especially if there are other children in the family, and it is far too short for a strong caring relationship to develop between the father and child. During this period, the father is not alone with the child, and thus not taking responsibility for his care.

However, paternity and parental leave cannot be seen either in isolation or in purely quantitative terms as both are embedded in a complex web of parenting styles, parental motivation, infant behaviour and wide ranging socio-economic factors.

3.8 Summary

- The attention given to fathers in national policies can signify the importance a society places on fathers' involvement in the care of children and their partnership role within the household. The current UK government's inclusion of fatherhood in the public debate on the future of the family has stimulated further academic, policy, and practitioner enquiry. The broadening of policy initiatives

on fatherhood into the area of employment has been a feature of their latter term in office.

- Whilst the promotion of new employment policy initiatives has highlighted the aim of supporting employed fathers' involvement in parenting and family life, the current UK government's view of fatherhood remains unclear, in part reflecting the continued emphasis which policy places on the economic role played by fathers.
- The Nordic experience indicates that fathers' uptake of parental leave is greatest under four key conditions: when parental leave includes a designated paternal quota; where there is high wage compensation; where there is flexibility in the way leave can be used by couples and finally, where male provision is publicised through government awareness campaigns.
- Other important factors in successfully encouraging active fatherhood through policy initiatives include establishing the 'business case' for its provision, advertising and educational campaigns plus the use of parental leave by political and organisational leaders, and presenting policies within a *gender collaborative* context.
- Whilst research evidence increasingly highlights the business benefits of introducing policies which can assist the reconciliation of work and family life, messages concerning the cost benefit of such policies remain mixed, with some employers reporting problems, even where take up has been encouraged as in Nordic countries.
- Swedish fathers, who take up higher than average amounts of leave, report more engaged family commitment, working fewer hours and more involvement with family and childcare.

4 FAMILY-SENSITIVE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND POLICIES

This chapter considers a range of family-sensitive employment practices and policies designed to assist fathers and mothers in managing work and family life. Findings from the secondary analysis of the DfEE Work-Life Balance 2000 (WLB2000) Employee Survey and Employer Survey datasets (IFER/IFF, 2000) are presented in order to address the following key areas from the perspectives of working fathers, working mothers and employers:

- The attitudes of fathers, mothers and employers towards family-sensitive employment practices and policies.
- Patterns of employers' provision of flexible working time arrangements, forms of leave and family-sensitive services and fathers' and mothers' expectations of access to these employment practices and policies.
- Mechanisms used by employers to promote awareness of and engagement with family-sensitive employment practices and policies and parents' perceptions of the information flows and consultation processes which underpin awareness and engagement.
- Patterns of uptake of flexible working time arrangements (FWTAs) and forms of leave arrangement amongst fathers and mothers.

4.1 Attitudes and expectations of employers,¹⁸ fathers and mothers

Work-life balance

There is a high level of support from fathers and mothers for work-life balance: 80 per cent of fathers and 85 per cent of mothers agreed or strongly agreed that everyone should be able to balance their work and home lives in the way they want (see Table 4.1). Although employers also supported work-life balance, this was at a lower level than amongst parents (62 per cent of employers). Together, these figures suggest encouraging levels of 'commitment in principle' amongst employers with regard to facilitating work-life balance whilst showing that it is expected by a clear majority of working parents.

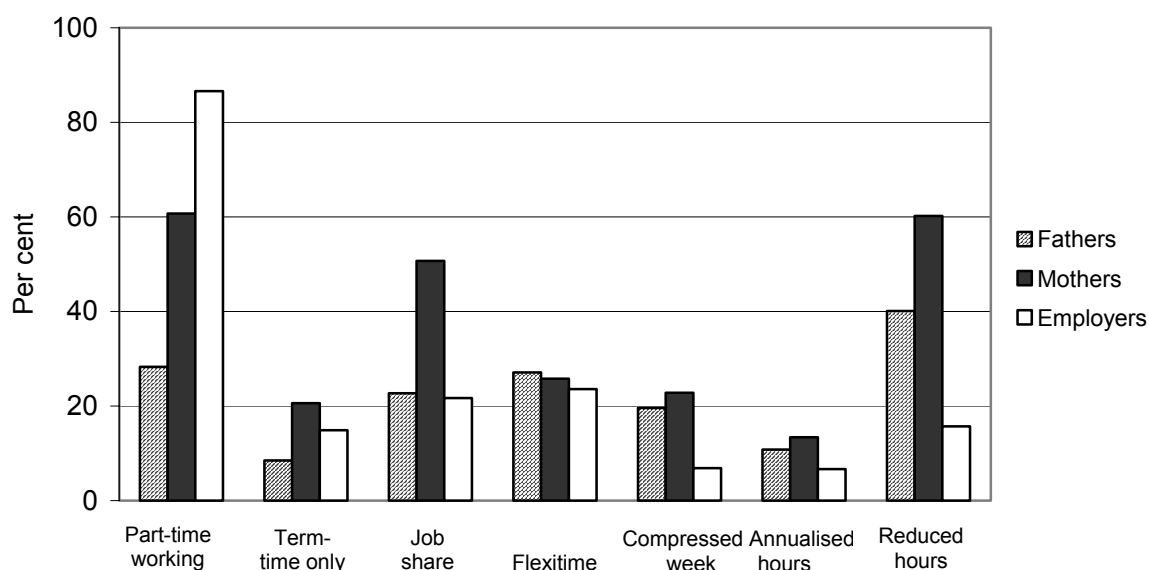
Table 4.1 Fathers' and mothers' attitudes to work-life balance

Proportion agreeing or strongly agreeing with the following statements	Per cent	
	Fathers	Mothers
Everyone should be able to balance their work and home lives in the way that they want	80	85
The employer's first responsibility has to be to ensure that the organisation achieves its goals	87	83
Employees must not expect to be able to change their working pattern if to do so would disrupt the business	57	50
It is not the employer's responsibility to help people balance their work with other aspects of their life	33	35
People work best when they can balance their work and the other aspects of their lives	96	98
Policies that help staff balance work and other interests are unfair to people like me	29	27

Base: All employed fathers and mothers (weighted measures)

Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey, IFER/IFF, 2000

However, fathers' expectations about whether specific work-life balance practices could be made available in their current workplace were low, suggesting that a majority of contemporary fathers do not anticipate that their employer will offer these arrangements (see Figure 4.1). Just over a quarter of fathers and mothers not currently using flexitime thought they would be allowed to work flexitime if they asked their employer. The level of expectation of access was highest amongst fathers in managerial occupations and those in the business services sector (see Appendix 3, Table A3.1). Similarly, only around two-fifths of fathers expected access to working reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary.

Figure 4.1 Expectations of access to and provision of FWTAs

Notes: All employed fathers and mothers; all workplaces (weighted measures)

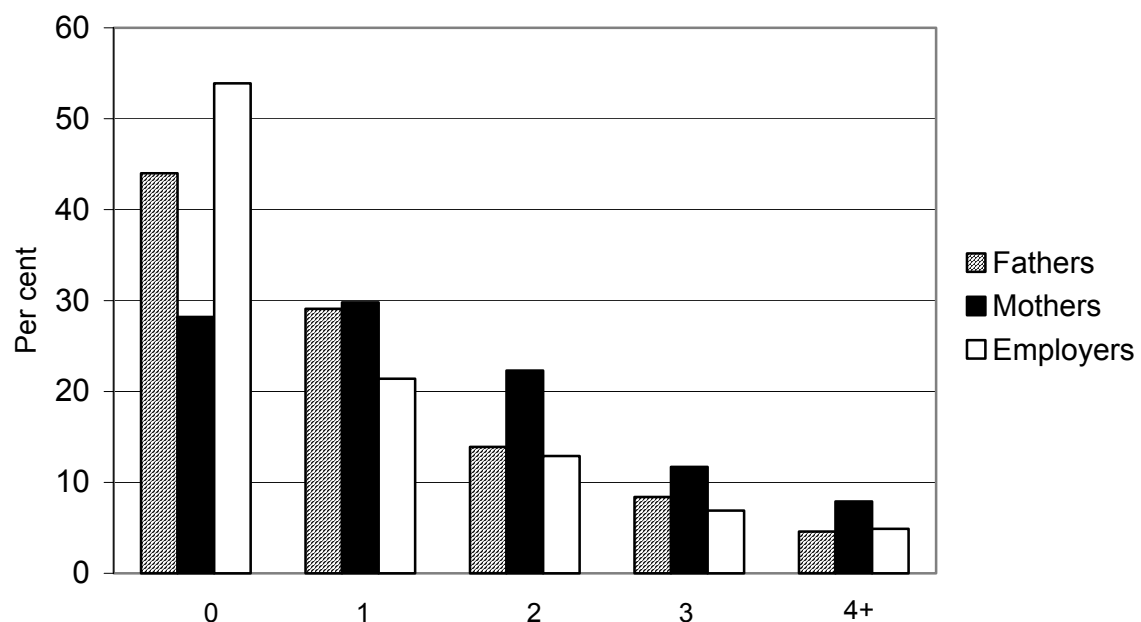
Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey and Employer Survey, IFER/IFF, 2000

In general, mothers' expectations of access to specific work-life balance practices were higher than those of fathers. For instance, 61 per cent of mothers not currently working part-time thought they would be able to work on a part-time basis in contrast to 28 per cent of fathers. Fathers living in Wales generally had lower expectations compared with English and Scottish fathers (see Appendix 4).¹⁹

Employers' provision

According to employers' reports, part-time work was the most commonly provided form of flexible working time arrangement, offered by almost nine out of ten employers, followed by flexitime (24 per cent) and job-share (22 per cent). Less than a quarter of employers provided two or more flexible working time arrangements (excluding part-time work or shift-work) (Figure 4.2). Overall, the data show that the level of provision of flexible working time arrangements was low, with over half of all employers not providing any of these arrangements for their employees.

Figure 4.2 Expectations of access to and provision of FWTAs, number of FWTAs available



Notes: All employed fathers and mothers; all workplaces (weighted measures)

Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey and Employer Survey, IFF/IFER, 2000

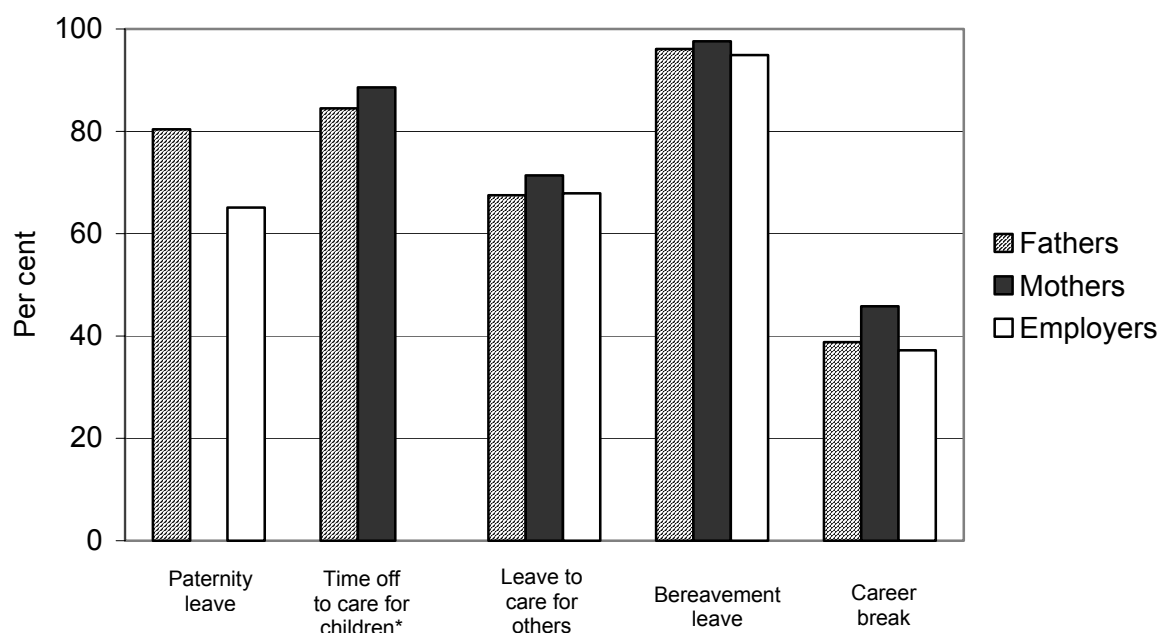
Although parents' expectations of access to flexible working time arrangements were low, they were higher than the proportion of employers reporting provision, suggesting that a gap may exist between expectation and reality. However, another factor may be important. Previous research has highlighted that those involved in formulating and implementing organisational work-life balance policy, such as proprietors, directors and managers with HR responsibilities, have higher levels of

policy awareness than other categories of management (Yeandle et al., 2002). Within the Employer Survey dataset, around half of all respondents fell into these 'high awareness' categories. As such, it is possible that the disparity between employee reported expectation of access and employer reported provision may reflect a relative lack of awareness at certain levels of organisational hierarchies of practices which are available.

Leave arrangements

Fathers had higher expectations about being allowed to take various forms of leave than being allowed access to flexible working time arrangements.

Figure 4.3 Expectations of access to and provision of forms of leave



Notes: Employers were not asked about provision of time off to look after children

Base: All employed fathers and mothers; all workplaces (weighted measures)

Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey and Employer Survey, IFF/IFER, 2000

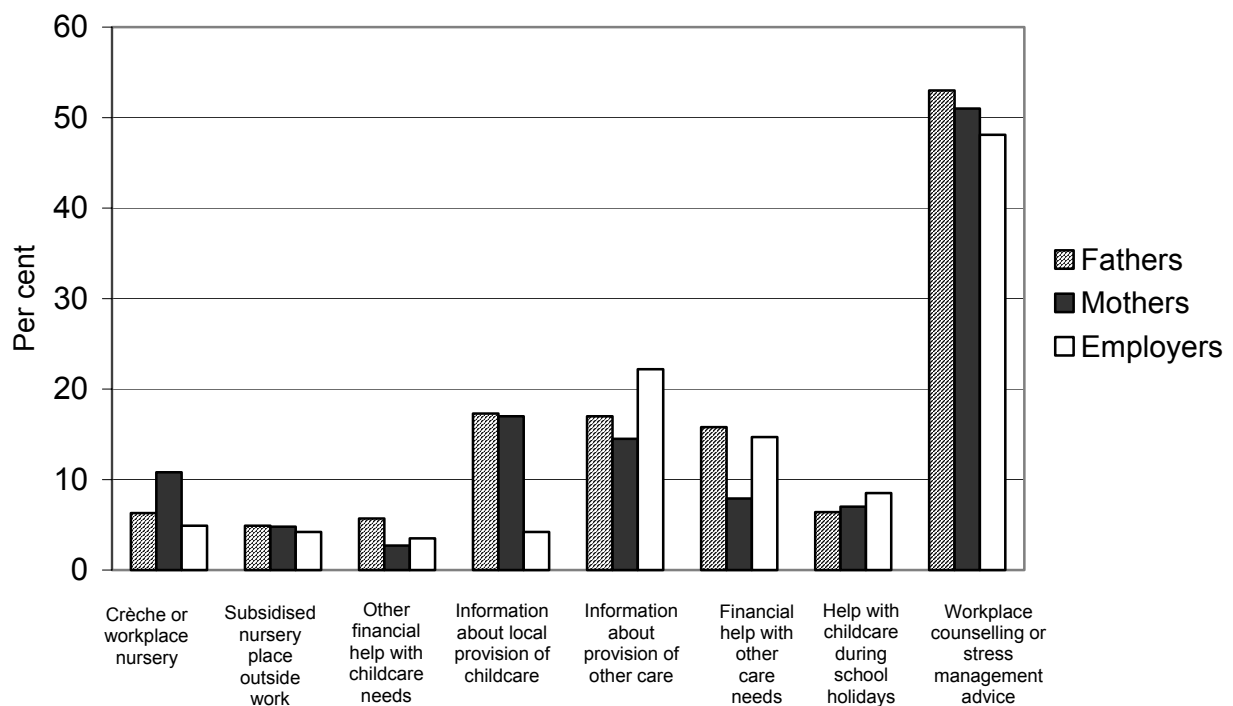
Eighty per cent of fathers believed they would be able to take paternity leave and 85 per cent thought that they would be allowed time off to care for children if they were sick, although these expectations were lower amongst fathers living in Wales. Over 90 per cent of fathers and mothers expected access to bereavement leave (see Figure 4.3). From the employer's perspective the availability of leave was not quite as extensive as that anticipated by employees although these differences were small in most cases. For instance, just over 60 per cent of employers actually allowed paternity leave although the majority provided bereavement leave. These findings confirm data from another recent national survey of employers' practices (Taylor,

2002b: 17) showing that just over two-thirds of managers 'did not allow any paid parental leave to employees beyond what was their legal minimum entitlement'.

Family-sensitive facilities

Overall, levels of provision of family-sensitive services were low (see Figure 4.4). Less than 10 per cent of fathers had access to a crèche, subsidised nursery places, financial help with childcare needs or to help with childcare during school holidays. Slightly higher proportions (around 1 in 6 fathers) had access to information about local provision of childcare, provision of other forms of care and financial help with care needs (excluding childcare). Provision was generally lower for fathers living in Wales.

Figure 4.4 Access to and provision of family-sensitive facilities



Base: All employed fathers and mothers; all workplaces (weighted measures)

Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey and Employer Survey, IFF/IFF, 2000

By contrast, over half of fathers had access to workplace counselling or stress management advice. Interestingly, access to forms of financial assistance to help meet the cost of childcare and other care needs was more common amongst fathers than amongst mothers, although still at a very low level. However, access to the practical facilities asked about (crèche or workplace nursery and help with childcare arrangements during school holidays) was more common amongst mothers than fathers. In general, there was little variation between parents' and employers' reports.

Fathers and mothers employed in the public sector or within large organisations had higher expectation of access to family-sensitive employment practices, policies and services (Appendix 3, Tables A3.1 and A3.2). Low levels of expectation were associated with increasing hours of work.

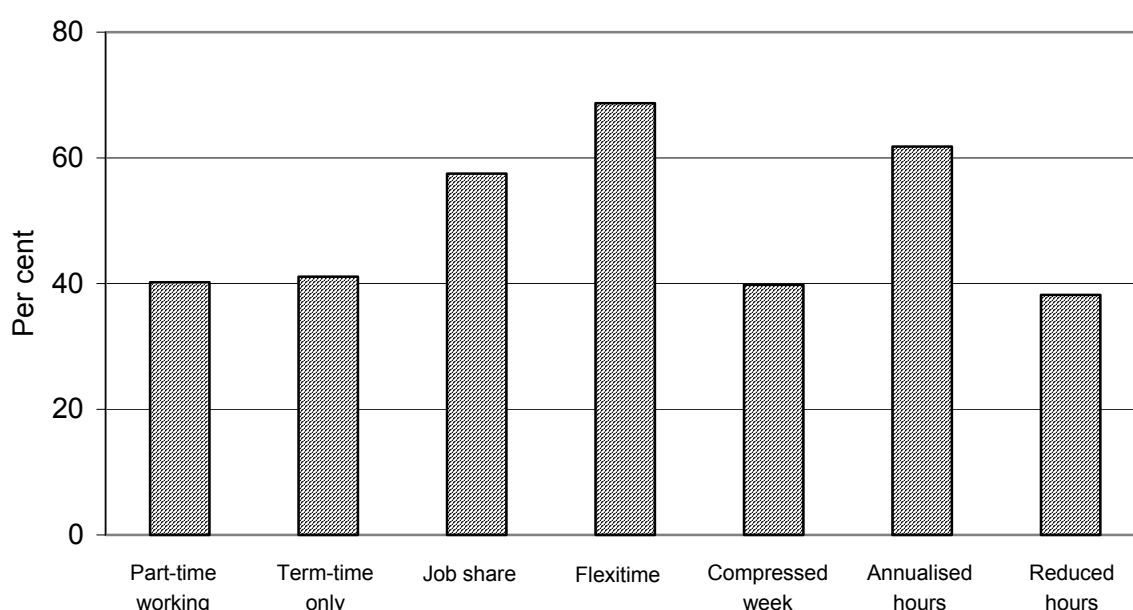
4.2 Mechanisms to promote awareness

Employers were asked about organisational information flows and consultation processes which help to promote awareness of and engagement with family-sensitive employment practices and policies amongst employees. These mechanisms are likely to be important in the extent to which family-sensitive working practices and policies become established, since previous research has suggested that comparatively high uptake of such practices reflects the presence of systematic communication strategies (Yeandle et al., 2002).

Information flows

Over 90 per cent of employers reported that there was one or more ‘proactive mechanism’ in place to disseminate information to employees about the practices available (including circulars to staff, staff magazines, e-mail and notice boards). However, the most common form of communication, reported by over a quarter of employers, was ‘word of mouth’, suggesting that many employers are at least partly reliant on less systematic, informal information flows to promote awareness. Four-fifths of fathers and mothers felt either very well informed or fairly well informed about the flexible working time arrangements offered by their employer.

Figure 4.5 Written policy statements



Base: All workplaces (weighted measure)

Source: WLB2000 Employer Survey, IFF/IFF, 2000

Previous research has suggested that awareness of flexible working time arrangements increases amongst employees where there is clear *written* communication around these issues (Bond et al., 2002). Figure 4.5 shows the proportion of employers who reported providing a particular flexible working time arrangement and who also reported that their organisation had a written policy relating to that arrangement. Overall, where a particular practice was available, written policy documentation was fairly common. It was most common in relation to flexitime, which may reflect that this is often the most established form of flexible working time arrangement and is often regarded as part of organisational culture, as opposed to a family-sensitive practice (Yeandle et al., 2002).

Consultation processes

Three-quarters of employers reported that one or more of the organisational policies relating to family-sensitive employment practices and policies had been decided after consultation with employees and/or their representatives. However, the overall pattern suggested that a majority of employers undertook only limited consultation with employees. Nevertheless, around seven in ten fathers and mothers reported that their employer sought their views about the practices and policies made available. Fathers in managerial occupations and mothers in the public administration sector were more likely to report higher levels of employer consultation.

Awareness amongst employers

Employers were asked about their awareness of statutory maternity and parental leave regulations and the government's Work-Life Balance Initiative, launched in March 2000 to promote the benefits to employers of policies and practices that help employees balance work and the rest of their lives (DfEE, 2000). Additionally, employers were asked directly about their awareness of the mechanisms within their organisation designed to inform employees about the available family-sensitive employment practices and policies.

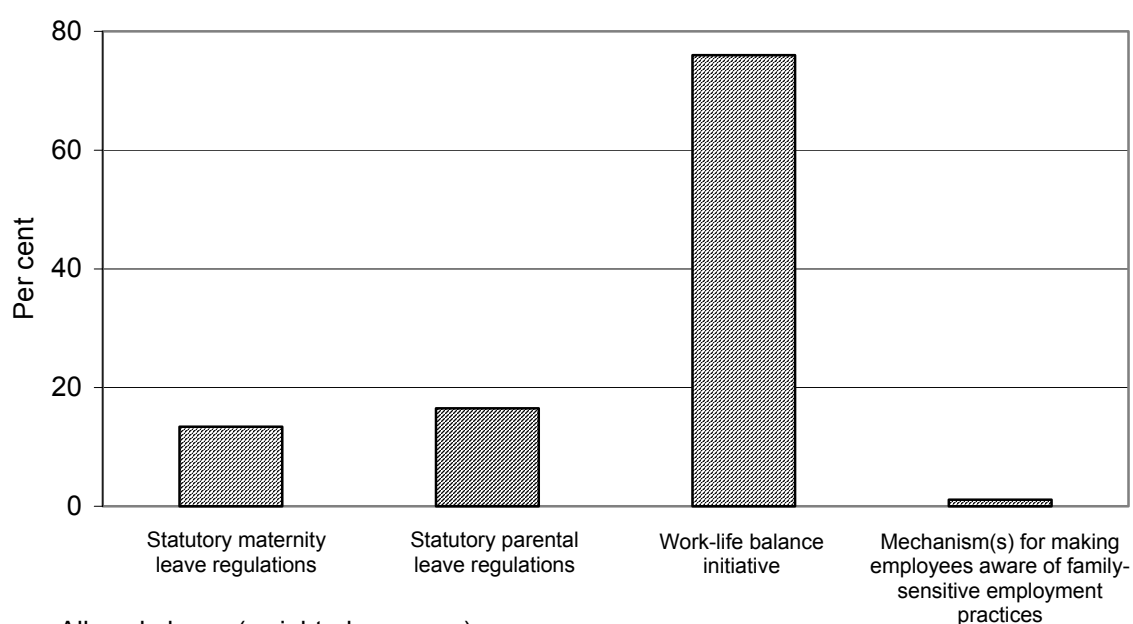
Only a handful of respondents reported that they did not know what mechanisms were used within the workplace to inform employees about any practices available (see Figure 4.6). Around one in eight employers had no awareness of maternity leave regulations and one in seven had no awareness of parental leave regulations. However, the majority of employers were unaware of the government's Work-Life Balance Initiative (76 per cent). This knowledge gap about the Work-Life Balance Initiative may be in part because it is relatively new and suggests more information promotion targeted at employers may be required to enhance awareness. Limited levels of awareness and training on formal family-friendly policies amongst employers has also been reported by Yeandle et al. (2002) who have highlighted the

importance of the training needs of line managers (local supervisors) in the implementation of policy into practice.

4.3 Uptake of practices and policies

The WLB2000 Employee Survey asked respondents whether they were using particular flexible working time arrangements and whether they had used forms of leave within the preceding 12 months. Questions about employees' recent use of family-sensitive services (such as workplace crèches or financial help with childcare needs) were not included in the survey.

Figure 4.6 Employers reporting no awareness of policies



Base: All workplaces (weighted measure)

Source: WLB2000 Employer Survey, IFF/IFF, 2000

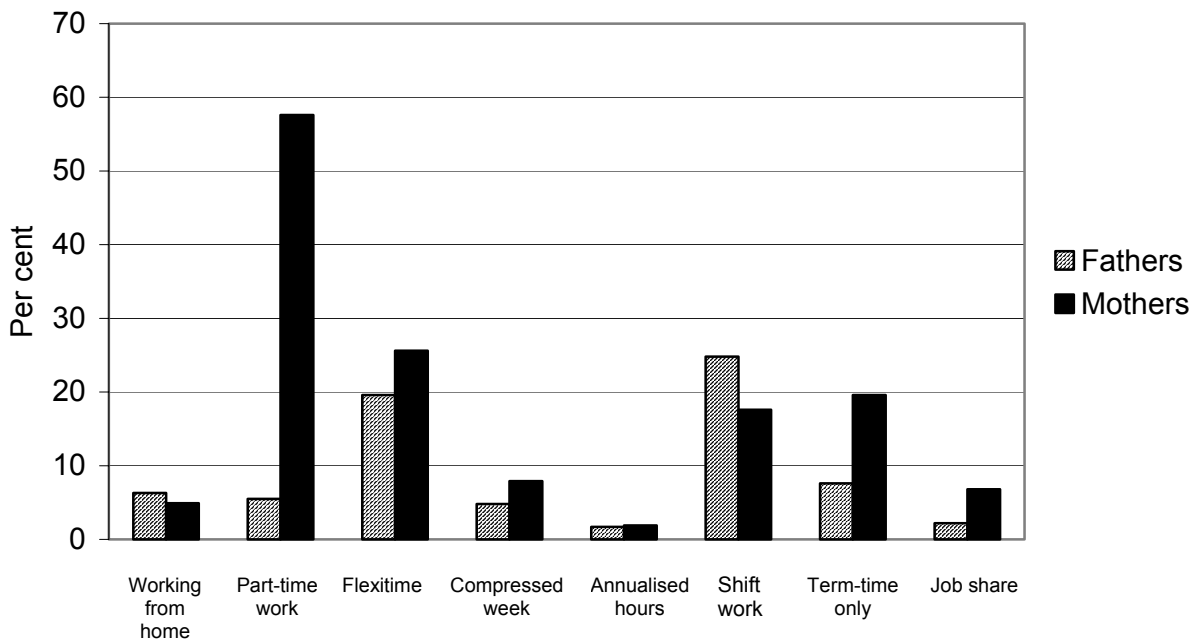
Flexible working time arrangements

Figure 4.7 shows the use of flexible working time arrangements. Fathers' actual use of flexible working practices was generally low. Flexitime, part-time and job-sharing were used by 20 per cent, 6 per cent and 2 per cent of fathers respectively. Mothers' use of flexible working practices was always higher than fathers except in the case of shift work, which was used by 25 per cent of fathers and 18 per cent of mothers. The largest disparities between the two groups were in the use of part-time working (58 per cent of mothers compared with 6 per cent of fathers) and term-time only working (20 per cent of mothers compared with 8 per cent of fathers). Fathers were less likely than mothers to adopt part-time working because of domestic commitments or a desire to spend more time with the family (see Appendix 2, Table A2.2). A majority of fathers thought that working part-time would adversely affect their career progression (66 per cent compared with 45 per cent of mothers, Appendix 2, Table A2.5).

In fact, the rates for part-time working and flexitime were lower amongst fathers in comparison to all men in employment but the rates of use of annualised hours, compressed working week, job share arrangements and term-time only working, all rarely used, were similar (Hogarth et al., 2000). In contrast, higher proportions of mothers used part-time working and term-time only working when compared to all women in employment. Rates of use of the other flexible working time arrangements were similar for mothers compared to all women.

Amongst fathers, flexitime was used most highly by those in the public administration sector, the transport and distribution sector and in community, social and personal services, both in small (5-24) and very large (500+) organisations. Managerial grades also had high usage. In addition, workforces with a majority of female employees were associated with high levels of fathers' use of flexitime (see Appendix 3, Table A3.3).

Figure 4.7 Use of flexible working time arrangements



Base: All employed fathers and mothers (weighted measures)

Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey, IFER/IFF, 2000

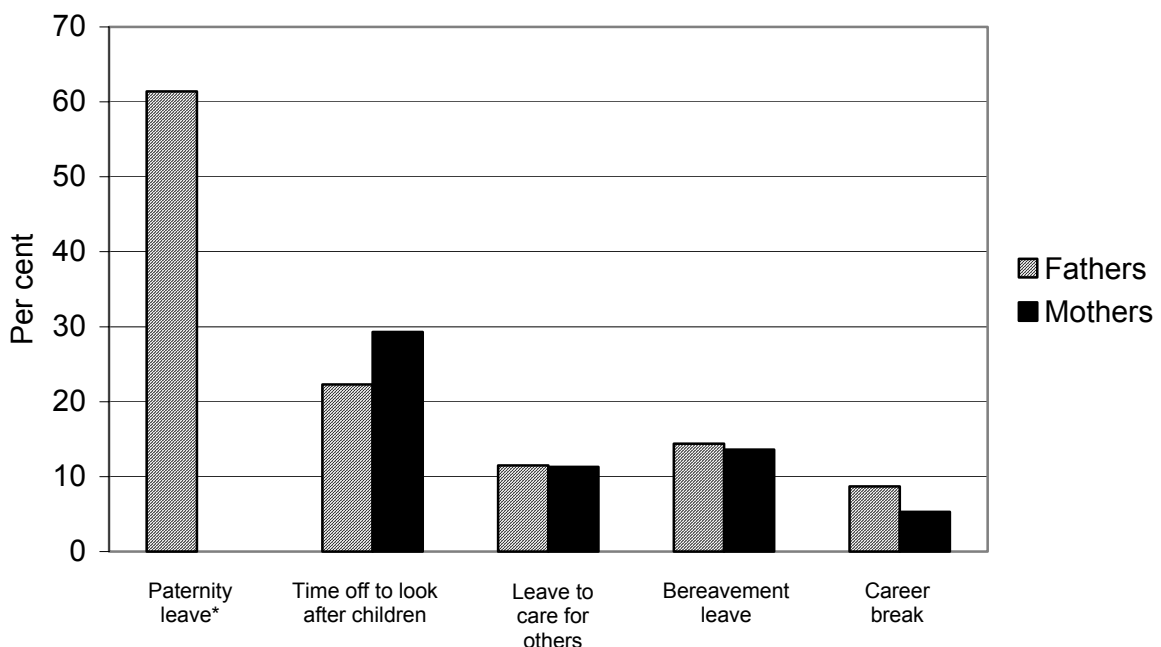
Use of leave (in last twelve months)

Employees were asked about their recent use of forms of leave offered voluntarily by their employer (as opposed to being subject to statutory regulations as with e.g. maternity leave and parental leave). The figures displayed in Figure 4.8 relate only to the occurrence of these forms of leave and do not take into account the amount of time involved (Hogarth et al., 2000). Only two forms of leave asked about were

specifically related to children: paternity leave and time off to look after children, for instance, if they were sick.

The rate of uptake of paid or unpaid paternity leave within the preceding 12 months amongst fathers with responsibility for at least one dependent child under one year old was 61 per cent.²⁰ As described in Chapter 2, this figure is comparable to rates observed across the European Community countries in the early period of Nordic advances in policy and legislation to encourage paternity leave. This level of uptake provides an important national baseline prior to the introduction of paternity leave in 2003. Analysis indicates that fathers in non-manual occupations were most likely to take paternity leave (Appendix 3, Table A3.3).

Figure 4.8 Use of forms of leave (last 12 months)



Notes: * Fathers with at least one dependent child aged less than one year.

Base: All employed fathers and mothers (weighted measures)

Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey, IFF/IFF, 2000

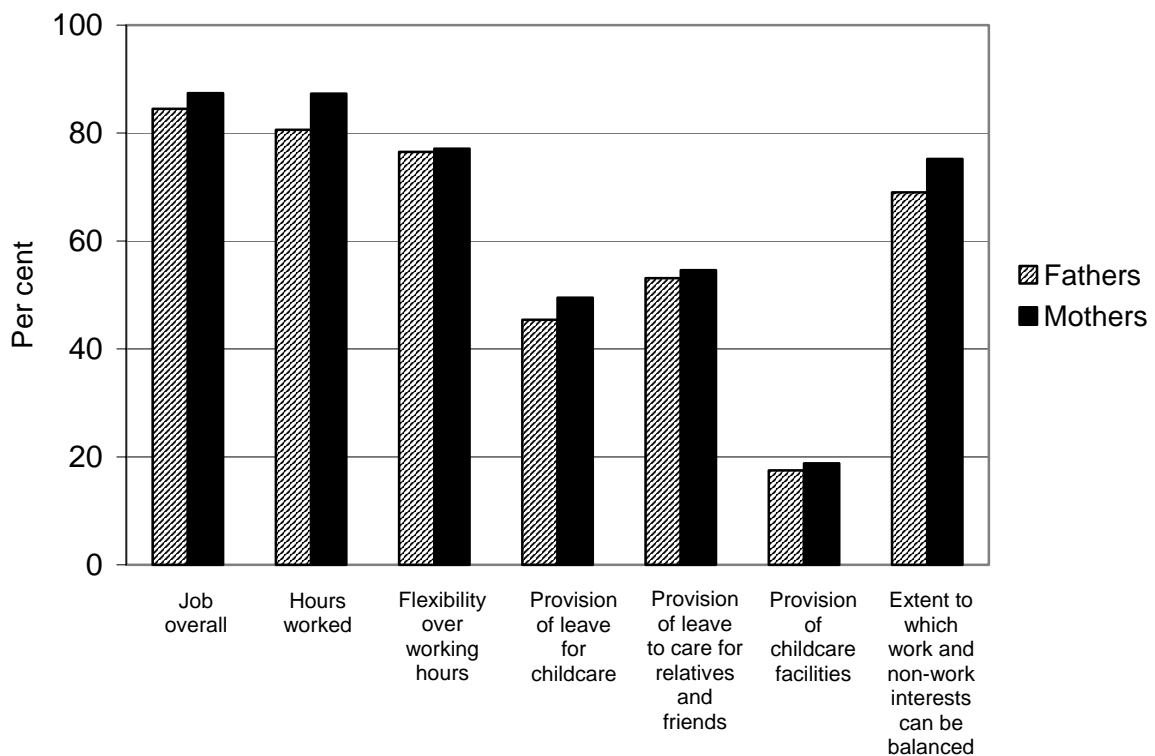
Both fathers and mothers take leave to look after children but the uptake is lower for fathers. Twenty-two per cent of fathers reported taking leave to care for children, rising to 28 per cent for those whose youngest child was less than 11 years. Comparative figures for mothers were 29 and 41 per cent respectively. This finding is consistent with research evidence which suggests that maternal responsibility for the care of children when they are unwell remains high (see Chapter 2). Apart from time off to look after children and paternity leave, leave rates were relatively low and were similar amongst both fathers and mothers, although uptake was marginally higher amongst fathers.

4.4 Satisfaction with family-sensitive employment practices

Fathers' and mothers' satisfaction with the absolute hours worked, the flexibility of the hours and the extent to which work and non-work interests were balanced was high. Eighty-one per cent of fathers and 87 per cent of mothers were very or fairly satisfied with their working hours,²¹ and this was particularly the case for fathers in managerial occupations (Figure 4.9). Fathers dissatisfied with their working hours highlighted three favoured changes (in order): being able to leave on time; working less over-time; and working longer hours for more pay. By contrast, dissatisfied mothers highlighted three favoured changes (in order): being able to leave on time; working fewer hours for less pay; and working less overtime (Appendix 2, Table 2.4).

There was a clear relationship between long working hours and levels of work dissatisfaction, unhappiness about hours and general discontent about the extent to which work and non-work interests could be balanced (See Appendix 3, Table A3.4). Satisfaction with work-life balance dropped to 60 per cent for fathers usually working 48+ hours per week and to 50 per cent for those regularly working 60+ hours per week. Mothers' work-life balance also reduced if they were working long hours and much more significantly than that of fathers (40 per cent for those usually working 48+ hours per week, 38 per cent for those regularly working 60+ hours per week).

Figure 4.9 Level of satisfaction



Base: All employed fathers and mothers (weighted measures)

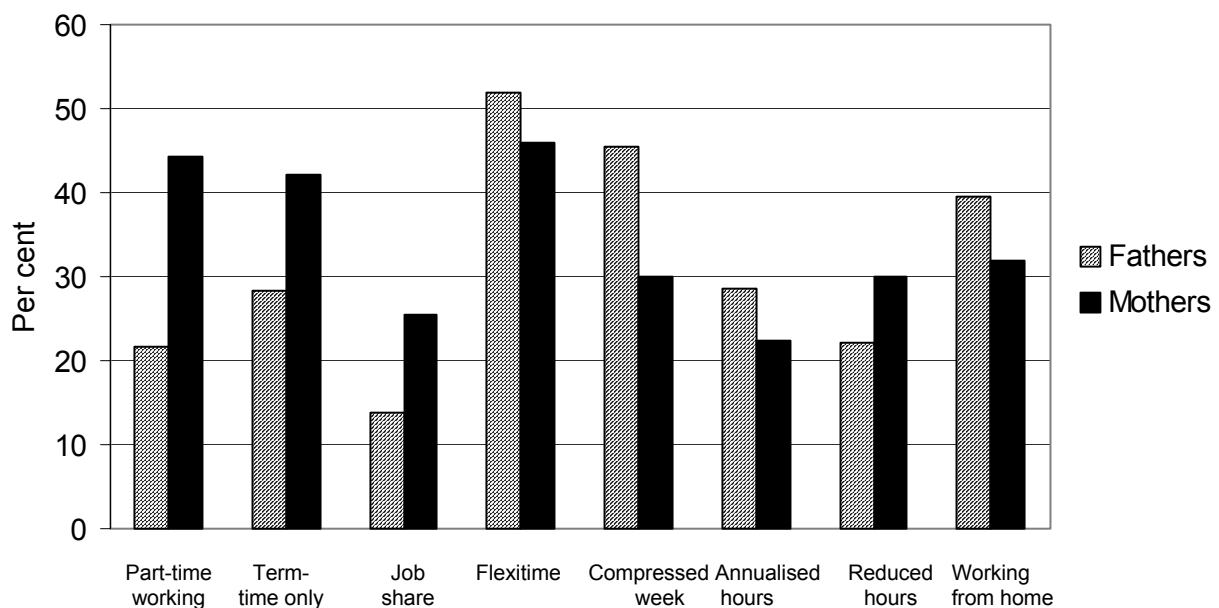
Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey, IFF/IFF, 2000

One mitigating factor, which perhaps put a ceiling on work-life balance dissatisfaction, was that overall job satisfaction for employees was high, even when they were working long hours. Job satisfaction remained high particularly for fathers. Parents were less satisfied with childcare facilities at work and with the provision available to care for relatives such as elders. Fewer than one-fifth were satisfied with the provision of childcare facilities, whereas over half were satisfied with the provision of leave to care for relatives and friends.

4.5 Latent demand for family-sensitive employment practices

Despite satisfaction with working hours there was a considerable latent demand for flexible working conditions amongst both fathers and mothers.²² However, they appeared to have different preferences. Fathers were most likely to want access to flexitime (52 per cent), a compressed working week (46 per cent) and working at home (40 per cent). A relatively low proportion of fathers were interested in undertaking a job share arrangement (14 per cent) or working reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary (22 per cent). In contrast, mothers were most likely to want access to flexitime (46 per cent), term-time only working (42 per cent) and part-time working (44 per cent). Working part-time was not a favoured option by fathers (22 per cent); this preference was particularly low amongst Welsh fathers. Demand for flexitime and term-time working was higher for fathers with children under 11 years.

Figure 4.10 Latent demand for FWTAs



Base: All employed fathers and mothers (weighted measures)
 Source: WLB2000 Employee Survey, IFER/IFF, 2000

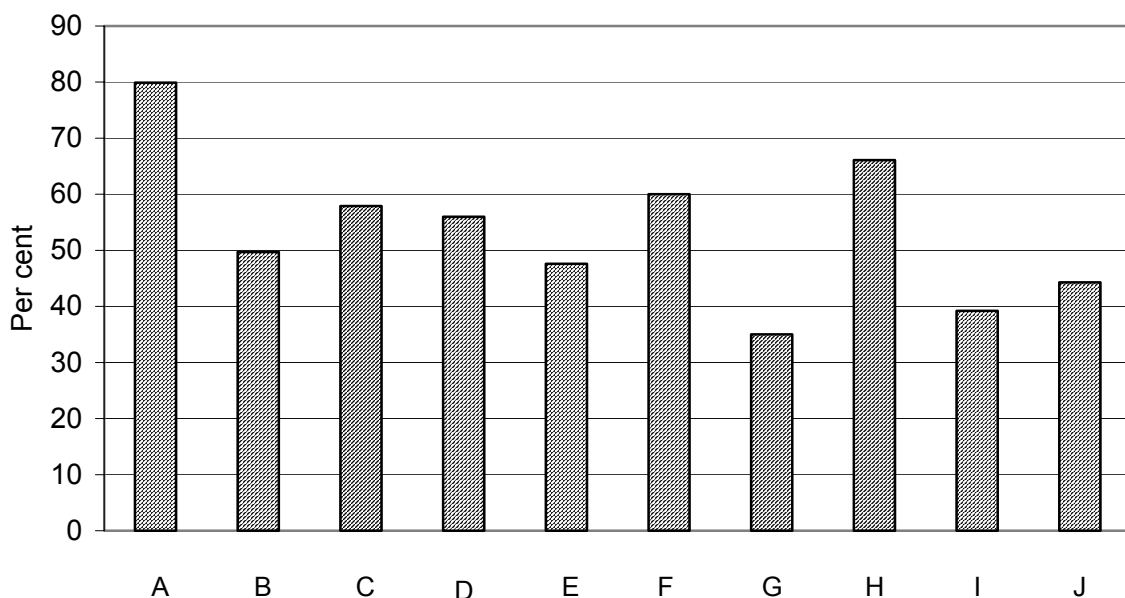
Fathers in managerial occupations were more likely to express a demand for flexitime (Appendix 3, Table 3.5). In general, however, demand amongst mothers and child-related variables showed a statistically significant association far more frequently in the regression analysis, than demand amongst fathers and child-related variables. For example, amongst mothers, demand was almost always negatively associated with increasing age of youngest dependent child, suggesting that those with young children had a consistently high level of demand for these arrangements.

In summary, although both fathers and mothers placed flexitime at the top of their 'wish list', fathers were more likely to want flexibility of working hours over the day and week whilst mothers preferred practices that entailed greater reductions in discrete chunks of working time, perhaps linked with children's requirements.

4.6 The business case

Employers were asked about the effects of flexible working time arrangements and forms of leave on their employees and the workplace more generally (see Figure 4.11, below). A majority of employers felt that the impact of work-life balance practices and policies on the organisation was positive, although concern was expressed about costs and workload involved.

Figure 4.11 Employers' assessment of the effects of FWTAs



A Fostered good employment relationships

B Helped increase productivity

C Helped reduce absenteeism

D Helped lower labour turnover

E Eased recruitment

F Helped retain more female employees

G Led to shortages of staff at key times

H Improved staff motivation and commitment

I Increased managerial workloads

J Increased overall costs to the business

Base: All workplaces (weighted measure)

Source: WLB2000 Employer Survey, IFF/IFER, 2000

Eight out of ten employers agreed that work-life balance practices and policies fostered good employment relationships and two-thirds agreed that they improved staff motivation, commitment, retention and turnover. As such, a majority of employers felt that the impact of these practices and policies upon the attitudes of their employees towards the organisation was positive. Previous research found that increased employee commitment was associated with employees who thought the establishment at which they work had a caring ethos (Dex and Smith, 2002).

However, there is a mixed picture of the extent to which employers felt that positive attitudes amongst employees towards their organisation translated into positive business outcomes. For example, whilst almost six out of ten agreed that these practices and policies helped reduce absenteeism and labour turnover and half agreed that they helped to increase productivity, a sizeable minority (44 per cent) stated that they increased the overall costs to the business. The latter finding runs counter to recent research which found that approximately nine out of ten establishments with some experience of policies to help employees balance work and non-work commitments found them to be cost effective (Dex and Smith, 2002) but does corroborate European findings reported earlier in this report. Increasing managerial workloads and the creation of staff shortages at key times were other negative effects perceived by substantial minorities of employers. As such, whilst the business case in favour of work-life balance appears to have become fairly well established, it is clear that varying degrees of caution remain within many organisations.

4.7 Summary

- There is a high level of support from fathers and mothers for being able to balance life at home and at work. Eighty per cent of fathers and 85 per cent of mothers agreed or strongly agreed that everyone should be able to balance their work and home lives in the way they want.
- Although three-fifths of employers also supported work-life balance this was at a *lower* level than amongst parents. Promotion of family-sensitive policies through formal communication and consultation mechanisms was variable.
- Fathers' expectations about whether specific work-life balance practices could be made available in their current workplace were *low*. But mothers' expectations of access to specific work-life balance practices were higher than those of fathers.
- Fathers had higher expectations about being allowed to take various forms of leave if required. Eighty per cent of fathers believed they would be able to take

paternity leave and 85 per cent that they would be allowed time off to care for a sick child.

- Sixty-one per cent of fathers with a dependent child less than one year of age had taken paternity leave in the last year. This provides an important national baseline prior to the introduction of paternity leave in April 2003. Fathers in non-manual, rather than manual, occupations were more likely to take paternity leave.
- From the employer's perspective, the availability of leave was not quite as extensive as that anticipated by employees.
- Fathers' and mothers' satisfaction with the absolute hours worked, the flexibility of the hours and the extent to which work and non-work interests were balanced was high, except in the case of the provision of childcare facilities, where satisfaction was low.
- Parents' satisfaction with their job overall, the number of hours worked, flexibility over hours of work and the extent to which work and non-work interests could be balanced declined markedly amongst those working the longest hours. The decline was sharpest amongst mothers.
- Despite satisfaction with working hours there was substantial *unmet* demand for flexible working conditions amongst parents. However, fathers and mothers prefer different types of arrangements.
- A majority of employers felt that the impact of work-life balance practices and policies on their organisation was positive, although concern was expressed about costs and workload involved.
- Given the low levels of uptake where flexible working time arrangements *were* available, it is likely that fundamental changes in *both* organisational culture and parental role division will need to occur alongside increased provision, before behaviour begins to match aspiration.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This final chapter of the report examines the main areas where policy initiatives are required in order to support working fathers and their families.

As this report has demonstrated, an understanding that the reconciliation of work and family life is an issue for fathers as well as mothers is beginning to be acknowledged by policy makers in the UK. In 2003 for the first time, a specific family policy measure targeted at fathers will be introduced - paid paternal leave after the birth of a child. Similarly, with the exception of the provision for extended maternity leave, most work-life balance sections of the new Employment Act have been designed so that they are in principle open to fathers as well as mothers. This policy development shows a more gender inclusive approach to work-life balance issues for employees with children. However, Britain, unlike some of its European neighbours (notably Sweden), is at an early stage in its move toward a father-sensitive family-work policy framework. A vision of active fatherhood is one component in the current Government's work-life agenda, although a concerted attempt to target fathers beyond the period of childbirth has not yet been undertaken.

Whilst an implicit mother-focused family-work policy approach has been a historic barrier to a more assertive consideration of fathers' needs, clearly lack of evidence about what provision fathers actually want has also hindered policy development. The present study contributes towards illuminating this knowledge gap, presenting data on British fathers' preferences for flexible working arrangements. The report also compares fathers' and mothers' preferences to clarify whether similar or different policy approaches are required in the overall goal of achieving a sustainable balance of work and family life.

Fathers and families

As shown in the literature review, fathers matter to children and in turn influence their psychological, educational and material welfare. There is growing evidence that fathers are significant in family relationships in both an economic and an emotional sense. Fathers can bring strengths to their relationships with their children and father involvement can have beneficial effects at different stages of children's development. Fathers can also act as supportive co-parents to their partners. From a working mothers' perspective, enlisting paternal support is one useful strategy in the negotiation of work-family time. Whilst the economic dimension of fathering is vital, and indeed still central to men's identity as parents, raising general societal awareness about the relevance of fathers as emotionally significant to children and partners beyond their economic provider role is an important policy recommendation.

An informed public debate about 'active' fatherhood is required and the introduction of paternity leave could act as a catalyst. In order to facilitate this debate an Active Fatherhood Working Party could be developed early in 2003 with representation from, for example: government departments (including the Department of Trade and Industry, Department for Education and Skills, Department of Health and The Treasury), EOC, fathers' organisations (e.g. Fathers Direct), women's and mothers' organisations (e.g. Fawcett Society; The Women's Institute, The Maternity Alliance), children's organisations (e.g. National Children's Bureau), business (e.g. Confederation of British Industry, The Work Foundation), Trade Unions and academia. Similarly the role of fathers in families should be a part of the national debate concerning the UK's decision to continue an opt-out from the *Working Time Directive* allowing employees to volunteer to work in excess of the forty-eight hour weekly limit.

The case for work-life balance?

An examination of fathers' employment patterns shows that fathers continue to work longer hours than mothers, although mothers are catching up. Data from the Work-Life Balance survey indicate that fathers are generally satisfied with their working hours, particularly if they enjoy their jobs. But when working hours start to increase above 48 hours per week fathers' satisfaction with their work-life balance begins to decline and reduces again when they regularly work 60 hours or more per week. Similarly, time use data indicate that fathers' involvement with children declines markedly as working hours increase. These trends, along with the medical evidence showing the adverse health risks for men of continual long work hours and low levels of sleep, may serve to motivate a work-life balance shift. Since the recent trend in working hours amongst fathers has also remained relatively stable, this may be a marker that fathers' allocation of time between work and parenting activity is beginning to take greater account of these pressures.

The dilemma for contemporary men is that when they become fathers they need to maximise their economic potential. This context creates a different pattern of work-life balance preferences for fathers and mothers, at least in the short term with the current gender pay gap. Although both fathers and mothers placed flexitime at the top of their 'wish list', fathers were more likely to want flexibility of working hours over the day and week without reduction in salary. By contrast, mothers' preferred flexible working arrangements entailed greater reductions in discrete chunks of working time, perhaps linking with children's requirements, with the inevitable drop in pay.

Whilst the introduction of paid paternity leave is welcome, the low income replacement level may mean that many fathers are unable to take up the new provision. Since paid paternity leave was introduced as far back as 1974 in Sweden,

this experience and that of other Nordic countries has provided a social experiment showing the optimal conditions for fathers' responsiveness and take-up. The importance of replacement income levels up to 80-100 per cent of earnings appears to be a necessary condition for universal father take-up.

The challenge for contemporary policy makers is how to respond to current parental preferences, which on the surface appear to amplify gender differences rather than encourage equal opportunities irrespective of gender. Parents are making employment and childcare decisions in the context of fathers' greater earning power and an uneven quality of childcare nationally. Evidence suggesting that women's earning power may be more predictive of higher levels of father involvement than women's working hours, again indicates the importance of tackling the gender pay gap. Also, employment policy should not be considered in isolation from the quality of informal and formal care for children throughout their life course.

Balancing family life

Evidence suggests that working mothers are important catalysts for change in the fathers and work-life balance debate. Labour market trend analysis has shown that mothers, in both couple and lone households, have experienced the greatest intensification in economic activity and general growth in working hours since the early 1990s. On the home front, in couple households, there is clear evidence that fathers have increased their participation in childcare and, to a lesser extent, housework although overall, mothers still spend more time on these activities than fathers.

Our analysis suggests that long working hours have a greater impact on mothers' work-life balance, perhaps reflecting role overload if emotional and practical support is not available at home. Work-life balance legislation, which is perceived by mothers to take away pre-existing support, could create extra strain. As in many Nordic countries, a *gender collaborative* approach to incorporating fathers in work-life balance initiatives is therefore vital, so that any future father targeting or quota is developed as an expansion of parental leave and not subtracted from maternal leave. In this context, sensitivity to the nutritional benefits of breast-feeding in the first year of life is an important health consideration to be taken into account in the future debate about the extension of maternity leave.

The business case

The findings suggest that work-life balance is supported in principle as an important social good by both parents and employers. However, employers need further encouragement, training and incentives to develop organisational policies which embrace the diverse ways that fathers and mothers balance their work and family life

throughout their life course. Responsiveness on the part of employers is important. If the format of flexible working is fixed, then it is not flexible. In addition, employers need more support and guidance on the changing role of fathers in families, including the hidden group of lone fathers.

Attempts to widen access to family-friendly working practices via legislative or other means will need to consider the risk that if organisational costs are likely to increase as a result, then either employers may choose not to employ those most likely to use such practices, or employees with family responsibilities may bear the costs indirectly. In addition, the low levels of paternal uptake where flexible working time arrangements were available, suggests that fundamental changes in both organisational culture and the division of roles within families need to occur alongside increased provision, before behaviour begins to match aspiration.

APPENDIX 1

Characteristics of the Employee Survey and Employer Survey samples

The source for Tables A1.1 to A1.11 is the WLB2000 Employee Survey (IFER/IFF, 2000) the base is all employed fathers and mothers (unweighted measures).

The source for Tables A1.12 to A1.13 is the WLB2000 Employer Survey (IFER/IFF, 2000), the base is all workplaces (unweighted measures).

All data shown are percentages, unless indicated otherwise.

Table A1.1 Employment sector

Employment Sector	Fathers	Mothers
Manufacturing, agriculture, mining and utilities	26	8
Construction	7	1
Retail and wholesale	12	18
Transport and distribution	11	3
Finance and business services	18	13
Public administration	11	11
Health, education and other services	13	44
Other community, social and personal service activities	3	4

Table A1.2 Size of workforce

Size of workforce	Fathers	Mothers
5-24	23	36
25-99	27	29
100-499	29	21
500+	21	15

Table A1.3 Occupational status

Occupational Status	Fathers	Mothers
Managerial	56	41
Non-manual	17	50
Manual	28	9

Table A1.4 Age group

Age group	Fathers	Mothers
16-17	<1	<1
18-24	3	2
25-34	25	24
35-44	42	46
45-54	25	24
55-60	4	3
61-65	1	1

Table A1.5 Number of dependent children

Number of dependent children	Fathers	Mothers
0	14	17
1	32	35
2	38	36
3	12	10
4+	3	3

Table A1.6 Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Fathers	Mothers
White	93	94
Black Caribbean	1	2
Black African	1	1
Black neither Caribbean nor African	<1	<1
Indian	2	1
Pakistani	<1	<1
Bangladeshi	<1	<1
Chinese	<1	<1
Other Asian	<1	<1
Arab	0	<1
Mixed	<1	<1
Other	0	<1
Refused	1	<1

Table A1.7 Marital status

Marital Status	Fathers	Mothers
Single, never married	8.7	10.9
Married/cohabiting	85.5	71.2
Married, separated from husband or wife	1.9	4.4
Divorced	3.1	11.7
Widowed	0.8	1.7
Refused	0.0	0.1

Table A1.8 Household employment status

Household employment	Fathers	Mothers
Full-time in solo earner household	36.2	16.9
Full-time main wage earner in dual earner household	47.2	6.9
Full-time not main wage earner in dual earner household	12.5	24.9
Part-time in solo earner household	1.7	13.3
Part-time main wage earner in dual earner household	0.5	2.6
Part-time not main wage earner in dual earner household	1.2	35.4

Table A1.9 Employment status

Employment status	Fathers	Mothers
Part-time	4.1	51.3
Full-time	95.9	48.7

Table A1.10 Usual hours of work

Usual hours worked each week	Fathers (mean)	Mothers (mean)
All	45.3	30.6
Full-time employed	46.3	40.9
Part-time employed	22.0	20.8

s.d. (All) = Fathers: 11.9; Mothers: 13.5.

Table A1.11 Additional hours of work

Additional hours worked each week	Fathers (mean)	Mothers (mean)
All	13.7 (n=26)	11.9 (n=55)
Full-time employed	13.8 (n=25)	16.7 (n=30)
Part-time employed	10.0 (n=1)	11.4 (n=25)

s.d.(All) = Fathers: 16.9; Mothers: 14.5.

Table A1.12 Characteristics of Employer Survey sample by employment sector

Employment Sector	Employers
Manufacturing, agriculture, mining and utilities	18
Construction	7
Retail and wholesale	20
Transport and distribution	12
Finance and business services	18
Public administration	10
Health, education and other services	12
Other community, social and personal service activities	3

Table A1.13 Characteristics of Employer Survey sample by size of workforce

Employment Sector	Employers
5-24	26
25-99	28
100-499	31
500+	15

APPENDIX 2

Employee Survey: further tables

The source for all tables is the WLB2000 Employee Survey (IFER/IFF, 2000), the base is all employed fathers and mothers (unweighted measures).

All data shown are percentages, unless indicated otherwise.

Table A2.1 Reasons for opting to work part-time rather than full-time

Reasons for taking part-time rather than full-time*	Fathers (n=61)	Mothers (n=1159)
You were a student at school or college	23.1	4.8
You are permanently sick or disabled	2.9	1.2
No full-time jobs are or were available	25.1	6.7
You did not want a full-time job	43.6	60.9

* Respondents could give more than one answer or none of the answers so that percentages may sum to more or less than 100

Table A2.2 Reasons for not wanting a full-time job

Reasons for not wanting a full-time job	Fathers (n=28)	Mothers (n=716)
You are financially secure, but work because you want to	6.4	6.9
You earn enough working part-time	3.5	7.7
You want to spend more time with your family	27.7	56.3
You have domestic commitments which prevent you from working full-time	20.9	39.9
There are insufficient childcare facilities available	0.0	7.5
Could only get part-time work	17.3	0.3
Health reasons	7.4	0.1
Wanted two jobs	0.0	0.3
Old age	0.0	0.3
Wanted more free time	0.0	0.6
Personal choice	0.0	0.7
To run own business alongside part-time work	3.0	0.4
Don't know	0.0	0.4
Other	4.5	1.5

* Respondents could give more than one answer or none of the answers so that percentages may sum to more or less than 100

Table A2.3 Long working hours

Proportion working long hours	Fathers	Mothers
48 or more	38.6	7.1
60 or more	13.2	2.7

Table A2.4 Preferred options for changing current working arrangement

Would you like to change your working arrangement in any of the following ways? (those dissatisfied with hours worked)	Fathers (n=214)	Mothers (n=237)
Work fewer hours for less pay	9.5	23.7
Work longer hours for more pay	13.8	16.1
Work less overtime	24.2	17.9
Work more overtime	7.2	0.4
Be able to leave on time	31.9	35.7
Work flexi-time	3.3	2.7
Work a compressed week	0.0	2.1
Work for more pay and/ or less hours	11.6	5.5
Choose own hours/ flexibility	7.1	7.2
Work fewer hours	5.6	4.3
Work day shifts	1.7	1.2
Work paid overtime	2.1	1.5
Work Monday to Friday	0.3	0.3
Have a manageable workload	2.0	4.0
Receive acknowledgement for hours worked	1.1	0.4
Do less paperwork	0.5	2.3
Receive help with workload from other staff/ assistant	0.3	0.0
Other	5.4	2.3
Don't know	2.9	1.8
No Answer	0.4	0.3

* Respondents could give more than one answer or none of the answers so that percentages may sum to more or less than 100

Table A2.5 Perceptions of the adverse affects of working practices on career progression

Proportion who think that in their current situation, (X) can adversely affect their personal career progression	Fathers	Mothers
Working part-time	65.7	45.3
Not being able to work beyond standard hours	48.5	40.2
Having more flexibility in when normal hours are worked	33.2	32.1
Taking extended leave to care for children	52.2	54.1
Taking extended leave to care for others	55.9	56.9

Table A2.6 Perception of importance to employer that employees have a balance between work and the rest of their lives

How important is it to your employer that staff have a balance between work and the rest of their lives?	Fathers	Mothers
Very important or fairly important	68.5	75.9

APPENDIX 3

Regression analysis summary tables

These tables contain the data arising from the regression analysis conducted using the WLB2000 Employee Survey Dataset (IFER/IFF, 2000). This was done to find out which variables had a positive or negative association with fathers' and mothers' expectations of access to, use of, satisfaction with and demand for particular family-sensitive employment policies and practices. All the variables listed in this table under the column headed 'Explanatory variable' were found to have a statistically significant association with the relevant 'Dependent variable' listed in the first column. We will use the first 2 rows of Table A3.1 (next page) as examples to show how the data should be interpreted, as follows:

Row 1

- **Longer working hours** [explanatory variable] were associated with **lower** [-] **expectation of access to part-time work** [dependent variable] amongst fathers.
- There was **strong statistical evidence** for this association [indicated by the p-value²³].

Row 2

- **Employment within the transport and distribution sector** was associated with **higher** [+] **expectation of access to part-time work amongst fathers**.
- There was **strong statistical evidence** for this association.

Row 3

- **Employment within the finance and business services sector** was associated with **higher** **expectation of access to part-time work amongst fathers**.
- There was **statistical evidence** for this association.

N.B.

- p-value <0.001 indicates strong statistical evidence for the association.
- p-value <0.025 and >0.001 indicates statistical evidence for the association.
- p-value <0.05 and >0.025 indicates weak statistical evidence for the association.

Table A3.1 Fathers' expectation of access to FWTAs and forms of leave

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Part-time working	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.007 to -0.002
	+	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	0.086 to 0.252
	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.002	0.040 to 0.182
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.218 to 0.387
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p<0.001	0.092 to 0.265
	+	Workforce consisting of about ½ men and ½ women	p=0.002	0.033 to 0.152
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of women	p=0.001	0.050 to 0.211
Term time only working	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.009	-0.003 to 0.000
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.005	0.020 to 0.118
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p=0.004	0.026 to 0.136
	+	Gender profile of workforce is mostly women	p<0.001	0.057 to 0.149
	+	Minority ethnicity	p<0.001	0.098 to 0.226
Job share	+	Managerial occupational status	p=0.015	0.011 to 0.108
	+	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p=0.011	0.023 to 0.173
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.261 to 0.416
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p<0.001	0.119 to 0.276
	+	Workforce consisting of about ½ men and ½ women	p=0.001	0.041 to 0.152
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of women	p<0.001	0.106 to 0.252
	+	Minority ethnicity	p<0.001	0.080 to 0.268
Flexitime	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.049 to 0.158
	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.004	0.033 to 0.178
Compressed week	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.016	0.013 to 0.130
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.002	0.042 to 0.192

	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.005	0.261 to 0.416
Reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.004	-0.006 to -0.001
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.010	0.027 to 0.201
	+	Workforce consisting of about ½ men and ½ women	p<0.001	0.052 to 0.180
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of women	p=0.004	0.039 to 0.199
Annualised hours	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.027	0.005 to 0.086
Paternity leave	-	Increasing age of father	p<0.001	-0.073 to -0.028
	-	Sole earner status	p=0.005	-0.105 to -0.018
	+	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p=0.001	0.048 to 0.185
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.082 to 0.221
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p=0.003	0.031 to 0.159
Time off to look after children	-	Increasing age of father	p<0.001	-0.058 to -0.017
Time off to care for others	-	Dual earner status where partner is main wage earner	p=0.011	-0.174 to -0.022
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.030	0.009 to 0.174
Bereavement leave	-	Increasing number of dependent children	p=0.025	-0.021 to -0.001
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.083 to -0.023
Career break	+	Employment within construction sector	p=0.046	0.002 to 0.211
	+	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	0.142 to 0.327
	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	0.129 to 0.276
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.316 to 0.493
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p<0.001	0.193 to 0.355
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.001	0.075 to 0.288

Table A3.2 Fathers' access to family-sensitive services and policies

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Crèche or workplace nursery	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.083 to 0.166
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p<0.001	0.177 to 0.252
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.102 to 0.165
Subsidised nursery places outside of work	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.056 to 0.133
	+	Workforce consisting of about ½ men and ½ women	p=0.003	0.013 to 0.065
Other types of financial help with childcare needs	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.002	0.024 to 0.108
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of women	p=0.011	0.010 to 0.080
Information about local provision of childcare	-	Managerial occupational status	p=0.002	-0.149 to -0.034
	-	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.145 to -0.045
	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.034	0.005 to 0.117
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.202 to 0.341
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p<0.001	0.137 to 0.272
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.114 to 0.216
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of women	p=0.017	0.013 to 0.130
Information about provision of other care	-	Manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.179 to -0.062
	-	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.168 to -0.070
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.158 to 0.297
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p=0.002	0.038 to 0.168
	-	Small workforce of 5-24 employees	p=0.002	-0.120 to -0.026
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of women	p=0.001	0.040 to 0.159
Financial help with other care needs	+	Managerial occupational status	p=0.002	0.022 to 0.101
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.029	0.006 to 0.104
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.001	0.055 to 0.224
Help with childcare arrangements during	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.018	-0.003 to 0.000

school holidays	+	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p=0.041	0.001 to 0.027
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.074 to 0.170
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p=0.003	0.023 to 0.110
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.002	0.021 to 0.093
	+	Minority ethnicity	p<0.001	0.049 to 0.166
Workplace counselling or stress management advice	-	Manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.196 to -0.063
	-	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.262 to -0.150
	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.015	-0.005 to -0.001
	+	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	0.200 to 0.351
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.345 to 0.503
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p<0.001	0.208 to 0.353
	+	Employment within other community, social & personal services sector	p=0.002	0.085 to 0.359
	-	Small workforce of 5-24 employees	p=0.004	-0.163 to -0.031
	+	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p<0.001	0.078 to 0.203
+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.183 to 0.321	

Table A3.3 Fathers' use of FWTAs and forms of leave

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Flexitime	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.035 to 0.117
	+	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	0.053 to 0.185
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.169 to 0.304
	+	Employment within other community, social & personal services sector	p=0.002	0.064 to 0.298
	+	Small workforce of 5-24 employees	p=0.001	0.032 to 0.132
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.068 to 0.173
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of women	p<0.001	0.045 to 0.158
Compressed week	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.003 to -0.001
	+	Presence of caring responsibilities other than childcare	p=0.002	0.021 to 0.092
Annualised hours		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Shift work	-	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	-0.257 to -0.172
	+	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.002	0.001 to 0.005
	-	Employment within construction sector	p=0.004	-0.210 to -0.041
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.194 to -0.083
	+	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p<0.001	0.074 to 0.170
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.070 to 0.179
Term time only working	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p<0.001	0.208 to 0.287
	-	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.005	-0.081 to -0.015
Job share	-	Managerial occupational status	p=0.001	-0.041 to -0.011
	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.038	-0.001 to 0.000
Working from home	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.037 to 0.088
	+	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.022	0.000 to 0.002
	+	Employment within health, education & other services sector	p=0.014	0.010 to 0.086

Paternity leave	+	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.031	0.004 to 0.091
	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.146 to -0.112
	-	Increasing number of dependent children	p<0.001	-0.075 to -0.029
Time off to look after children	-	Manual occupational status	p=0.002	-0.195 to -0.044
	-	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.002	-0.158 to -0.035
	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.081 to -0.032
Leave to care for others	+	Presence of caring responsibilities other than childcare	p<0.001	0.157 to 0.283
Bereavement leave	-	Couple household status	p=0.022	-0.155 to -0.012
Career break	+	Presence of caring responsibilities other than childcare	p=0.006	0.027 to 0.164
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.015	0.020 to 0.181

Table A3.4 Fathers' satisfaction with family-sensitive FWTAs, services and policies

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Level of information about the working practices provided	-	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.177 to -0.088
	+	Couple household status	p=0.008	0.028 to 0.183
Flexibility over hours of work	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.014	-0.004 to 0.000
	+	Employment within other community, social & personal services sector	p=0.048	0.001 to 0.251
Provision of leave for childcare	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.056 to 0.164
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.004	0.040 to 0.214
	+	Workforce consisting of about ½ men and ½ women	p=0.048	0.000 to 0.120
Provision of leave to care for relatives or friends	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.046 to 0.154
	-	Couple household status	p=0.033	-0.219 to -0.009
Provision of childcare facilities		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Extent to which work and non-work interests can be balanced	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.011 to -0.007
	+	Dual earner status where partner is main wage earner	p=0.002	0.041 to 0.177
	+	Employment within construction sector	p=0.021	0.017 to 0.203

Employee reports that employer seeks views of employees about the working practices which are available	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.081 to 0.175
Employer thinks that it is important to their employer whether staff have a balance between work and the rest of their lives	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.006	0.037 to 0.224

Table A3.5 Fathers' latent demand for FWTAs

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Part-time working		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Term time only working	-	Manual occupational status	p=0.015	-0.144 to -0.016
	+	Increasing number of dependent children	p<0.001	0.038 to 0.087
Job share	+	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.001	0.028 to 0.110
	+	Small to medium workforce of 25-99 employees	p=0.038	0.002 to 0.084
	+	Minority ethnicity	p<0.001	0.077 to 0.229
Flexitime	+	Managerial occupational status	p=0.001	0.041 to 0.159
Compressed week		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Annualised hours		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary	+	Increasing age of father	p=0.022	0.006 to 0.071
	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p=0.007	-0.059 to -0.009
	-	Couple household status	p=0.001	-0.242 to -0.063
Working from home	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.035	-0.006 to 0.000
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.013	0.033 to 0.274

Table A3.6 Mothers' expectation of access to FWTAs and forms of leave

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Part-time working	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.011 to -0.004
	-	Employment within manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.358 to -0.159
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.256 to -0.078
Term time only working	+	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	0.069 to 0.225
	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.004 to -0.001
	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.222 to -0.078
Job share	-	Manual occupational status	p=0.038	-0.104 to -0.003
	-	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.290 to -0.108
	-	Employment within manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.263 to -0.075
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.243 to -0.112
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.128 to 0.278
	-	Workforce consisting mostly of men	p=0.011	-0.177 to -0.023
Flexitime		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Compressed week	-	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.004	-0.177 to -0.035
	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.001	-0.004 to -0.001
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.004	0.029 to 0.156
	+	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p=0.006	0.020 to 0.116
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.005	0.037 to 0.215
Annualised hours	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.003	-0.003 to -0.001
	+	Employment within construction sector	p=0.003	0.073 to 0.364
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.013	0.018 to 0.157
Reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary	-	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.234 to -0.070
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.100 to 0.248

Time off to look after children	-	Managerial occupational status	p=0.011	-0.063 to -0.008
	-	Presence of caring responsibilities other than childcare	p=0.014	-0.085 to -0.010
Time off to care for others	+	Sole earner status	p=0.004	0.033 to 0.168
	+	Couple household status	p=0.007	0.029 to 0.185
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.091 to 0.219
	+	Small to medium workforce of 25-99 employees	p=0.034	0.004 to 0.093
	-	Minority ethnicity	p=0.004	-0.229 to -0.045
Bereavement leave		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Career break	-	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.001	-0.216 to -0.056
	+	Dual earner status where mother is main wage earner	p=0.001	0.050 to 0.198
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.199 to 0.343
	-	Workforce consisting mostly of men	p=0.048	-0.146 to -0.001

Table A3.7 Mothers' access to family-sensitive services and policies

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Crèche or workplace nursery	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.118 to 0.089
	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.264 to -0.162
	-	Employment within the construction sector	p=0.029	-0.257 to -0.014
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.209 to -0.135
	-	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	-0.266 to -0.114
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.220 to -0.138
	-	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	-0.170 to -0.083
	+	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p=0.001	0.021 to 0.086
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.198 to 0.273
Subsidised nursery places outside of work	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p=0.031	-0.076 to -0.004
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p=0.001	-0.069 to -0.018
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.078 to 0.140
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.053 to 0.108
Other types of financial help with childcare needs	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.036 to 0.083
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.021 to 0.062
	+	Minority ethnicity	p<0.001	0.029 to 0.092
Information about local provision of childcare	+	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p=0.002	0.010 to 0.043
	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.242 to -0.103
	-	Employment within the construction sector	p=0.004	-0.454 to -0.089
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.202 to -0.341
	-	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	-0.383 to -0.176
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.240 to -0.132

	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.050 to 0.169
	-	Employment within other community, social & personal services sector	p<0.001	-0.321 to -0.133
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.001	0.037 to 0.138
Information about provision of other care	+	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p=0.001	0.010 to 0.041
	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.239 to -0.112
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.232 to -0.144
	-	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	-0.277 to -0.087
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.224 to -0.126
	-	Employment within other community, social & personal services sector	p<0.001	-0.301 to -0.131
Financial help with other care needs		No significant associations	n/a	n/a
Help with childcare arrangements during school holidays	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p=0.034	-0.063 to 0.003
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.004	-0.086 to -0.017
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.067 to 0.142
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.001	0.022 to 0.087
Workplace counselling or stress management advice	-	Non-manual occupational status	p<0.001	-0.253 to -0.101
	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.048 to 0.132
	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.305 to -0.143
	-	Employment within the construction sector	p=0.002	-0.492 to -0.116
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.361 to -0.249
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.224 to -0.098
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.135 to 0.267
	-	Employment within other community, social & personal services sector	p<0.001	-0.324 to -0.108

	+	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p<0.001	0.122 to 0.220
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.222 to 0.336
	-	Workforce consisting mostly of men	p=0.020	-0.144 to -0.013

Table A3.8 Mothers' use of FWTAs and forms of leave

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Flexitime	-	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.014	-0.142 to -0.016
	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.001	0.034 to 0.141
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.341 to 0.456
	+	Workforce consisting of about ½ men and ½ women	p=0.008	0.014 to 0.093
Compressed week	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.031	-0.002 to 0.000
Annualised hours	+	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p=0.005	0.000 to 0.001
Shift work	-	Increasing age of mother	p<0.001	-0.055 to -0.019
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.203 to -0.108
	-	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	-0.161 to -0.059
	+	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p=0.012	0.011 to 0.089
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.074 to 0.165
	-	Workforce consisting mostly of men	p=0.015	-0.115 to -0.012
Term time only working	+	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.005	0.027 to 0.146
	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.005 to -0.002
	+	Increasing age of mother	p=0.002	0.011 to 0.050
	+	Increasing number of dependent children	p<0.001	0.019 to 0.052
	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.409 to -0.277
	-	Employment within the construction sector	p<0.001	-0.446 to -0.143
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.336 to -0.246

	-	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p<0.001	-0.398 to -0.213
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.365 to -0.264
	-	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	-0.308 to -0.200
	-	Employment within other community, social & personal services sector	p<0.001	-0.434 to -0.261
	-	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p=0.001	-0.108 to -0.028
	-	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	-0.164 to -0.072
Job share	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.003 to -0.002
	-	Small to medium workforce of 25-99 employees	p=0.014	-0.059 to -0.007
	-	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p<0.001	-0.082 to -0.025
	-	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.049	-0.065 to 0.000
Working from home	+	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	0.052 to 0.091
	+	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	0.001 to 0.002
	+	Increasing age of mother	p=0.044	0.000 to 0.022
	+	Employment within the construction sector	p=0.001	0.065 to 0.242
Time off to look after children	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.123 to -0.079
Leave to care for others	+	Presence of caring responsibilities other than childcare	p<0.001	0.116 to 0.207
Bereavement leave	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p=0.013	-0.087 to -0.010
Career break		No significant associations	n/a	n/a

Table A3.9 Mothers' satisfaction with family-sensitive FWTAs, services and policies

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Level of information about the working practices provided	+	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p=0.005	0.007 to 0.041
	+	Increasing number of dependent children	p=0.016	0.005 to 0.048
	+	Dual earner status where mother is main wage earner	p=0.009	0.020 to 0.136
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.004	0.026 to 0.139
	-	Workforce consisting mostly of men	p=0.001	-0.154 to -0.038
Flexibility over hours of work	-	Managerial occupational status	p=0.005	-0.090 to -0.016
	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.006 to -0.003
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p<0.001	0.051 to 0.164
Provision of leave for childcare	-	Minority ethnicity	p<0.001	-0.274 to -0.087
Provision of leave to care for relatives or friends	+	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	0.021 to 0.066
	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p=0.011	-0.210 to -0.027
	-	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p=0.035	-0.298 to -0.011
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.001	0.051 to 0.205
	-	Minority ethnicity	p=0.002	-0.262 to -0.058
Provision of childcare facilities	-	Employment within the manufacturing, agriculture, mining & utilities sector	p<0.001	-0.220 to -0.085
	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p=0.001	-0.133 to -0.037
	-	Employment within transport & distribution sector	p=0.013	-0.230 to -0.028
	-	Employment within finance & business services sector	p<0.001	-0.180 to -0.071
	-	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.015	-0.131 to -0.014
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p=0.006	0.020 to 0.118
Extent to which work and non-work interests	-	Managerial occupational status	p<0.001	-0.142 to -0.060

can be balanced	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.010 to -0.007
	+	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p=0.001	0.012 to 0.049
	-	Presence of caring responsibilities other than childcare	p=0.004	-0.138 to -0.026
Employee reports that employer seeks views of employees about the working practices which are available	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.004	0.028 to 0.152
Employer thinks that it is important to their employer whether staff have a balance between work and the rest of their lives	-	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	-0.005 to -0.003

Table A3.10 Mothers' latent demand for FWTAs

Dependent variable	+ / -	Explanatory variable	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Part-time working	+	Increasing age of mother	p=0.037	0.003 to 0.108
	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.134 to -0.063
Term time only working	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.097 to -0.047
	-	Small to medium workforce of 25-99 employees	p=0.036	-0.130 to -0.005
	-	Medium to large workforce of 100-499 employees	p=0.014	-0.147 to -0.017
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.017	0.024 to 0.246
Job share	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.083 to -0.042
Flexitime	+	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	0.003 to 0.006
	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.001	0.055 to 0.206
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of men	p=0.002	0.050 to 0.214
Compressed week	+	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	0.004 to 0.007
	+	Large workforce of 500+ employees	p<0.001	0.059 to 0.178
	+	Minority ethnicity	p=0.012	0.026 to 0.211
Annualised hours	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p=0.019	-0.046 to -0.004

	-	Employment within retail & wholesale sector	p<0.001	-0.175 to -0.064
Reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary	+	Increasing usual hours of work per week	p<0.001	0.003 to 0.006
	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.082 to -0.040
	-	Increasing number of dependent children	p=0.006	-0.065 to -0.011
	+	Workforce consisting mostly of men	p<0.001	0.070 to 0.218
	+	Workforce consisting of about ½ men and ½ women	p<0.001	0.053 to 0.150
Working from home	+	Non-manual occupational status	p=0.002	0.046 to 0.210
	-	Increasing age of youngest dependent child	p<0.001	-0.072 to -0.027
	+	Employment within finance & business services sector	p=0.002	0.044 to 0.188
	+	Employment within public administration sector	p=0.017	0.018 to 0.179
	+	Minority ethnicity	p<0.001	0.129 to 0.327

APPENDIX 4

Employee Survey data disaggregated by country

Key: All = All countries
 E = England
 S = Scotland
 W = Wales

The source for all tables is the WLB2000 Employee Survey (IFER/IFF, 2000), the base is all employed fathers and mothers (unweighted measures).

All data shown are percentages, unless indicated otherwise.

Note: It is possible that the lower proportion of fathers in managerial jobs (and higher proportion of fathers in manual jobs) in Wales, may help to explain the lower expectations of access to FWTAs and to leave. However, the sample size in Wales was small and caution should be exercised in interpreting these data.

Table A4.1 Occupational status

Occupational Status	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Managerial	56	57	52	48	41	41	41	45
Non-manual	17	17	17	18	50	51	51	47
Manual	28	27	31	34	9	9	8	8

Table A4.2 Expectation of access to FWTAs

	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Part-time	28.3	27.9	33.3	25.8	60.7	59.4	66.0	64.9
Term time only	8.5	8.5	9.2	6.5	20.6	21.0	21.0	14.1
Jobshare	22.7	22.0	27.7	23.0	50.7	50.4	55.1	46.6
Flexitime	27.1	27.6	30.1	14.5	25.8	26.5	20.1	26.7
Compressed week	19.6	19.5	23.1	14.9	22.8	22.8	25.1	18.4
Annualised hours	10.8	10.9	10.6	9.1	13.4	13.3	12.8	14.5
Reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary	40.1	40.9	37.5	47.4	60.2	60.9	57.8	54.8

Table A4.3 Expectation of access to forms of leave

	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Paternity leave	80.4	80.2	84.0	76.8	-	-	-	-
Time off care for children	84.5	85.0	84.0	78.0	88.6	89.0	86.1	87.9
Leave to care for others	67.5	67.5	69.5	65.2	71.4	71.8	70.2	68.5
Bereavement leave	96.1	96.3	96.1	93.7	97.6	97.5	97.4	99.5
Career Break	38.8	37.5	41.6	43.2	45.8	45.8	45.8	45.9

Table A4.4 Access to family-sensitive facilities

	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Crèche or workplace nursery	6.3	6.5	6.3	3.2	10.8	11.3	8.2	7.8
Subsidised nursery places outside workplace	4.9	4.8	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.9	5.0
Other financial help with childcare	5.7	5.8	7.0	2.4	2.7	2.7	3.0	3.0
Information about local provision of childcare	17.3	17.5	18.3	14.1	17.0	16.5	19.7	18.5
Information about local provision of other care	17.0	17.2	17.5	13.1	14.5	14.3	16.0	14.8
Financial help with other care needs	15.8	16.1	16.3	9.5	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.5
Help with childcare during school holidays	6.4	6.9	2.9	5.7	7.0	7.4	4.7	6.0
Workplace counselling or stress management advice	53.0	52.4	58.8	52.2	51.0	51.1	50.5	49.7

Table A4.5 Use of FWTAs

	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Part-time	5.5	5.8	2.3	5.7	57.6	59.1	50.7	49.9
Flexitime	19.6	19.5	18.8	22.6	25.6	25.4	26.8	26.1
Compressed week	4.8	5.0	4.2	3.9	7.9	7.9	5.9	10.7
Annualised hours	1.7	1.3	5.5	0.8	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.9
Shift work	24.8	24.1	28.6	28.1	17.6	16.8	23.5	18.1
Term time only	7.6	7.2	9.9	9.4	19.6	19.3	22.5	19.1
Jobshare	2.2	2.1	2.4	3.8	6.8	7.2	6.0	3.6

Table A4.6 Use of forms of leave (past 12 months)

	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Working from home	6.3	6.1	6.9	7.6	4.9	4.8	6.3	2.9
Paternity leave*	61.4	62.8	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Time off to care for children	22.3	22.2	23.3	21.8	29.3	30.2	23.4	27.3
Leave to care for others	11.5	11.0	12.6	17.0	11.3	11.6	8.2	11.7
Bereavement leave	14.4	15.0	13.3	6.8	13.6	13.7	13.8	11.4
Career Break	8.7	8.7	8.3	9.1	5.3	5.1	7.4	4.1

* Fathers where age of dependent child is less than one.

- insufficient data.

Table A4.7 Satisfaction with family-sensitive employment practices and policies offered within the workplace

	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Flexibility over working hours	76.5	76.4	75.7	78.5	77.1	77.3	74.9	79.1
Provision of leave for childcare	45.4	45.6	43.8	46.4	49.5	50.2	43.9	49.6
Provision of leave to care for others	53.1	53.5	51.0	50.4	54.6	54.8	54.0	53.3
Provision of childcare facilities	17.5	17.1	16.0	24.4	18.8	18.4	17.3	25.9
Extent to which work and non-work interests can be balanced	69.0	68.8	73.2	64.2	75.2	75.2	74.8	75.7

Table A4.8 Demand for FWTAs

	Fathers				Mothers			
	All	E	S	W	All	E	S	W
Part-time	21.6	22.8	19.4	10.0	44.4	45.1	38.5	47.1
Term time only	28.3	28.4	27.6	27.0	42.2	42.4	39.4	45.2
Jobshare	13.8	13.9	15.4	9.3	25.4	25.4	25.8	25.7
Flexitime	52.0	52.1	54.2	47.4	45.9	46.3	41.0	50.5
Compressed week	45.5	45.0	46.2	52.3	30.1	29.3	35.7	30.7
Annualised hours	28.5	28.7	25.7	30.6	22.3	21.8	24.3	26.4
Reduced hours for an agreed period at a reduced salary	22.2	22.1	19.9	27.5	30.1	29.2	34.2	34.7
Working from home	39.6	39.8	40.9	34.4	31.8	31.8	30.8	34.4

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ENDNOTES

¹ Available from the ESRC Data Archive, Essex University: <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=4465>

² Multiple regression models were constructed first with respect to working fathers and then working mothers for each dependent variable (e.g. 'use of flexitime within the last 12 months') using SPSS version 11.1. Categorical explanatory variables (e.g. 'employment sector') were coded as a set of dummy variables before being entered into each model, whilst continuous variables (e.g. 'hours usually worked') were entered as originally coded. Initially, all explanatory variables were entered into each model. No theory based assumptions were employed to determine the order of entry. Where an explanatory variable had low tolerance due to multicollinearity with other explanatory variables (and therefore contributed little information to the model and had the potential to cause computational problems) it was excluded from the initial model automatically. Once each initial model had been estimated, all non-significant explanatory variables were removed until a model had been specified which contained only statistically significant explanatory variables. The threshold for assuming statistical significance was set at a p-value of <0.05. Given this threshold, a p-value of <0.05 was considered to constitute weak evidence of a statistically significant association; a p-value of <0.025 was considered to constitute evidence of a statistically significant association and a p-value of <0.001 was considered to constitute strong evidence of a statistically significant association. Because multiple tests of significance were conducted, the likelihood of a Type 1 error (apparent statistically significant association is entirely due to chance in one in twenty cases) should be considered when interpreting the results of the regression analysis.

³ Throughout Chapter 4, ethnicity is coded into two categories: majority (white) ethnicity and minority ethnicity. This is due purely to the low numbers of ethnic minority individuals contained within the WLB2000 Employee Survey sample, which has precluded analysis on the basis of membership of ethnic groupings as defined under the most recent applicable census (e.g. Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese etc.).

⁴ Data from the WLB2000 Employee Survey on the actual proportions of mothers and fathers employed within an organisation (by employment sector) was used to derive estimates for the proportion of fathers (given the proportion of men) and the proportion of mothers (given the proportion of women) within each organisation within the WLB2000 Employer Survey. A weighting was then derived from these data using the Rankit proportional estimation formula, assigning 'rank 1' to the smallest value and tying the assigned rank to the highest value for the estimated proportions of fathers and mothers within each organisation. This final weighting incorporated a further weighting variable already present within the dataset to control for size of workforce within each organisation.

⁵ This definition is identical to that used in previous analysis of Labour Force Survey Data undertaken by Brannen et al. (1997).

⁶ The Labour Force Survey asks respondents to classify themselves as either full-time or part-time employed. To ensure greater consistency, respondents are classified here as working either full-time or part-time on the basis of their hours of work. Hours of work are calculated on the basis of hours *usually* worked in a main job, including overtime. People working more than 30 hours a week are classified as full-time employed, whilst those working less than 30 hours a week are classified as part-time employed (Brannen et al. *ibid*).

⁷ Percentages may not sum to 100 both because of rounding and because the proportions of mothers/ fathers currently on maternity leave are not displayed.

⁸ The data source for Austria was EUROSTAT analysis of the 1996 European Labour Force Survey.

⁹ The data source for Denmark was EUROSTAT analysis of the 1993 European Labour Force Survey, since no analysis was possible for 1995 due to data problems. Also, the data presented for Denmark differ from the other data in that they relate to men and women with children aged less than 11 years.

¹⁰ The data source for Sweden was EUROSTAT analysis of the 1993 European Labour Force Survey, since no analysis was possible for 1995 due to data problems. Also, the figures presented for Sweden differ from the other data in that they relate to men and women with children aged less than 7 years.

¹¹ Classification of part-time/ full-time employment is based on respondents' own definitions. Overall data for Norway was not available.

¹² NS-SEC is the new official UK employment classification system, which attempts to reflect contemporary developments in the understanding of the concept of class in so far as it is based upon principals of social difference between occupational groupings. As such it is arguably less constructive of hierarchical occupational inequalities, one criticism levelled at the classification system it succeeded- the Standard Occupational Classification 1990 (SOC). One way of understanding distinctions between the SOC and the NS-SEC systems is to apply a distinction between the '*market situation*' and the '*work situation*', where '*market situation*' refers to the wage or salary and employment prospects of an occupation, embedded within SOC, whilst '*work situation*' refers to the levels of autonomy and discretion (or control) available to particular occupations, more implicit within NS-SEC (Lockwood, 1958).

¹³ The figures for 1992 and 1995 were produced by analysis of *individual level* Labour Force Survey quarterly data (March to May). The figures for 1998 and 2001, however, were produced by secondary analysis using *household level* Labour Force Survey quarterly data. Whilst the mechanisms used to derive whole population figures differ between the individual and household level datasets, it is acknowledged that these percentages (generated by

applying each weighting) would not vary by more than one tenth of a percentage point and the figures are therefore comparable.

¹⁴ This categorisation makes analysis of change over time more sensitive to variations distributed across a broad spectrum of hours worked and also acknowledges the 16 hours threshold for access to certain employment rights.

¹⁵ ‘Involved’ fathers were defined as those who took an equal role to mother in the management of their children, were interested in their education, and spent time going on outings with their children. They included resident and non-resident and biological and non-biological fathers.

¹⁶ “Cherie gives Blair paternity leave hint”: Cherie Booth dropped a broad hint last night that she would like her husband, Tony Blair, to take a break from running the country and spend some time with her and the baby after it is born in May. ...“Our children need their male role models as well as their female ones if they are to grow up into well-rounded, well-balanced individuals.” She drew comparisons with the Finnish Prime Minister, who had taken advantage of his right to paternity leave. (The Guardian Newspaper, March 21, 2000).

¹⁷ See www.employersforwork-lifebalance.org.uk.

¹⁸ Data from the WLB2000 Employee Survey on the actual proportions of mothers and fathers employed within an organisation (by employment sector) was used to derive estimates for the proportion of fathers (given the proportion of men) and the proportion of mothers (given the proportion of women) within each organisation within the WLB2000 Employer Survey. A weighting was then derived from these data using the Rankit proportional estimation formula, assigning ‘rank 1’ to the smallest value and tying the assigned rank to the highest value for the estimated proportions of fathers and mothers within each organisation. This final weighting incorporated a further weighting variable already present within the dataset to control for size of workforce within each organisation.

¹⁹ It is possible that the lower proportion of fathers in managerial jobs (and higher proportion of fathers in manual jobs) may help to explain the lower expectations of access to FWA and to leave. However, the sample size in Wales was small and caution should be exercised in interpreting these data.

²⁰ No valid comparative data on rates of uptake of maternity leave can be presented since the Employee Survey asks respondents about the uptake of maternity leave within the last 3 years as opposed to within the last 12 months.

²¹ The data in Figure 4.10 shows the proportions of fathers and mothers who were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with, for example, the number of hours they work. The original question on the Employee Survey gave respondents a choice of responses from a five point Likert Scale. The options were ‘very satisfied’, ‘fairly satisfied’, ‘neither satisfied or

dissatisfied', 'fairly dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied'. There was a further option of 'don't know'.

²² Employees were asked whether they would like to use the flexible working time arrangements that they had stated they did not expect their employer to allow them access to. The data therefore represent the level of latent (or unfulfilled) demand.

²³ The probability value (p-value) can be regarded as an indicator of the strength of evidence for the statistical association between a dependent and explanatory variable within the model. The p-value of a statistical hypothesis test is the probability of getting a value of the test statistic as extreme as or more extreme than that observed by chance alone. The p-value is compared with the significance level and, if it is smaller, the result is significant. The smaller the p-value is, the greater strength of evidence for a significant statistical association. According to convention, a p-value <0.05 constitutes weak evidence of a significant association, a p-value of <0.025 constitutes evidence of a significant association and a p-value <0.001 constitutes strong evidence of a significant association.

The confidence interval can be read alongside the p-value as a measure of certainty in relation to the unknown population parameter. A confidence interval gives an estimated range of values which is likely to include an unknown population parameter, the estimated range being calculated from a given set of sample data. If independent samples are taken repeatedly from the same population, and a confidence interval calculated for each sample, then a certain percentage (confidence level) of the intervals will include the unknown population parameter. Confidence intervals have been calculated here so that this percentage is 95%. The width of the confidence interval gives us some idea about how uncertain we are about the unknown parameter. A very wide interval may indicate that more data should be collected before anything very definite can be said about the parameter. Confidence intervals are more informative than the simple results of hypothesis tests since they provide a range of plausible values for the unknown parameter.