Neighbourhood Influences on the Work-Family Interface and the Implications for Residents’ Well-Being

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May 28, 2015

Prepared for Presentation at the Offord Centre for Child Studies
EXPERIENCES OF WORK, FAMILY, AND CONFLICT

How can neighbourhoods help or hinder our ability to balance work and family?
Why should you care?

Prevalence of work-family conflict

+70% report at least some conflict (Aumann et al. 2011; Schieman et al. 2009)

Modern mental health risk (Wheaton et al. 2012)

Implications for Children

Children’s problems (Milkie 2010; Young et al. 2014)

Time spent with children (CASA 2007; Eisenberg et al. 2008; Milkie et al. 2015)

Health and well-being (Adam et al. 2007)

Work-family conflict in “context”

Placelessness vs. Placed (Sampson 2012)
LIMITS OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT RESEARCH

- **Individual-level antecedents**

- **Generic or a-theoretical definitions**
  - Greenhaus et Beutell 1985; Clarke 2001; Nippert-Eng 1996

- An Alternative...
  - **Conceptualize WFC as a “chronic stressor” within the Stress Process Model** (Pearlin et al. 1981)
    - Insidious
    - Dependent on context
    - Objective and subjective components (i.e., normal operation of work and family)
      - *Whether or not there is an objective basis for the stressor, the “perception of it operates as a stressor”* (Wheaton 1997, p. 60).
RESEARCH PROGRAM

- Mechanisms through which neighbourhoods affect the work-family interface

Social Composition and Psychosocial Resources
- Structural equivalence, normative diffusion and social support (Burt 1978; Jencks & Mayer 1990; Sampson et al. 2002)

Physical and Perceived Disadvantage
- Social disorganization and “structural amplification” (Ross and Mirowsky 2001; Shaw and McKay 1942; Wilson 1987)

Objective and Perceived Community Resources
- Beyond disadvantage; perceived support (Pitt-Catsouphes et al. 2006; Sampson et al. 2002; Swisher et al. 2004; Lin, Ye, & Ensel 1999)
DATA AND METHOD

- Two Toronto-based community surveys

1. Toronto Study of Intact Families (Wheaton, PI)
   - 888 Households across; 289 CT’s
   - Census data

2. Neighbourhood Effects on Health and Well-Being (Wheaton; O’Campo PI’s)
   - Three stage sampling design
   - 2,412 across 50 neighbourhoods, 87 CT’s
   - Census data and administrative data
# Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Individual-Level Variables</th>
<th>Perceptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Work-Family Conflict</td>
<td>Psych. Distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items</td>
<td>Likert scales “how often work interferes with family” (4 items)</td>
<td>Standard distress items - Likert scales (16 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Greenhaus et al., 1985; Bond et al., 2003</td>
<td>Radloff, 1977; (CES-D), and Eaton et al., 2004; (CES-D-R); Langner &amp; Stanley 1963; Speilberger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Level Variables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Social Composition</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Disadvantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items</td>
<td>Similarity between respondent and residents (<em>structural equivalence</em>)</td>
<td>Standard disadvantage measures – poverty; unemploy. rate; % lone parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Burt, 1978; Young &amp; Wheaton, 2013</td>
<td>see Leventhal &amp; Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Aneshensel &amp; Sucoff, 1996; Ross &amp; Mirowsky 2001;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**General Multilevel Model for Work-Family Conflict & Distress**

- Estimating interactive effects, where \( (i) \) represents the individual-level variables and \( (j) \) represents neighbourhood-level variables
  - (see Raudenbush and Bryk 2002)

**Level 1**

\[
Distress_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \sum_{q=1}^{IV_{i}} \beta_{qj} X_{qij} + \epsilon_{ij}
\]

**Level 2**

\[
\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} \sum_{k=1}^{1} \gamma_{k0} + \gamma_{k1} \sum_{k=1}^{NV} W_{kj} + u_{kj}
\]

Statistically control for work, family and socio-demographic conditions.
SOME RESULTS
Basic Patterns of Work-Family Conflict by Neighbourhood

- **Significant variation in work-family conflict across neighbourhoods**

- **Intra-class correlation:**
  
  $5\% - 8\%, \quad p<.001$

- **Significant random component of work-family conflict when predicting distress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>73.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic controls</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hours and demands</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family related demands</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexplained</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VARIATIONS IN WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

CITY OF TORONTO
Neighbourhoods

Prepared by Social Policy Analysis & Research with assistance from Toronto Public Health
VARIATIONS IN NEIGH DISADVANTAGE
VARIATIONS IN NEIGH RESOURCES
MAIN FINDINGS FROM HLM ANALYSES

- **Gender differences**
  - Experiences of work-family conflict (Simon 1995; Nippert-Eng 1996)
  - Childcare and household chores (Bianchi et al. 2006; Hays 1996; Hochschild 1997; Ross & Mirowsky 1988)
  - Neighbourhood integration (Campbell and Lee 1990; Naples 1991; Swisher et al. 2004)

- **Perceptions matter**
  - Beyond objective circumstances (Festinger 1954; Wheaton et al. 2012; Ross and Mirowsky 2001)
    - Socially similar others, perceptions of disorder, and resource availability
RESULTS

1. Social Composition - Psychosocial Resources


- *Toronto Study of Intact Families, Census Data*

- Social similarity between respondents and residents
  - Structural equivalence (threshold)
    - *Family structure, age, income, ethnicity*
  - Gender differences
Average Work-Family Conflict by Percent Similar Respondents (TSIF, N=1,425)
Work-Family Conflict as an Outcome For Mothers

HLM analyses with controls

% Similar Residents Relative to Respondent
Distress as an Outcome, Predicted by Work-Family Conflict

HLM analyses with controls with controls
RESULTS

2. Physical and Perceived Disadvantage


- **Toronto Neighbourhood Effects on Health and Well-Being (NEWH) Study, Census Data**
  - Perceived and objective neighbourhood disadvantage, measured at the census level; psychological resources
  - Based on ideas of “structural amplification” (Ross and Mirowsky 2003).
- **Statistically control for work, family and socio-demographic conditions**
CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURAL AMPLIFICATION MODEL OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTEXT AND WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT
Average Work-Family Conflict by Neighbourhood Disadvantage (NEHW, N=1,702)
Average Work-Family Conflict by Perceived Neighbourhood Disorder (NEHW, N=1,702)
Structural Amplification Hypothesis
Average Work-Family Conflict by Psychological Resources (NEHW, N=1,702)

Structural Amplification-Part 1

![Bar chart showing the average work-family conflict by psychological resources (mastery) for women and men. The chart compares low and high psychological resources. Women have higher conflict in low mastery, while men have higher conflict in high mastery.]}
Average Psychological Resources by Objective and Perceived Disadvantage/Disorder (NEHW, N=1,702)

Structural Amplification - Part 2

Psychological Resources (Mastery)

Objective and Perceived Neighbourhood Disorder

Women

Men
Work-Family Conflict as an Outcome, Predicted by Perc. Neigh. Disorder

Structural Amplification-Part 3
RESULTS

3. Objective and Perceived Community Resources


- *Toronto Neighbourhood Effects on Health and Well-Being (NEWH) Study, 2006 Census data*

- **Perceived and objective community resources**
  - Perceptions matter

- *Statistically control for work, family and socio-demographic conditions*
CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF REAL/PERCEIVED NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCE AVAILABILITY, WFC, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Total Community Resources Available

Perceived Resource Availability

Social Cohesion

Work-to-Family Conflict

Psychological Distress

Moderating Processes of Gender

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+ -

- -

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Average Work-Family Conflict by Objective Resource Availability (NEHW, N=1,702)
**Average Work-Family Conflict by Perceived Resource Availability**

*(NEHW, N=1,702)*

The chart illustrates the average work-family conflict by perceived resource availability, comparing men and women. The x-axis represents perceived resource availability, categorized as low and high, while the y-axis shows the work-family conflict. The data suggest a decrease in conflict as resource availability increases, with women experiencing higher levels of conflict compared to men in both low and high resource availability scenarios.
Work-Family Conflict as an Outcome, Predicted by Perc. Resource Avail.
**Take Away Message... And Solutions**

*Neighbourhood context matters...*

- **Convergence of social similarities**
  - Comfort of similarity
    - Threshold of similarity
      - Mixed income housing (August 2008; Joseph, Chaskin & Webber)
  - Protecting psychosocial resources and encourage positive perceptions...
    - Promote orderly environment
    - Sense of control over one’s environment
    - Knowledge of available resources
MOVING FORWARD...

- Effects of neighbourhoods on the work-family interface, overtime and more in depth

  - Residential life history project
The Missing Link: Past Middle-Level Social Contexts

(Meso) Social contexts a part of life history...
Connecting Census with Previous Residences: Example-Linking a 1991 Address to a 1991 Census Tract

2. Translate the 2006 CT back to 1991 CT.... then link to 1991 CT.
MOVING FORWARD...

- Effects of neighbourhoods on the work-family interface, overtime and more in depth

- Toronto Intact Family Study follow up
  - 25 years later

- Early childhood context
  - Egalitarian transmission
  - Lagged contextual effects
Moving Forward...

- Effects of neighbourhoods on the work-family interface, overtime and more in depth

  • Qualitative accounts of neighbourhood experiences, coupled with SSO data
  • McMaster Arts & Research Board
Thank you.

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