

**Labour force status and workplace
provisions: Examining the relationship
between work and parental involvement
in couple families¹**

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Introduction

Research into parental involvement spans many disciplines including sociology and developmental psychology. Within sociological research, it is often considered together with the division of household labour for men and women (see Oakley, 1974; Baxter, 1998). Following changes in women's labour force participation trends, which have shown increases in women's paid labour involvement since WWII (among others see, Young, 1990), researchers anticipated an increase in men's involvement in domestic labour. Some researchers have indeed found changes (see for example, Bittman, 1995; Gershuny and Robinson, 1988; Presser, 1995), but the transfer is not as great as expected, considering the extensive changes in women's labour force participation (Hochschild, 1989).

Much of the research into the division of household labour examines the relationship between paid work and household labour (Baxter, 1998). Corresponding research interests include demographic theories highlighting the importance of social policies, including family friendly work policies on maintaining birth-rates in developed countries (Hoem, 1990; Chesnais, 1996; McDonald 1997). As involvement in the labour force is such an integral part of people's lives, it is important to consider how work and workplace policies affect people's behaviour.

Developmental psychologists are also considering the impact of work. Martha Moorehouse has suggested that many developmental psychologists use a problem-oriented perspective when considering the impact of mother's work on child development. She suggested that the first task in overcoming this outlook is to 'understand how parents' (both mothers' and fathers') experiences at work transfer to

family life in positive as well as negative ways' (1993:267). Lamb in his overview of paternal influences on child development, did not mention how father's involvement in paid work may influence child development, but discusses the growth of the investigation of father's influence (Lamb, 1995). There is a strong recognition that men's behaviour does impact on child well-being, and many researchers are currently investigating the pathways through which men's involvement works.

Ihinger-Tallman, Pasley and Buehler, created a theoretical model of the paths through which paternal involvement affects child well-being (1995:58). They hypothesised that identification with the parental role determines father involvement, which in turn influences child well-being, and tested this relationship of identity to involvement with a group of non-resident fathers. The application of father role identities is a useful one for explaining father involvement, and has also been used by Marsiglio (1995). However, considering the relationship between work and household labour, it may be useful to see if people who identify with certain aspects of the parenting role are involved in work which makes negotiating work and home life easier.

The examination of family-friendly policies which have been used to help people juggle work and family life tend to emphasise which workplace arrangements make life better for workers. There have been various suggestions about what types of policies are appropriate to help people negotiate work and family life. These include the availability of paid maternal/paternal leave, the ability to hold a work position after maternity absence, family or carers leave, sick leave, flexible working hours, the ability to work on a casual or part-time basis, the availability of child-care options, and numerous other initiatives.

In Australia, The Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business examined workplace initiatives in *Work and Family – State of Play 1998*. In asking the question, ‘What are family-friendly practices?’ the report found that tangible items such as on-site child care centres, family rooms and brochures about employee assistance programs are measures. So too are conditions such as paid parental leave, career breaks and purchased leave schemes. The report says that maternity and paternity leave are obviously important conditions, but arguably as important, are provisions such as flexitime, control over start and finish times, and access to regular part-time work (DEWRSB, 1998, Executive Report). The report found that the most common family-friendly provision provided by the organisations surveyed was flexible hours, as they are able to assist many employees and are also cost effective.

This paper examines further the impact of work and workplace experiences on men and women’s parental involvement. The conditions outlined above will be investigated to see what impact work has on parental involvement. The purpose is to examine whether identity is related to the type of work the respondent is involved in, and the types of workplace arrangements that the respondent received, and whether these in turn affect parental involvement for men and for women.

Theoretical perspective

The paper examines whether a person’s identification as a parent impacts on the types of work that they are involved in, and whether they receive certain benefits. In the way Ininger-Tallman, Pasley and Beuhler conceptualised a relationship between identity and father involvement, it is hypothesised that people who identify with the parental role are likely to choose work which is conducive to the negotiation of work and family time.

While there is a difficulty with the causality of this argument, that is, that people who have flexible workplace are likely to identify with their parental roles more, it is worthwhile determining whether there is in fact a relationship between them. The question then remains, what is the relationship between work and workplace experiences and parental involvement. As Moorehouse suggested, it is important to look at family behaviour as a function of workplace experience (1993: 267). This paper looks at those relationships with regard to parental involvement, and background variables are also considered.

Data and methodology

The data used in this study were obtained from the first wave of a longitudinal study, and a sub-sample of this study who were re-surveyed. The longitudinal survey is an Australia wide national random sample obtained by a randomised phone method. The survey is called *Negotiating the Life Course* (NLC). Only one eligible respondent per household was interviewed, the person being randomly selected from the household. It was conducted in November 1996 and March-April 1997. Information on areas such as demographic characteristics, relationships, children, work experiences, and attitudes, was collected from 2,231 respondents, 1247 women and 984 men, ranging in age from 18-54.

The sub-sample survey is titled the *Parenting Survey 1999*, and respondents were surveyed by mail questionnaire. Questions related to parental identity, workplace experiences, childcare, child-rearing and parenting styles were asked. Information was gathered from 501 respondents, a response rate of 65 per cent. A statistical comparison of background variables concluded that those who returned the survey were more likely to have completed high school education and to be currently employed, but there was no

statistically significant difference by sex, age, marital status, or number of children aged under 12 years.

Measures

Identity indicators. Parents were asked a series of questions related to how they identify as parents. The scale is titled 'Self-Perceptions of the Parental Role Scale' (SPPR), and was developed by MacPhee, Benson and Bullock. A report on the scales development and psychometric measures is described in a conference paper presented at the International Conference on Infant Studies in Los Angeles, 1986 (MacPhee, Benson and Bullock, 1986). Use of the SPPR is to examine how parents feel they perform on four dimensions of the parental role. The roles are satisfaction, competence, investment and integration.

There were twenty-two questions which were reduced to the fewer four scales. The scales were then changes to scores out of ten, with a score of zero representing the lowest score, and a score of ten representing the highest score. The satisfaction scale measured whether respondents where satisfied as opposed to resentful or regretful with their parenting role and the competence scale indicated competence, or confidence in the parenting role (McPhee, Fritz & Miller-Heyl, 1996). Investment indicates the importance of the parental role and integration measures the integration of parent, spouse, career and friend roles (McPhee, Benson & Bullock, 1986).

Work and workplace provision indicators. Parents were asked a series of questions related to their involvement at work. Standard questions such as whether they were involved in work last week, what type of job they hold, how many people do the same kind of work as them, and how many hours they work, were asked. These same questions

were asked about their partner's current work status. Respondents were also asked whether they were happy with the number of hours they work, and whether they received a selection of workplace benefits, or had particular workplace arrangements at their place of work. Workplace benefits include whether they have access to paid sick leave, family or carers leave, paid paternity/maternity leave, paid holiday or recreation leave, and for how many days or weeks per year. Workplace arrangements include options like job sharing, working flexible hours, working from home, or working part-time. Information on whether people are happy with items such as working overtime, working at night, travelling away were also collected.

Three standard questions of work involvement are used in this paper. They are whether the respondent was employed in the previous week, whether both partners work in the household, and how many hours the respondent usually works.

Three indicators representing workplace benefits, workplace arrangements, and whether the respondent is happy with their work arrangements are examined. Access to workplace benefits such as sick leave, paid carers leave, were combined in a variable which scores the number of benefits the respondent receives. Similarly, a variable representing high or low eligibility to workplace arrangements was created, with two categories – one with access to less than three types of workplace arrangements, and one with access to three or more of arrangements. Finally, respondents were asked whether they were happy with arrangements such as working broken shifts, working overtime, and travelling away for work, which were coded into not completely happy with these arrangements, or completely happy with these arrangements.

Parental involvement indicators. The measurement of parental involvement includes indicators of who does more of certain tasks related to child maintenance, and an analysis of types of parenting styles.

A series of questions were asked about tasks which related to child maintenance. These included questions like who gets the child up in the morning, reads to the child, plays with the child, washes the child's clothes etc. These questions were asked of parents with children who were not of school age, and also of parents whose children who were attending school, but were under age 12.

Factor analysis was then used to reduce the number of responses related to child tasks. Three factors held up in the questions asked about children under age 5, and two factors were found in the questions related to children over age 5. The factors represented different dimensions of child maintenance activities. The factors were scored out of ten, with a higher score meaning the respondent did more of this type of child maintenance work.

To measure parenting styles, a 29-item scale based on the work of Baumrind was used. Respondents were asked the amount they engaged in a particular behaviour, and also the amount their partner did. In order to analyse the data that was provided through this number of questions, factor analysis was used to reduce the 29 items to fewer 'factor scales'. Four important factors were found in the data. The factors have been called the 'warmth and understanding scale', the 'disciplinary scale', the 'boundary setting scale' and the 'democratic participation scale'. The disciplinary scale is a measure of authoritarian parenting style, whilst the other three are dimensions of authoritative parenting style.

Background indicators. A large number of questions were asked to determine respondents' sociodemographic background. Responses used in this analysis include sex of the respondent, age, marital status, highest education level achieved, age of youngest child, number of children, and country of birth. A bivariate analysis of background variables and their relationship with identity, work and parental involvement indicators are presented at Table 1a, Table 1b and Table 1c.

Results

Background analysis

Firstly, Table 1(a, b & c) outlines the relationship of background variables to the three areas of investigation. In examining, the relationship between background variables and identity indicators (Table 1a), the most consistent relationship is by gender and marital status of the respondent. There was also some difference by education, but little by other explanatory variables. Men and women felt around the same levels of confidence with their parenting, but women were much more likely to be satisfied, to invest, and to integrate other components of their life into their parenting roles.

Table 1a: Mean (with standard deviation) identity scores by background variables.

<i>Background</i>	Competence	Satisfaction	Investment	Integration
<i>Characteristics</i>	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Sex				
Male	7.02 (1.84)	8.34 (1.65)	3.25 (2.01)	6.63 (1.92)
Female	7.05 (1.89)	8.53 (1.65)	4.77 (2.24)	6.94 (1.80)
Age group				
Under 30	7.00 (1.73)	8.53 (1.57)	4.50 (2.63)	6.90 (1.97)
30-34	6.98 (1.83)	8.47 (1.48)	4.48 (2.15)	6.72 (1.68)
35-39	7.09 (1.78)	8.50 (1.67)	3.97 (2.19)	6.77 (1.88)
40-44	7.00 (2.01)	8.49 (1.66)	4.10 (2.31)	6.87 (1.92)
45+	7.17 (2.14)	8.01 (2.13)	3.06 (1.93)	6.92 (2.02)
Marital Status				
Living together	6.28 (2.02)	7.87 (2.50)	3.84 (1.99)	6.54 (2.30)
Married	7.10 (1.84)	8.50 (1.56)	4.14 (2.29)	6.83 (1.82)
Born in Australia?				
Yes	6.99 (1.86)	8.44 (1.67)	4.11 (2.27)	6.74 (1.86)
No	7.26 (1.87)	8.49 (1.55)	4.16 (2.30)	7.12 (1.82)
Highest Education				
Incomplete Yr 12	7.03 (1.95)	8.39 (1.65)	3.87 (2.19)	6.87 (1.83)
Complete Yr 12	6.98 (1.77)	8.45 (1.71)	4.34 (2.31)	6.80 (1.84)
Other/higher	7.22 (1.96)	8.60 (1.47)	4.08 (2.31)	6.68 (1.98)
Age youngest child				
0	6.97 (1.66)	8.86 (1.08)	4.55 (2.23)	6.70 (1.59)
1-4	6.99 (1.91)	8.47 (1.58)	4.42 (2.29)	6.65 (1.90)
5-12	7.01 (1.86)	8.30 (1.80)	3.69 (2.19)	6.97 (1.84)

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

Looking at the relationship between background variables and standard work variables (Table 1b), the sex of the respondent was again important, as was age and education level. Related to the age variable is the age of youngest child where there were also significant differences by age of youngest child and work involvement.

Table 1b: Chi-square analysis of work indicators by background variables.

<i>Background Characteristics</i>	Employed last week?		Are you both Employed?		Number of hours usually worked per week			
	Yes	No	Yes	No	None	1-10	11-39	40+
Sex								
Male	94.5	5.5	59.1	40.9	6.1		25.0	68.9
Female	72.0	28.0	67.1	32.9	31.3	10.0	43.0	15.7
Age group								
Under 30	66.7	33.3	50.9	49.1	31.5	1.9	27.8	38.9
30-34	83.2	16.8	65.2	34.8	21.7	9.4	44.3	24.5
35-39	80.5	19.5	62.4	37.6	21.8	5.9	32.8	39.5
40-44	89.0	11.0	70.3	29.7	13.6	4.9	34.6	46.9
45+	83.3	16.7	65.7	34.3	14.7	2.9	32.4	50.0
Marital Status								
Living together	80.6	19.4	61.3	38.7	24.1	3.4	41.4	31.0
Married	81.6	18.4	63.9	36.1	20.5	6.0	35.1	38.4
Born in Australia?								
Yes	82.8	17.2	64.8	35.2	18.9	6.4	36.9	37.8
No	75.3	24.7	58.3	41.7	30.3	3.0	28.8	37.9
Highest Education								
Incomplete Yr 12	73.8	26.3	53.2	46.8	29.1	3.4	36.5	31.1
Complete Yr 12	85.1	14.9	69.6	30.4	17.1	6.1	38.7	38.1
Other/higher	88.9	11.1	70.8	29.2	12.3	10.8	24.6	52.3
Age youngest child								
0	73.8	26.3	53.2	46.8	29.1	3.4	36.5	31.1
1-4	85.1	14.9	69.6	30.4	17.1	6.1	38.7	38.1
5-12	88.9	11.1	70.8	29.2	12.3	10.8	24.6	52.3

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

Note: Figures in italics are significant at the P<0.05 level.

When looking at the findings from Table 1c, the relationship between background variables and parenting style scores, similar relationships were found. Women scored considerably higher on the authoritative parenting styles, warmth and understanding, boundary setting and democratic participation. There was some relationship by marital status and by education level, but little relationship was found by other background characteristics.

Table 1c: Mean (with standard deviation) parenting style scores by background variables.

<i>Background</i>	Warmth and understanding	Discipline	Boundary setting	Democratic participation
<i>Characteristics</i>	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Sex				
Male	6.14 (1.96)	3.45 (1.72)	5.55 (2.06)	5.81 (1.64)
Female	7.99 (1.37)	3.18 (1.65)	6.36 (2.01)	6.50 (1.55)
Age group				
Under 30	7.59 (2.10)	3.59 (2.07)	5.69 (2.29)	5.92 (1.78)
30-34	7.56 (1.58)	3.28 (1.79)	6.15 (1.91)	5.96 (1.64)
35-39	7.14 (2.01)	3.32 (1.56)	6.15 (2.15)	6.26 (1.57)
40-44	6.75 (1.89)	3.21 (1.56)	6.03 (1.91)	6.45 (1.44)
45+	6.88 (1.66)	3.02 (1.49)	5.50 (2.23)	6.65 (1.89)
Marital Status				
Living together	7.15 (2.01)	3.95 (2.12)	5.58 (2.09)	5.90 (1.53)
Married	7.20 (1.88)	3.25 (1.65)	6.04 (2.06)	6.23 (1.63)
Born in Australia?				
Yes	7.21 (1.93)	3.32 (1.69)	6.08 (2.04)	6.13 (1.64)
No	7.17 (1.63)	3.19 (1.66)	5.69 (2.15)	7.56 (1.50)
Highest Education				
Incomplete Yr 12	7.22 (1.87)	3.61 (1.81)	5.94 (2.17)	5.93 (1.72)
Complete Yr 12	7.27 (1.91)	3.16 (1.54)	5.98 (2.03)	6.42 (1.58)
Other/higher	6.97 (1.86)	2.98 (1.71)	6.27 (1.93)	6.23 (1.48)
Age youngest child				
0	7.15 (2.39)	3.60 (1.89)	5.91 (2.01)	5.56 (1.75)
1-4	7.32 (1.84)	3.45 (1.72)	6.05 (2.06)	6.10 (1.56)
5-12	6.99 (1.84)	3.14 (1.59)	5.99 (2.11)	6.50 (1.63)

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

This analysis determines that whether a person is male or female has the greatest impact on the way they identify as parents, whether they are involved in the paid labour force, and the parenting styles they use. Not shown on a table here is the relationship by sex and who does more with regard to child tasks. The child tasks include a range of jobs

including washing the child's clothes, reading to the child, feeding the child, getting the child to bed, dressing the child etc, and different questions were asked depending on the age of the child. The findings show that women are more involved in every type of child maintenance task, and the one area that sees men more involved than other areas is playing with the child. This relationship between men being involved in play activities, whilst women are involved in caring and nurturing activities has been noted by other researchers (see Lamb, 1995:150).

Given that gender is inextricably linked with a person's involvement in the paid labour force, an examination of workplace provision indicators with gender was made (Table 2).

It was found that men were much more likely to say that were eligible to standard work benefits such as paid sick leave, paid holiday or recreational leave and long service leave than women. There is no difference between men and women's access to family and carers leave or maternity/paternity leave according to respondents. Men are also more likely to receive more of these standard benefits than women.

In comparison, women are more likely to have access to arrangements such as job sharing, working flexible hours, and working permanent part-time, while there is no difference between men and women's eligibility to teleworking (working from home) or rostered days off. These arrangements are utilised by both men and women, but women are more likely to work permanent part-time. In comparison, men are more likely to have to work broken shifts, to work overtime, to work weekends, and work at night or travel away overnight. If you examine whether respondents are happy with these arrangements, men are less likely to be happy with these situations.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis of selected work benefits and arrangements by gender.

<i>Work characteristic</i>	Men		Women	
	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %
Standard work benefits				
Paid sick leave*	84.3	15.7	59.4	40.6
Paid holiday/rec leave*	84.3	15.7	59.2	40.8
Long service leave*	85.8	14.2	58.6	41.4
Paid mat/paternity leave	38.8	61.2	34.8	65.2
Family or carers leave	50.0	50.0	45.7	54.3
Workplace arrangements				
Job sharing*	18.9	81.1	39.0	61.0
Flexible working hours**	42.4	57.6	54.5	45.5
Teleworking	18.4	81.6	15.5	84.5
Permanent part-time*	30.1	69.9	58.6	41.4
Rostered days off	24.8	75.2	23.2	76.8
Work requirements				
Work shifts/irregular hours*	57.1	42.9	37.1	62.9
Work overtime/long hours*	79.1	20.9	46.3	53.7
Work weekends**	68.2	31.8	54.5	45.5
Work nights**	53.2	46.8	36.4	63.6
Take work home	53.5	46.5	45.1	54.9
Travel away overnight*	39.3	60.7	18.4	81.6
“Are you happy with...?”				
working shifts/irregular hours	84.7	15.3	90.8	9.2
working overtime/long hours**	74.4	25.6	84.0	16.0
working weekends	74.8	25.2	81.5	18.5
working nights**	79.2	20.8	87.6	12.4
taking work home	80.0	20.0	85.6	14.4
travelling away overnight**	84.6	15.4	95.5	4.5

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

Notes: ** significant at the P<0.05 level, * significant at the P<0.0001 level.

So what we have is women having access to work situations which are conducive to juggling work and family life, while men have access to standard benefits, but are required to work in less flexible arrangements. This is a situation that they are not necessarily happy about.

Examining work and parental identity

Whilst parental role identification may impact on parental involvement, little relationship was found between identity and work. It was hypothesised that respondent's parental role identity may influence the type of work they were involved in, or at least be related to their work experiences. The most consistent relationship is that there is an inverse relationship for women and men with how they identify as parents as the number of workplace arrangements that they have. Mean scores for competence, satisfaction, investment and integration drop for men, but increase for women, if they have less than three, or 3 or more workplace arrangements. So women who have 3 or more workplace arrangements such as flexible leave, permanent part-time work etc., feel that they are more competent, more satisfied, invest more and are better integrated in their parenting roles. For men, the opposite was found.

However, on the whole, there appears to be little relationship between identity and work. This questions whether people who identify with the parental role, and who think that their family life is important, are able to negotiate satisfactory work arrangements. More research should investigate whether people seek out certain work arrangements based on their familial requirements.

Work indicators and parental involvement: Child maintenance tasks

As discussed, an examination of child maintenance tasks show a definite division by gender. This is visible on Table 4 (child under 5), where women's mean scores are higher for the caring tasks scale, daily maintenance scale and the scale that represents tasks such as reading, bathing and playing with the child. Men are likely to score higher on this third scale. However, there are also differences by work and work provisions.

First looking at the three standard work indicators, employment in the previous week, whether both partners are working, and the number of hours worked, together with scores on child tasks scale, the results show that for women there is a definite decrease in responsibility for child maintenance tasks by their involvement with work. For men, if they have a partner who is working their participation is lowest, but the relationship between the number of hours worked and involvement is varied and depends on the type of child activity. For example, men who work 40+ are likely to be more involved in tasks such as reading to the child or getting the child ready for bed (reading/bathing/playing scale). But they are less likely to be involved in tasks such as staying home with the child when sick, or washing the child's clothes (caring tasks scale).

However, there are other workplace experiences that should be considered. Three indicators of workplace experience are measured against parental involvement. Firstly the number of standard benefits the respondent receives, secondly the number of flexible workplace arrangements they are eligible for, and thirdly, whether they are happy with their work arrangements.

One consistent finding is related to the number of standard benefits received. Men who receive more benefits are more likely to be involved in child maintenance tasks, whilst women who receive less than three benefits are the most likely to do these tasks. This appears to be due to the type of work they are involved in, with men's access to work benefits related to their full-time work status, whilst women's lack of access related to their more casual employment. Similarly, men who have access to flexible workplace arrangements are slightly more likely to be involved in child tasks than men who have

fewer arrangements, but for women there is no difference. Men who are not happy with their work arrangements are less likely to help with child tasks.

This pattern is also found in the relationship between work and child tasks for children over age five (Table 5).

Work indicators and parental involvement: Parenting styles

Moving to the relationship with parenting styles (Table 6), the results show that men who worked in the previous week scored on average the lowest scores for the parenting styles warmth and understanding, and democratic participation. There was little difference for women by whether they worked or not. Similarly, men who were in couples where both parents were not working had the lowest scores for warmth and understanding and democratic participation. Men who worked over 40 hours scored higher for boundary setting and discipline, than their counterparts who worked fewer hours, while women who worked longer hours were more likely to score higher for democratic participation.

The pattern of parental involvement by work benefits and arrangements is slightly different for the parenting styles. Firstly, these work experiences only impact on the warmth and understanding parenting style. Secondly, men with the greatest access to work benefits have the lowest scores for warmth and understanding, but men and women who have flexible work arrangements receive higher scores, as do those who are not completely happy with their work arrangements.

Table 3: Mean (with standard deviation) identity scores by work indicators for men and women.

<i>Work indicators</i>	Competence		Satisfaction		Investment		Integration	
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Employed last week								
Yes	6.99 (1.84)	6.93 (1.93)	8.34 (1.66)	8.47 (1.59)	3.32 (2.02)	4.67 (2.19)	6.57 (1.93)	6.93 (1.74)
No	7.20 (1.97)	7.40 (1.74)	8.23 (1.60)	8.66 (1.79)	2.11 (1.23)	5.00 (2.33)	7.55 (1.31)	6.92 (1.95)
Are you both employed?								
Yes	6.75 (1.94)	7.00 (1.88)	8.21 (1.84)	8.48 (1.60)	3.46 (1.94)	4.69 (2.20)	6.38 (2.03)	6.91 (1.73)
No	7.38 (1.60)	7.24 (1.91)	8.52 (1.31)	8.67 (1.72)	2.96 (2.07)	4.91 (2.35)	6.96 (1.69)	6.94 (1.92)
No. of hours usually worked per week								
None	7.15 (1.85)	7.39 (1.74)	8.67 (1.22)	8.68 (1.73)	2.46 (1.18)	5.03 (2.29)	7.59 (1.30)	6.90 (1.99)
1-10		7.31 (1.48)		8.59 (1.39)		4.40 (2.01)		7.05 (1.62)
11-39	6.64 (1.98)	6.91 (1.96)	7.99 (2.03)	8.47 (1.51)	3.47 (2.16)	4.60 (2.16)	6.21 (1.93)	6.97 (1.59)
40+	7.13 (1.71)	6.88 (2.17)	8.36 (1.56)	8.42 (2.02)	3.13 (1.89)	4.82 (2.56)	6.57 (1.92)	7.06 (1.87)
Standard work benefits								
Less than 3	7.89 (1.26)	6.95 (1.79)	8.98 (0.97)	8.50 (1.56)	3.45 (2.38)	4.77 (1.98)	6.52 (1.69)	6.94 (1.59)
Three	7.01 (1.48)	7.02 (1.81)	8.60 (1.13)	8.64 (1.14)	3.51 (2.00)	4.55 (2.08)	6.65 (1.62)	6.70 (1.99)
Four	6.36 (1.89)	6.86 (2.33)	7.78 (1.97)	8.75 (1.15)	3.29 (2.00)	4.76 (2.37)	6.21 (2.19)	7.33 (1.46)
Five	6.90 (2.09)	6.65 (1.90)	7.96 (2.06)	8.31 (1.58)	2.80 (1.82)	4.28 (2.27)	6.48 (2.17)	6.67 (1.74)
No. of workplace arrangements								
Less than 3	7.11 (1.75)	6.60 (2.01)	8.37 (1.65)	8.31 (1.72)	3.20 (2.11)	4.87 (2.19)	6.49 (1.96)	6.81 (1.71)
3 or more	6.36 (1.85)	7.33 (1.57)	7.82 (2.01)	8.78 (1.28)	3.61 (1.94)	4.13 (2.20)	6.19 (1.69)	7.11 (1.61)
Are you happy with work requirements								
not completely happy	7.33 (1.91)	6.90 (2.19)	8.52 (1.56)	8.62 (1.82)	3.51 (2.11)	4.93 (2.12)	6.47 (1.94)	6.61 (1.96)
happy in all aspects	6.89 (1.96)	6.87 (1.89)	8.20 (1.83)	8.37 (1.58)	2.89 (1.77)	4.39 (2.23)	6.66 (1.94)	7.15 (1.65)

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

Table 4: Mean (with standard deviation) child task (under 5 years) scores by work indicators for men and women.

<i>Work indicators</i>	Caring tasks		Daily maintenance		Reading/Bathing/Playing	
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Employed last week						
Yes	2.05 (1.90)	8.50 (1.69)	3.56 (2.05)	7.40 (1.86)	3.84 (1.80)	6.53 (1.79)
No	7.08 (2.50)	9.35 (1.01)	4.69 (0.36)	7.56 (1.51)	4.84 (1.29)	7.15 (1.68)
Are you both employed?						
Yes	2.36 (1.82)	8.71 (1.44)	3.83 (1.92)	7.49 (1.84)	3.70 (1.73)	6.62 (1.80)
No	2.28 (2.62)	8.92 (1.69)	3.40 (2.12)	7.40 (1.61)	4.10 (1.85)	6.94 (1.73)
No. of hours usually worked per week						
None	5.83 (3.54)	9.28 (1.11)	3.75 (2.12)	7.42 (1.67)	4.00 (2.19)	7.07 (1.71)
1-10		9.25 (0.93)		7.67 (1.82)		7.58 (1.68)
11-39	2.94 (3.04)	8.52 (1.82)	3.75 (2.58)	7.44 (1.83)	3.75 (2.47)	6.41 (1.74)
40+	1.85 (1.44)	8.47 (1.51)	3.64 (1.90)	7.41 (1.85)	4.10 (1.50)	6.00 (1.55)
Standard work benefits						
Less than 3	1.71 (3.10)	9.02 (1.15)	3.69 (2.21)	7.77 (1.79)	3.44 (3.15)	6.85 (1.70)
Three	2.25 (1.36)	8.40 (1.70)	2.96 (2.18)	6.56 (2.23)	4.13 (1.15)	6.67 (1.96)
Four	2.34 (1.88)	7.81 (1.93)	3.70 (1.97)	6.88 (2.03)	3.61 (1.91)	6.04 (2.05)
Five	2.36 (0.98)	7.92 (2.18)	4.79 (1.88)	7.25 (1.76)	4.03 (1.13)	6.22 (1.85)
No. of workplace arrangements						
Less than 3	2.14 (1.91)	8.45 (1.79)	3.55 (2.18)	7.24 (1.79)	3.84 (2.01)	6.45 (1.89)
3 or more	2.43 (1.94)	8.31 (1.68)	4.38 (1.37)	7.26 (2.02)	4.17 (1.35)	6.64 (1.74)
Are you happy with work requirements						
not completely happy	1.71 (1.02)	8.36 (1.56)	3.37 (2.02)	7.53 (1.84)	3.70 (1.50)	6.35 (1.94)
happy in all aspects	2.32 (2.17)	8.56 (1.54)	3.84 (1.99)	7.30 (1.90)	3.91 (1.73)	6.90 (1.72)

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

Table 5: Mean (with standard deviation) child task (over 5 years) scores by work indicators for men and women.

<i>Work indicators</i>	Daily maintenance		Taking to appointments	
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Employed last week				
Yes	2.63 (1.89)	8.02 (1.60)	4.07 (2.25)	6.93 (2.00)
No	5.43 (3.33)	8.98 (0.95)	4.83 (3.25)	7.27 (2.09)
Are you both employed?				
Yes	2.99 (2.13)	8.16 (1.46)	4.11 (2.47)	7.04 (2.00)
No	2.33 (1.77)	8.51 (1.64)	4.09 (1.98)	6.96 (2.10)
No. of hours usually worked per week				
None	5.14 (3.75)	9.04 (0.92)	4.00 (3.46)	7.30 (2.11)
1-10		8.79 (0.93)		7.55 (1.93)
11-39	3.71 (2.69)	8.12 (1.52)	4.62 (2.69)	7.04 (1.97)
40+	2.26 (1.39)	7.26 (2.01)	3.93 (1.93)	6.23 (2.01)
Standard work benefits				
Less than 3	2.70 (3.18)	8.63 (1.04)	3.07 (3.32)	7.28 (1.83)
Three	2.65 (1.94)	7.89 (1.74)	4.20 (1.72)	6.58 (1.98)
Four	2.18 (1.32)	8.10 (1.70)	4.05 (2.06)	6.93 (2.27)
Five	2.72 (1.71)	7.30 (1.87)	4.25 (2.22)	6.44 (1.69)
No. of workplace arrangements				
Less than 3	2.32 (1.74)	7.89 (1.77)	3.81 (2.39)	6.89 (2.00)
3 or more	3.66 (2.57)	8.19 (1.41)	4.56 (1.59)	6.97 (1.84)
Are you happy with work requirements				
not completely happy	2.41 (1.48)	7.05 (2.00)	4.00 (2.17)	6.48 (2.11)
happy in all aspects	2.62 (2.03)	8.36 (1.33)	4.02 (2.51)	7.09 (1.92)

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

Table 6: Mean (with standard deviation) parenting style scores by work indicators for men and women.

<i>Work indicators</i>	Warmth&understanding		Disciplinary		Boundary setting		Democratic participat'n	
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Employed last week								
Yes	6.10 (2.01)	7.96 (1.30)	3.50 (1.75)	3.14 (1.65)	5.53 (2.01)	6.56 (1.99)	5.80 (1.65)	6.62 (1.55)
No	6.72 (0.89)	8.05 (1.30)	2.61 (1.11)	3.26 (1.68)	5.40 (2.63)	5.88 (1.97)	6.20 (1.41)	6.22 (1.55)
Are you both employed?								
Yes	6.34 (2.08)	7.96 (1.42)	3.43 (1.63)	3.11 (1.68)	5.64 (1.98)	6.54 (2.03)	6.11 (1.58)	6.60 (1.53)
No	5.85 (1.77)	8.04 (1.31)	3.49 (1.86)	3.26 (1.63)	5.37 (2.12)	6.12 (1.91)	5.42 (1.65)	6.30 (1.58)
No. of hours usually worked per week								
None	6.50 (1.22)	7.90 (1.46)	2.28 (1.00)	3.27 (1.64)	5.08 (2.24)	5.85 (2.03)	6.33 (1.45)	6.11 (1.47)
1-10		8.05 (1.31)		3.38 (1.76)		6.82 (1.80)		6.15 (1.58)
11-39	6.22 (1.91)	7.98 (1.36)	3.94 (1.71)	3.22 (1.80)	5.08 (2.28)	6.61 (2.02)	6.17 (1.91)	6.79 (1.61)
40+	7.13 (2.05)	8.28 (2.26)	3.46 (1.75)	2.85 (1.37)	5.68 (1.88)	6.41 (2.03)	5.68 (1.60)	6.77 (1.44)
Standard work benefits								
Less than 3	6.82 (2.09)	7.88 (1.65)	3.30 (1.47)	3.37 (1.91)	6.03 (2.33)	6.62 (1.88)	6.19 (1.55)	6.39 (1.49)
Three	6.63 (1.89)	8.29 (1.12)	3.45 (1.84)	2.82 (1.58)	5.54 (1.40)	6.81 (2.21)	5.64 (1.66)	7.28 (1.37)
Four	5.75 (2.03)	8.31 (1.01)	3.26 (1.36)	2.73 (1.20)	5.52 (2.44)	6.62 (1.96)	5.98 (1.85)	6.73 (1.73)
Five	5.50 (2.16)	7.94 (1.21)	3.99 (1.31)	3.36 (1.83)	5.19 (2.29)	6.25 (2.18)	5.96 (1.48)	6.76 (1.28)
No. of workplace arrangements								
Less than 3	6.01 (2.03)	7.90 (1.47)	3.67 (1.78)	3.31 (1.70)	5.57 (2.00)	6.39 (2.04)	5.83 (1.59)	6.45 (1.46)
3 or more	6.39 (2.21)	8.24 (1.07)	3.25 (1.49)	2.92 (1.81)	5.29 (2.55)	6.98 (1.99)	6.25 (1.82)	7.17 (1.46)
Are you happy with work requirements								
not completely happy	6.38 (1.51)	8.31 (1.34)	3.41 (1.63)	2.79 (1.27)	5.92 (1.77)	6.65 (2.00)	5.84 (1.37)	6.76 (1.79)
happy in all aspects	5.93 (2.24)	7.78 (1.42)	3.52 (1.79)	3.21 (1.78)	5.19 (2.16)	6.53 (2.00)	5.86 (1.74)	6.68 (1.49)

Source: Parenting Survey 1999

Conclusion

Although it appeared there was no real relationship between identity and work, these findings demonstrate the relationships between work involvement and parental involvement. Clearly men who are the main workers, or work the longest hours have less time left for particular types of parenting behaviours.

In looking at the picture of work and its impact on parental involvement, it is important to look at a full range of work responses, as it is not as simple as just allowing flexibility for working parents.

Researchers should not just look at work and family negotiation, but how different work experiences impact on what happens at home. We shouldn't just look at who works, and what working hours, but realise that the workplace situation is very important. Men who have least access to good work arrangements, are also least likely to be involved in child maintenance tasks and use good parenting styles. What we don't know from this investigation is the direction of this relationship. Instead we simply know that there is one. At the outset, I discussed Moorehouse's criticism of the fact that we don't look at how men's work experience impacts on children, just the so called, detrimental effects of mother's employment considered under the social problem perspective. Interestingly, as I've shown, it is women's experiences in the workplace which are the least volatile when examining the relationship with parental involvement.

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