

BABIES AND WORK: A STUDY OF EMPLOYED
PARENTS OF INFANTS

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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DOROTHY B. ROBBINS, B.A., B.S.W.



BABIES AND WORK:

A STUDY OF EMPLOYED PARENTS OF INFANTS

BY

© DOROTHY B. ROBBINS, B.A., B.S.W.

**A Thesis submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Social Work**

**Department of Social Work
Memorial University of Newfoundland
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Newfoundland



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List of Key Words

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Abstract

This study examined the absence from paid work for child birth and infant care by mothers and fathers in thirty-five, dual-earning families. Respondents were also asked about their division of child care and household tasks; how satisfied they were with current infant care arrangements and what kind of system of parental leave and benefits should be available through public policy.

The sample was recruited through obstetrical care hospitals and a family practice physicians' clinic in St. John's. All respondents were in the workforce at the time they were recruited for the sample. Mothers and fathers were interviewed by telephone, using a research instrument constructed for this study, 5 to 12 months after their infant was born.

All but one of the mothers had returned to work at the time of the interview and all the fathers were in the workforce. All mothers took time off from work for child birth and infant care. Most took 17 weeks, the time that corresponded to the 15 weeks benefit period through Unemployment Insurance, plus the required 2 week waiting period, that was available when the research was conducted. Most fathers, not being eligible for paternity leave or benefits, took only a few days off around the time of child birth.

Approximately one-quarter of the sample were egalitarian with respect to the division of child care and household tasks. One-quarter were quite traditional, with the mother being responsible for these tasks most of the time, and the remainder were semi-traditional with the fathers "helping out" but not primarily responsible for these tasks.

The majority of the sample favoured a longer period of paid maternity leave than was available to them and a period of paid paternity leave. The majority of respondents agreed with the concept of mothers and fathers sharing a period of parental leave. In 22% of the sample both the mothers and the fathers said they would have shared the leave, had that option been available to them. Thirty-three per-cent of the egalitarian families would have shared parental leave, compared to only 10% of the traditional families.

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Chapter 1**INTRODUCTION**

During the last two decades major changes have taken place in Canadian society. One change which is most evident is the growth in women's participation in the labour force. In October 1986, 3.5 million married women were in the labour force, a tenfold increase from 1951 (Statistics Canada, 1986). The most dramatic increase has been in the participation of women with young children. In 1975 only 35% of married women with pre-schoolers worked outside the home; by 1983 this figure had grown to 51.5% (Statistics Canada, 1985).

Women in Newfoundland, like women in the rest of the country, have been entering the labour force in record numbers. In 1976, there were 58,000 women in the labour force. By 1986 this figure had increased to 91,000, an increase of 56.9% (Statistics Canada, 1976 and 1986). Eleven thousand five hundred and eighty (11,580) women in the labour force have children under the age of six (Statistics Canada, 1986).

Life-time patterns of work for women are also changing. Many women do not drop out of the labour force to rear children and take only a short period of maternity leave around the time of child birth. In light of these radical

changes in women's work patterns, many countries have had to re-examine their maternity leave and child care policies. With women's growing contribution to the formal economy, there is some recognition of the need to share family and household tasks. However, these are still primarily handled by women. This recognition is related to concerns about the impact of women's double work load, and the fact that economic equality for women in the labour force is closely linked to equality in family responsibilities.

The birth of a new family member is one of the most critical events in family life. It is also one of the periods when conflicts between work and family responsibilities are most evident in two-earner families. This study examined parents' infant care responsibilities and the effect of our current system of maternity leave/benefits on decisions about how these responsibilities are met.

Research questions

This study examined the absence from paid work by both parents (including formal parental leave, annual leave, sick leave or informal time off) related to child birth and infant care, in two-earner families. The respondents were asked how they divided child care and household tasks, and their responses were compared with their attitudes about parental

leave. Mothers and fathers were asked how satisfied they are with their current arrangements and what kind of system of parental leave/benefits they felt should be available through public policy.

Rationale for the study

The questions explored in this study have important implications for policy development in Canada. They relate to two policy goals. These are economic equality for women and a more equal balance for workers between their employment and family responsibilities. The federal and provincial governments have articulated a commitment to economic equality for women (First Ministers' Conference, 1985). Similarly, both levels of government have recognized that changes in the labour force require adjustments in social policies and programs to assist workers with family responsibilities. (First Ministers' Conference, 1987)

In Canada, the two-earner, two-parent family is now the norm. Only 16% of two-parent families have only one of the partner in the paid labour force (Statistics Canada, 1985). Most social policies in Canada were developed to meet the needs of the more traditional one-earner, two-parent family. Consequently the needs of single-parent and two-earner families are not being met. This is most evident in

our lack of adequate child care services and our fragmented and inadequate system of leave and benefits for child birth and infant care.

Job protected leave, including seniority and fringe benefits at the time of child birth, and the provision of a cash benefit to cover all or a portion of foregone wages at that time, has been made available in several industrialized countries, including Canada (ILO, 1985). These policies have developed primarily to ensure that women do not continue to suffer a major disadvantage in the paid labour force due to their childbearing responsibilities. The policies have been directed almost entirely towards women. The most notable exception is Sweden, which allows both parents to share job-protected, paid leave from work for the first nine months of a child's life (Kamerman, 1980).

Since the initial introduction of maternity leave in the 1960's and 1970's, some countries have expanded the period of leave around child birth to take into account child development needs. With the expansion from a maternal policy to include child development, it is hard to argue that fathers should not be eligible to share the latter portion of the leave (Kamerman, 1983).

There is also a growing recognition that gender equality in the workplace will not occur until there is a more equitable sharing of family responsibilities. Unless men take an equal share of family responsibilities at home, women will continue to carry the double burden of contributing to the family economy and being responsible for most of the child care and household tasks. As well as being stressed by overwork, women will continue to be disadvantaged in the labour market because of their conflicting work and family responsibilities. If family related leaves and benefits are available only to women, employers may be reluctant to hire and advance women and conversely, men will not have the opportunity to share family responsibilities equally. This situation will continue to contribute to the lower economic status of women, unless legislation and employment policies that will assist all workers with their dual roles are instituted. Consequently, harmonizing work and family responsibilities, so that neither parents nor children suffer because of conflict between work and family, has become a stated public policy goal (First Ministers Conference, 1987).

Although parental leave and the sharing of infant care between mothers and fathers have not been the subjects of much attention in the social work literature, parental leave and infant care obviously have important implications for social work practice. Fathers have been almost absent from the

social work literature. Social work in general, and child welfare in particular, have been focused on maternal care. Social work theory and practice have been heavily influenced by Bowlby's Maternal Care and Child Mental Health (1952), Levy's Maternal Overprotection (1947) and similar scholarly tracts, in which the centrality of the mother is discussed in detail and the father's role is virtually ignored. Discussions of fathers as nurturers or families sharing child care tasks have been rare (Wolins, 1983).

In a review of all the issues of five major social work journals published between 1961 and 1987, Greif and Bailey(1990) found only 21 articles on fathers, while mothers featured much more frequently. Fathers were noted for their absences, their abuse and lack of financial support to their families. No articles focused on the father in a two-parent family (except regarding a father's incestuous relationship with his child) although the majority of fathers in the U.S. and Canada are living with children who are under age 18. The researchers concluded that if the social work profession is to remain committed to supporting families, than researchers and practitioners must study the changing patterns of motherhood and fatherhood.

The last three decades have been a period of rapid economic, political and social change. There have been many

pressures on parents and these pressures are likely to continue. Social workers in practice, in research and in administration need to learn more about how working parents adapt and how to encourage positive, nurturing roles for fathers and mothers. Social policy developers need to be aware of the new economic and social roles of both parents in order to initiate social policies that support working parents.

A few references to shared child care were found in the social work literature. For example, Winborn (1983) uses case examples from her practice to illustrate that institutional supports and flexibility in programs and policies are needed, so that women and men can integrate both parental and occupational roles.

Other social work literature addresses new parenthood as a time of transition that can be a positive time for building family relationships. Aronoff and Lewis (1979) point out that a great deal of preventative work with both mothers and fathers can be done around the time a child is born. This time when family dynamics are in a state of flux, when new skills have to be learned quickly and a new lifestyle has to be worked out, is an optimal point for parent learning programs.

Current maternity/parental leave/benefits available to Canadian and Newfoundland families

In Canada, the right to time off from work for child birth with no threat to job security, is provided by labour standards legislation. Under the Canada Labour Code and similar provisions under the Newfoundland Labour Standards Act (1977), employed women are entitled to a specified period of leave, related to child birth, provided they have worked for the same employer long enough to be eligible.

The Canada Labour Code applies to employers and their employees who come under federal jurisdiction (e.g. federal public servants, federal crown agencies and interprovincial employers such as those in the banking, transportation and telecommunications industries). In 1985 the Canada Labour Code was amended to provide for a 17 week unpaid maternity leave to all female employees, and an additional 24 weeks of unpaid leave, available to any employee, male or female, who has the care and custody of a newborn child, provided they have been employed with the same employer for the past 6 months. The 24 weeks of leave is available to natural fathers, adopting parents and natural mothers who have completed the maternity leave of 17 weeks. Parents may choose to share this unpaid leave, if they both work for employers regulated by the Canada Labour Code. Upon return to work, the

employee must be re-instated to his or her former position or one equivalent to it and be given wage increments, benefits and seniority accrued during the period of leave (Task Force on Child Care, 1985).

The Newfoundland Labour Standards Act applies to all employers and employees in the province who do not fall within the jurisdiction of the federal government. Like most provincial labour codes, it only allows natural mothers and adoptive parents to take unpaid leave for up to 17 weeks. In 1985 only three provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec) required employers to allow natural fathers unpaid leave around the time of birth of a child. Manitoba allowed natural fathers 6 weeks in the 3 month period surrounding the birth, or immediately following the expiration of the mother's maternity leave. Saskatchewan allowed natural fathers 6 weeks in the three month period surrounding the birth. Quebec allowed fathers 2 days leave on the birth of a child (Task Force on Child Care, 1985).

Maternity benefits (payment during time off from employment due to pregnancy, child birth and/or infant care) are currently available through the Unemployment Insurance Program. At the time data was collected for this study natural mothers and adoptive parents of either sex, could receive up to 15 weeks of benefits, provided they had at least

20 weeks of insurable earnings before their claim was filed. The benefits were payable after a 2 week waiting period from the time unpaid leave from work commenced. The benefit was 60% of the claimant's regular wage, up to a maximum, coverage level. This maximum is increased each year. In 1989, the maximum weekly benefit was \$363 (EIC, 1989). Natural fathers were not eligible for benefits from Unemployment Insurance for the purpose of caring for infants, unless the mother was unavailable to care for the infant due to serious incapacity or death (EIC, 1988).

Since the data was collected for this study new amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act have come into force. These amendments provide for 15 weeks of maternity benefits plus a further 10 weeks of parental benefits which may be taken by either mothers or fathers (EIC, 1990). The relationship of the findings of this study and issues raised in the literature to these new benefits will be discussed in Chapter 8.

Aside from the required minimum standard of legislated unpaid leave employers are required to give, some employers provide extra leave and benefits to employees. These leave provisions are usually negotiated through union/management collective agreements. A few employers top-up Unemployment Insurance benefits to natural mothers and adoptive parents to

90 - 95% of their salary and/or continue part or all of the salary normally paid, for the period of the maternity leave during which Unemployed Insurance is not available (Labour Canada, 1984).

Incidence of maternity leave and benefits in Newfoundland and Canada.

Average maternity absences over the years 1980-87, among working women aged 15-49, was 3.0 per 100 in Newfoundland, the lowest in Canada (Maloney, 1989(a)). The ratio of the maternity absence rate to the fertility rate in the Canadian provinces ranges from 0.87 in Quebec to 0.50 in Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. The ratio for Canada as a whole is 0.68. The ratio of maternity absences to the fertility rate is the highest in Quebec, which has the lowest fertility rate. The high maternity absence/fertility ratio for Quebec may be related to enhanced maternity leave provisions and financial compensation in that province, compared to the rest of Canada (Maloney, 1989 (b)).

The duration of maternity absences is related to the financial compensation available. In Newfoundland, between 1980-87, the average duration of maternity absences was 15.4 weeks. Eighty-six per cent (86%) of these absences were compensated. Seventy-nine per cent (79%) of this compensation

was from Unemployment Insurance. The Canadian average leave duration is 18.2 weeks, of which 87.3% is compensated. The component of this compensation that comes from Unemployment Insurance in Canada as a whole, at 79% , is the same as in Newfoundland (Maloney, 1989(b)).

Summary

Women in Newfoundland are entering the labour force in increasing numbers and continuing in paid work while they bear and care for young children. The role of fathers as workers with family responsibilities (other than providing economically for their dependents) is rarely recognized in public policy. Parental leave and benefits are available on a limited basis only, through a patchwork of provincial legislation, federal unemployment insurance benefits and the formal policies and informal practices of employers.

How parents cope with working, child birth and infant care in the current Newfoundland context is the subject of this study. Questions related to this topic have important economic and social implications related to the status of women and to the maintenance of healthy families.

In the following chapters the methodology used for the study will be described, an analysis of the results will be

presented and conclusions drawn. Recommendations for changes to public policy will be made.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Maternity and paternity leave/benefits

A number of researchers have compared parental leave policies in different countries. The International Labour Organization (1985) completed a global survey of maternity leave/benefits from 1964 - 1984. The ILO defined maternity leave/benefits, for purposes of the survey, as all laws, regulations and agreements that provide for specific benefits for women workers during or after pregnancy, which protect their job during absence from work and/or replace all or a portion of lost wages. Of the 127 countries surveyed, the average length of maternity leave was found to be between 12 and 14 weeks. The leave period was generally shorter in developing countries and longer in socialist countries. The survey also found that the period of leave has been increasing in market economics since 1975.

Townson (1985) prepared an international comparison of parental leave, and presented options for Canada, in a background paper prepared for the Cooke Task Force on Child Care. Townson reviewed paid maternity and paternity leave in 24 countries, including Canada. In 23 of these countries, cash benefits are provided by means of social insurance or

public funds, as set out by the International Labour Organization Convention #103. The one exception was the United States which has not ratified ILO Convention #103 and has no generally available maternity leave or benefits. With regard to the period of leave available and the amount of cash benefits, Townsen ranked Canada 22nd of the 23 industrialized countries she surveyed.

Sweden has one of the most generous systems of legislated parental leave and benefits in the world. In 1974 a new law for parental insurance came into effect. When a child is born, both parents can take paid parental leave for 10 days, at 90% of salary. The rationale for this leave is to give mothers time for child birth and fathers time to share in the care of the new born and/or to look after older children. This part of the insurance is used by virtually all new mothers and 85% of new fathers (Hwang, 1987).

During the first 180 days of the child's life, parental compensation is paid to one or both parents. Compensation is 90% of the parent's salary up to a maximum of SEK403 (U.S. \$58) and not less than SEK48 (U.S. \$7) per day. The median income for men and women in Sweden in 1986 was SEK222 (U.S. \$32) per day. The parents can decide who goes to work and who stays home. This part of the parental insurance can be

divided as whole or half days and must be taken within the first 9 months of the child's life.

Each parent is then entitled to another 180 days of leave that can be taken immediately, transferred to the other parent or taken at anytime up to the child's 7th birthday. Remuneration is set at 90% of full salary for the first 90 days and at SEK48 for the remainder of the 180 days. This special leave can be used to reduce an employee's work day from 8 to 6 hours per day for some portion of the child's life. In addition, all Swedish parents with children under the age of 8 are entitled to decrease their working hours from 40 to 30 hours per week, without receiving compensation (Lamb and Levine, 1983).

In the 1970's the Swedish government launched a campaign to encourage men to share the joys of parenthood. Despite this, Hwang (1987) reports that only about 10% of Swedish fathers take advantage of the first 180 days of leave and the proportion of days taken by fathers is only about 2%. Most Swedish mothers nurse their babies for about 6 months. Hwang speculates that this may be the reason for the low take up of parental leave by fathers in the first 180 days. During the next 90 days, almost 28% of fathers take some leave, representing about 9% of the days taken. The last 90 days, during which the flat rate is paid, are almost never taken by

fathers and in many cases, not used by mothers either. Many families feel they cannot afford to use the last 3 months of parental leave, because the compensation is so low. The parental insurance scheme also allows either parent to stay home with sick children for a maximum of 60 days per year until the child is 12 years old, at 90% of salary. In 1980, 34.5% of fathers took advantage of this leave.

Due to Sweden's provision of legislated leave for both parents, studies have been done of men's engagement in and experience of parental leave in Sweden. In 1982 the Swedish government did a questionnaire survey on men's attitudes towards parental leave (Hwang, 1987). Six percent (6%) of those surveyed had been on parental leave. These men had the most positive attitudes compared to those who had not taken the leave. Age of respondent and age of children also affected attitude. Older men with teenage children were more negative. The man's profession or place of employment was also a factor. Men who were self-employed or worked in male-dominated work places were negative. Those men most positive towards parental leave worked in female-dominated workplaces.

Hwang et al (1984) studied 50 fathers who had taken parental leave. The fathers were asked about their views on the leave and any problems that may have arisen during the leave or when they returned to work. The average length of

the leave was 4.7 months. About 2/3 of the men were satisfied with the leave period, but most were surprised at how time-consuming child care was and what hard work it was, when done on a full-time basis. Fathers mentioned difficulties in planning time during the day and adjusting to the child's rhythm. A common complaint was one of loneliness and isolation. They had little contact with other fathers on similar leave. On the positive side, they were pleased to be able to more closely follow their child's development. Several fathers felt that on a personal level, it put the importance of their paid work in perspective. The women who shared leave were quite satisfied with the arrangement.

Reasons for men's reluctance to take advantage of parental leave have been explored (Trost, 1983). Most men mention their professional role, demands of the job and the family's economic situation. Several said that their employers had negative attitudes toward men taking parental leave.

Investigations of Swedish employers' attitudes towards men taking parental leave have shown that many are suspicious and some are very negative towards fathers who take leave. Sometimes men are not promoted, or in some other way left behind in competition with colleagues. Employers know the law that requires them to give the leave, but feel that fathers

are disloyal to the company and unfair to co-workers, if they take leave for parental duties (Hwang et al, 1984 and Hwang, 1985).

Although many employers have negative attitudes, there is also evidence that references by men to employer attitudes are sometimes a pretext for other reasons. Many fathers do not want to stay home. Evidence for this was collected by Hwang et al (1984) when they found that 3 out of 4 fathers who took leave had not noticed any particular reaction from employers or co-workers, or had received positive reactions. Mothers' profession or type of employment did not seem to have any significant effect on the decision of men to take or not take parental leave.

Also in Sweden, few differences in child development were noted in 52 middle class families where parents shared leave (Frodi et al 1987) and in another study of 145 families (Hwang, 1987). Both these studies showed that the amount of paternal leave significantly predicts subsequent paternal involvement.

Kamerman, Kahn and Kingston (1983) studied maternity leave and benefits in the United States, where there is little government intervention to assist parents with their dual role. They surveyed 250 U.S. companies whose net worth

exceeded \$500,000. The researchers caution that their sample excluded many small firms and thus their analysis was likely to overstate the benefits provided by American business. Although 88% of employers in the survey indicated they had formal employment policies which provided maternity leave for female employees, only 72% said they guaranteed seniority or the same or a comparable job on return to work. The period of leave granted was much shorter than commonly supposed. Over 50% of the 234 firms which allowed leave, granted two months or less.

The U.S. Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 requires that employers treat pregnant employees the same as any other employee with a temporary disability. If a company has no disability insurance plan for employees, then no benefits are required to be paid to pregnant employees while they are away from work for child birth. Based on their 1983 survey and related work, Kamerman and Kahn (1987) estimate that fewer than 40% of working women in the U.S. have income protection at the time of child birth which permits them a six week leave, without severe financial penalty.

Bell, McKee and Priestly (1983) studied informal leave taking experiences of fathers in Birmingham, England and the impact of work on men's family roles in the immediate post-natal period. Of a sample of 282 new fathers, only 13 of the

232 employed fathers (4.6%) took no time off when their child was born. Most fathers in the study made use of annual leave, sick leave or unpaid leave, since paternity leave was not available. Penalties were often incurred for taking leave, particularly sick leave or unpaid leave. These penalties included a backlog of work, employer hostility, loss of pay and in a few cases, job loss. There was strong support (91% of 282 respondents) for introducing paternity leave.

Division of household labour

Despite the growth in women's labour force participation, studies have shown that when both spouses work, husbands may help, but women remain responsible for and actually perform most household and child care tasks. Holstrom (1972) studying 27 professional couples, found that most husbands did "help out" with household tasks but few were actually responsible for doing these tasks or arranging to have them done. In another intensive study of 14 dual-worker families, it was found that while both parents participated in child care, the responsibility for the children remained with the wife (Lien et al, 1974).

Two later studies (Lamb et al, 1987 and Pleck, 1983) compared the degree of involvement by employed fathers in two parent families where the mother is employed and the mother

unemployed. In both studies, fathers with employed wives spent an average of 33% more time in direct interaction and being accessible (in the room with a child but not involved in play or caretaking activities) than fathers in families with non-employed mothers. However, there was no evidence that maternal employment status had any effect on the levels of responsibilities for childcare and household tasks assumed by fathers. Even when mothers were employed more than 30 hours per week, the amount of responsibility assumed by fathers was negligible, just as it was in families where mothers were unemployed.

In a review of the major time use studies of men and women in dual earning couples done in the 1960's and 1970's Hochschild (1989) discovered that women work roughly 15 hours longer than men each week. Over a year, women worked an extra month of twenty-four hour days a year. Over a dozen years, it was an extra year of twenty-four hour days. Most women without children spend much more time than men on housework; with children, they devoted much more time to housework and child care. Hoschschild concludes that "just as there is a wage gap for women in the workplace, there is a leisure gap in the home" (p.4).

A more recent study of 651 employees of a Boston corporation by Bradley Googins (1987) of Boston University,

School of Social Work, found that married mothers spent an average of 85 hours a week on the job, homemaking and childcare, while married fathers averaged 66 hours, a gap of nineteen hours.

In 1983, Coverman studied 1500 white, working couples in the United States. She found that women did an average of 87 hours of paid and unpaid work, while men did 76 hours. Sara Yogev (1981) studied professional women and men with children, finding that the women worked 30 more hours a week than the men.

In Canada, the General Social Survey done by Statistics Canada in 1986, showed that the proportion of women who reported doing housework on a typical day was much higher than the corresponding figure for men: 85% versus 52%. These women spent an average of 3 hours on such chores compared to 2 hours for men. For example, 77% of women prepared meals on any given day, spending about 1 1/4 hours doing so, while only 29% of men prepared meals and averaged less than 3/4 of an hour a day doing so. More women than men (54% versus 15%) cleaned up after meals and (45% versus 10%) did indoor housecleaning.

Employed women are still responsible for housework. On any given day, 83% of employed women did housework for an average of 2 1/4 hours. In contrast, 50% of working men did

housework, for an average of 1 3/4 hours a day. Housework patterns of working men and women who were married were even more divergent: 89% of these women did housework compared to 51% of the men.

As might be expected, children increase housework, particularly for women. In 1986, women who did housework spent an average of just under 3 1/2 hours each day on it, if children under 19 were living at home. This was about 3/4 of an hour more than women without children. The presence of children did not affect the percentage of men doing housework. About 50% of men do some housework with or without children in the home. Men with children under 19 living at home, did spend 20 minutes longer on chores than other men (Marshall, 1990).

Why are fathers not more involved in and/or responsible for child care and household tasks? Lien's (1979) intensive study of 25 Boston-area families describes and explains the ambivalence of males' responses to pressure to participate more in home life. All families in the study were two-earner families with pre-school children. Separate interviews with husbands and wives, an interview as a couple, and at least three observations of parents with their children were conducted. Lien found that men's difficulties in meeting new demands in family life are not simply the result of personal

weakness or a lack of commitment. Rather, difficulties stemmed from inconsistencies between family expectations and the wider society. Men perceived paid employment as their primary contribution to the family and were reluctant to acknowledge that they needed to help in the home. Lien found that men's social support networks were very different from those of women and these networks tend to support traditional roles.

Nugent (1987) reported that fathers in a study of 84 urban, middle and working class families in Ireland were substantially involved in caring for children during the child's first year. Using a list of 10 infant care-taking activities, fathers were asked about the number of times a week they performed these tasks when the children were one month old, based on a three point scale-never, occasionally (1-2 times/week) or regularly (3-4 times/week). The responses varied, depending on the task; 3% dressed the baby in the morning regularly; 48% regularly changed the baby's nappies; 56% regularly fed the baby and 93% talked and played with the baby regularly.

Younger men were more likely to be involved in child care in the first month. The same task list completed by the same fathers at the end of the infant's first year, showed similar responses. When the division of labour did not follow

traditional lines, fathers often modified their work schedule to accommodate their parental involvement. Fathers who attended pre-natal classes and were present during child birth were more likely to participate in infant care. This suggests a positive relationship between fathers' involvement in child birth and the sharing of infant care. This may be the case, but as the researcher cautions, fathers who were highly involved in pre-natal courses and child birth may have been predisposed towards paternal nurturance.

A U.S. national survey on the quality of working life (Quinn and Staines, 1979) showed that 40% of fathers would like to spend more time with their children. While this shows that a substantial number of fathers appear to be motivated, over half of the fathers in the survey did not state a desire for more time with children.

No comparable Canadian studies were found, but a Canadian Survey of the workforce done in 1985 (Benimadhu, 1987) showed that more women than men wanted more time off work to care for children. Forty-two percent (42%) of women in the usual childbearing age group (25-34) and women with children under age 5, ranked extra time off for child care and household tasks as most important, compared to 20% of the men surveyed.

Lamb and Levine (1983) cite the Swedish government's publicity program to encourage fathers' involvement with infants as an indication of one of the attitudinal barriers to male involvement: the notion that it is effeminate to be involved in child care. Fears that active parenting and masculinity are incompatible are changing but continue to exist and may explain why motivation has shifted slowly and why no more fathers are taking an active role in child care despite the tremendous changes in female employment patterns.

The support of the family, especially the mother, has been found to be important for father involvement in infant care. The Pleck (1982) and Quinn and Staines (1979) studies, mentioned above, showed that somewhere between 60% and 80% of women did not want their husbands to do more. Lamb (1987) suggests that this may be because mothers feel fathers are not competent to care for children or because mothers don't want to give up the one area of authority that has been traditionally theirs.

The lack of economic support and the presence of barriers imposed by the workplace are most commonly cited by men for their low level of parental involvement (Lamb, 1987). Although economic barriers and lack of time due to employment commitments influence fathers' lack of involvement in child care, time use studies show that men and women use unpaid time

off differently. Survey data (Pleck, 1983) showed that when employees were permitted to take unpaid time off work, women translated each hour they took off into 40-45 minutes of family work, whereas men translated each hour they took off into less than 20 minutes of family work.

A study reported by Jackson (1987) in England on child health and education, illustrated the priority of the work role over child care tasks for men. One hundred expectant fathers, were asked prior to child birth if they intended to take time off work around the time of birth and were then checked to see how much they actually took. Only 5% took more than 2 weeks, 25% took 2 days or less; 31% took one week annual leave and 21% took 2 weeks.

Jackson argues that the failure of the working world, both at an institutional and personal level, to recognize the significance of child birth to men disrupts the developing bond between father and child. Jackson felt that this contributed to bouts of depression suffered by about 1/3 of her sample of 100 fathers. Most couples in this study coped by retreating to traditional roles. Faced with new parental responsibilities, most men worked overtime for more money or sought promotion by displaying long hours at work, while women assumed the unpaid role of infant care taker.

Jackson's work indicates that lack of paternity leave prevents fathers from an equal involvement with infants. This conclusion is supported by studies in Sweden of fathers who take paternity leave. Use of paternity leave has been shown to increase subsequent paternal involvement in child care (Lamb et al, 1982).

Research by Goldberg, Michaels and Lamb (1985) found that following child birth in two-earner families, the division of labour generally follows traditional lines. DeFrain (1979) found that parents who shared child care equally had a commitment to the principle of equal sharing and had flexible job schedules which allowed them to accomplish an equal division.

Marital satisfaction and distribution of family work

Marital and family therapists working with dual-career couples (Yogev, 1983) have commented that the distribution of family work is one of the most critical issues that couples face. Yogev and Brett (1985) investigated the relationship between marital satisfaction and perceptions of distribution of household and child care in four groups: husbands in two earner families (n=136); wives in two earner families (n=136); husbands in single earner families (n=103); and wives in single earner families (n=103). For all groups, marital

satisfaction was greater for those who perceived that both they and their spouse were doing a fair share of family work. In dual earner families the perception of distribution of family work was a pivotal issue in marital satisfaction.

Belsky, Perry - Jenkins and Crouter (1985) studied the relationship between work-family interference and/or support and changes in marital satisfaction and marital communications. This was based on measures taken prenatally and at six and nine months post-partum, in 67 caucasian families in Pennsylvania. The evidence from this research indicates that tensions stemming from the workplace detrimentally affect marriage during the transition to parenthood.

Gray, Lovejoy, Piotrkowski & Bond (1990) studied husband supportiveness and the well-being of employed mothers with infants. The wives were asked to report on their husbands' participation in six household chores (cleaning, cooking, dishes, food shopping, laundry and bill paying) that have been traditionally considered "female" household chores, and three child care tasks (getting up at night with the baby, taking the child to the doctor and general everyday care of the baby when both parents were present). The majority (70.6%) of the 490 women surveyed reported that they were primarily responsible for three or more of the household tasks. Only

27.8% of the women reported the sharing of three or more of the tasks equally and only 6.8% reported their husband was mainly responsible for three or more of the tasks. No respondent said her husband did the preponderance of all household tasks. The pattern reported for the child care tasks was similar, but they were somewhat more likely (47.5%) to be shared equally. Most respondents perceived that their husbands were supportive, although they did not report high levels of concrete help from them. The study found a relationship between the women's perceptions of support from their husbands and their well-being.

Gender equity issues

Gender equity, a stated goal of Canadian public policy, remains elusive. Women continue to be concentrated in three occupational categories - clerical, sales and service, in jobs that offer lower income and little opportunity for advancement (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1978). Despite occupational gains by some women in professional areas, the wage gap remains. In 1988 the average earnings of Canadian women who worked full time was only 66% of the average earnings of Canadian men who worked full time (Statistics Canada, 1988).

Proponents of policies and programs to promote the advancement of women have long realized that gender inequality

exists both at home and in the workplace. The general expectation has been that as women gain more economic power through public policy measures, they will have more bargaining power with men in all arenas, including the performance of family work (Ratner, 1980; Luxton, 1986). It is now becoming more evident that reasons for persistent gender inequality in the labour market and family life are more circular. Bohlen (1984) found that women take more responsibility for family work than men and therefore curtail their pursuit of training and jobs that would allow them to advance and earn more money. Men do not want to jeopardize their earning power by spending more time on family work and expect women to do more at home. Women oblige, and the system sustains itself.

A number of researchers have noted that women and men experience marriage and family life differently (Baker-Miller, 1976; Bernard, 1982). Bernard (1982) reports that research shows that women and men in different relationships frequently differ in their responses to the same questions about who does particular household tasks in their family. She uses this and other examples to support her theory of "his" and "hers" marriage (p.5). This supports the need for a study of both men's and women's attitudes toward and their use of parental leave.

Summary of relevant literature

The literature reviewed above provided a basis for this research. International comparisons of parental leave policies and data on women's use of maternity leave in Canada showed that Canadian maternity leave/benefit provisions are less generous than those in most other industrialized countries. Research on parental leave or paternity leave was more difficult to find in Canada, but studies from Sweden have linked the use of paternity leave to the development of paternal nurturance.

The division of household labour and child care is the subject of a number of studies, particularly in North America. These studies indicate that women continue to be responsible for a large share of family work even when they work outside the home. Even though an equal sharing of family work may not be a reality for most couples, some evidence indicates that sharing family responsibilities positively influences marital and parental satisfaction. This suggests that paternity leave could contribute to increased family well being in Canada.

Four studies were found that explored questions similar to those planned in this research (Bell, McKee and Priestly, 1983; Nugent 1987, Jackson, 1987; and Gray et al, 1990).

These studies explored fathers' absences from work for child birth when paternity leave was not formally available and fathers' involvement in infant care. These studies were done in England, Ireland and the United States and therefore may have limited relevance for Canada, given the different economic and social context in which the research was completed.

There is a significant increase in female labour force participation in Canada and most women do not drop out of the labour force for extensive periods to raise children. Fathers have little or no leave provisions to assist in caring for infants. New social policies and programs are needed to assist parents who are raising a family and both working outside the home. Infant care is a critical area for both working parents. This research asked how new parents cope with infant care and their use of parental leave provisions. Differences between men's and women's experiences as working parents of infants are explored. The impact of social policies on the ability of new parents to balance work and family responsibilities is assessed and policy changes proposed.

Chapter 3
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was exploratory. Information was gathered on parents' absences from work for childbirth and infant care, how they divide household/child care tasks and their satisfaction with parenthood. Respondents were also asked their opinion on policy questions related to parental leave. The relationship between their opinions about parental leave and the division of household and child care tasks was explored.

Propositions

Based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and the researcher's experience as a direct practice social worker, a social policy analyst and a working mother, the following propositions were developed and explored in the research:

- (1) In most dual earner families, both mothers and fathers are absent from work for some period of time around the time of child birth.

- (2) In most dual earner families with infants, the division of household and child care tasks still follows

traditional patterns of mothers being primarily responsible for these tasks.

- (3) In most dual income families with infants, decisions about division of childcare and household tasks are influenced by the availability/nonavailability of paid leave from work for child birth/infant care.
- (4) Parental satisfaction will be greater for dual earner mothers and fathers of infants if they share responsibility for child care and household tasks.
- (5) Mothers and fathers who are employed outside the home want access to paid leave from work around the time of child birth, for a sufficient period to allow them to share infant care.

The population and the sample

The population for this study was two-earner parents who had a child born at one of the two maternity hospitals in St. John's in the period February to July 1989. Over a six month period, the researcher collected a sample of 35 new mothers and 35 new fathers who were in the paid labour force (as defined by Statistics Canada and used in labour market surveys) and who volunteered to participate in the research.

The criteria used for inclusion in the sample meant that the mothers and fathers were cohabiting at the time they agreed to participate in the study. The mothers and fathers were asked to participate in a telephone interview when their baby was 4 months or older. Most interviews were done when the infants were 6 months old. All interviews were completed before the infant's first birthday.

A written description of the research project was given to new mothers by the nursing staff of both hospitals (Appendix I). The hospitals were asked to give the written description of the research project to all new mothers, but with so many different staff nurses involved, it is inevitable that some new mothers were missed and not given the description. How many received the description, matched the criteria, but decided not to participate, is unknown.

Mothers were asked to consult with the father and if both agreed to participate, the mother was visited by the researcher at the hospital approximately 1 to 4 days after the birth of her child. The research project was further explained to the mother, and she was asked to sign a consent form. Consent forms were signed by the fathers at the same time, or in some cases signed later and left at the nursing station for the researcher. The participants were informed that arrangements would be made by telephone for a convenient

tine to conduct a telephone interview. The interview appointment time was set approximately one week before the interview actually took place.

Since collection of the sample was proceeding slowly, a family practice physicians' clinic was asked for assistance. Physicians were asked to contact their female patients who matched the criteria for inclusion in the study (cohabiting with a partner, both in the labour force, infant less than one year old). These mothers would have also delivered at one of the two maternity hospitals in St. John's but did not respond to or were not given my original request. If the patient agreed when she was approached by her physician, her name was given to the researcher who provided a further description of the project. Approximately five families were recruited using this method.

This sampling method had strengths and weaknesses. On the positive side, it allowed for inclusion of mothers and fathers, seeking out the interest of the mothers first. On the other hand, it biased the sample to parents who could discuss this issue, hence to "progressive" or compatible households. It was not a random sample, but given the small number of cases that could be managed by the researcher alone, the sample could not be considered representative in any case. Since the hospitals only allowed collection of the sample if

their staff gave the information to the women first, it was not possible to keep track of the number of refusals. The thirty-five families who volunteered for the study turned out to be more homogeneous in relation to education and income than was originally anticipated by the researcher. Mothers and fathers in the study agreed more on how they divided household tasks than the literature suggests. This will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 8.

The research instrument

The instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire (see Appendix III and IV). Since relatively little research had been conducted on this topic, the instrument had to be constructed for the study, based on the relevant literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

Questions on fathers' involvement at the time of child birth were adapted from Bell, McKee and Priestly (1983). The questions on parental satisfaction were taken from and/or modeled on a questionnaire developed by Johnson (1980) who studied family planning in the St. John's area. Johnson used a five response Likert-type scale for questions about parental satisfaction.

Questions on leave and benefits available to the respondents were based on current employment policies and practices in Newfoundland. Questions about future policies the respondents may support were based on the literature.

The section on the division of household and child care tasks was based on the related literature on this subject. The task lists were generated from the literature and the researcher's knowledge of the most common tasks performed in households with an infant. Responses to questions in this section were used to determine if the household was traditional, non-traditional or egalitarian. These variables (traditional, non-traditional or egalitarian) were correlated with attitudes towards parental leave. The responses to this section were also used to compare mothers' and fathers' perceptions of who takes responsibility for household and child care tasks.

The questionnaire for the mother was slightly longer than that for the father. Mothers and fathers were asked different questions about what leave they took at the time of child birth, with mothers asked questions concerning delivery and hospitalization. Mothers were also asked for specific information on children/dependents living in the household and others who help out with child care and household tasks. Both mothers and fathers were asked questions about employment

leave/benefits available to them, the leave/benefits they would support, the distribution of household and child care tasks, parental satisfaction and demographic data.

The instrument was pretested on three families prior to it being used in the study. Minor changes were made as a result of this pre-test.

Data collection

The instrument was administered by means of a pre-arranged telephone interview. This allowed for the inclusion of families in the sample included from a wider geographic area than the city of St. John's, although the final sample included only two families reached by a long distance telephone call. This decision was also based on the experience of Johnson (1980) who referred to difficulties encountered in conducting personal interviews in the St. John's area. Although appointments were pre-arranged, interviewers frequently arrived at a home to find planned respondents not at home, or visitors present. This meant that interviewers often had to return to the homes several times. This could also occur with pre-arranged telephone interviews, but postponements of arranged interviews would not be so time consuming.

The telephone interview method was chosen because it allowed for inclusion of respondents from a wider geographic area and because of the limited time available to the researcher. The telephone interview method also allowed easier access to mothers and fathers in private and at different times. These factors were judged to outweigh any disadvantages the telephone interview method may have, such as possible lack of privacy in the family for the respondents. Even with the use of telephone interviews, about a third of the parents were interviewed one after the other. This may have reduced privacy for the partners, and may have discouraged discrepancies between responses of partners (See Chapter 6).

The interviews were approximately 30 minutes long for the mothers and 20-25 minutes long for the fathers. Only two of the families lived in the long distance dialing area, but not all families lived in the city. A few lived in smaller communities close to St. John's, but the survey format did not permit an accurate count of those not living in the city.

Research ethics

The research was conducted according to the Ethics Guidelines for Research with Human Subjects published by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (1981).

Approval of the research proposal was received from the Human Subjects Review Committee, School of Social Work, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Permission was granted by the Grace General and St. Clare's Hospitals to collect my sample from obstetrical patients at these hospitals, provided that the first information about the project was given to patients by the nursing staff. New mothers were given a written description of the purpose of the research (Appendix I). Those who agreed to participate in the research contacted the researcher through the nursing supervisor. The researcher then visited them at the hospital, gave them more information and arranged to have the consent forms signed (Appendix II). Confidentiality was assured. Data is presented using methods which ensure that no identifying information is reported in the analysis. The original questionnaires were identified by number only. The original questionnaires were destroyed after the data was tabulated and no record of the individual families who participated in the research was kept.

Chapter 4

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

The sample for this study was 35 mothers and 35 fathers of infants who had children born at either of two St. John's hospitals with obstetrical facilities, or who were patients at a St. John's family practice clinic. In order to be included in the sample, both the mother and the father had to be cohabiting and in the labour force (employed, unemployed but looking for work, temporarily out of the labour force upgrading their education or on some form of childbirth leave) when the child was born. The respondents, therefore, all lived in two parent families where two incomes were normally present. The data was collected in the fall of 1989 and the winter of 1990.

Demographic data

Mothers in the sample ranged in aged from 24 to 39 years with the average age being 30 years. Fathers were slightly older, ranging from 27 to 42 years, with the average age being 35 years. The sample was relatively mature, with no respondents in the teenage or young adult categories.

Most were well educated with mothers as a group being slightly better educated than fathers as a group (See Figure 4.1). All the mothers had completed high school, while two of the fathers had less than high school graduation. Five of the fathers gave high school graduation as their highest level of education attained while two of the mothers had achieved only high school graduation. The majority of both mothers and fathers had completed post-secondary education, with seventeen of the mothers and nine of the fathers having a post-secondary diploma. Ten of the mothers and ten of the fathers had a bachelor level university degree. Four of the mothers had graduate degree(s) compared to three of the fathers.

The sample is biased towards respondents with a higher level of education. In 1986, in the age groups 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 only 59% of males and 53% of females in Newfoundland had a secondary school diploma and/or a higher level of education. (Statistics Canada, Summary Tabulation of Labour Force, Mobility and Schooling, 1988). In this sample all the females and 94% of the males had completed high school and/or had a higher level of education. Only 16% of males and 8.3% of females in these age groups in the province in 1986 had university degrees, while 29% of males and 29% of females in sample had university degrees.

Educational Attainment of the Sample

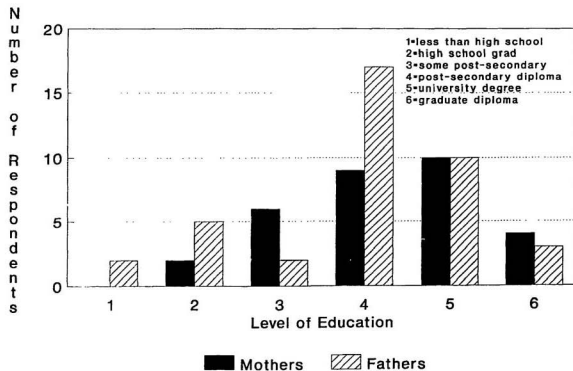


Figure 4.1

This bias may be affected by a combination of age and education factors. The incidence of maternity absences from work were studied in the Maternity Leave Survey done by Statistics Canada in 1985 (Maloney, 1989). Findings indicated that the incidence of maternity absences was almost twice as high in the 30 - 34 year old age group than in women ten years younger (aged 20 - 24), although the younger age group had a higher fertility rate. This was explained by further study of education levels. Among university graduates the incidence of maternity absences in the 30 - 34 year age group was even more pronounced. Women with higher levels of education tend to postpone childbearing to accommodate post-secondary education and some work experience after graduation.

The sample also had a relatively high income, with over half (19) having a combined family income of over \$50,000 before taxes in the year prior to being interviewed. The average family income in Newfoundland in 1988 was \$35,906 (Statistics Canada Cat. No. 13208).

Mothers personal income before taxes ranged from \$10,000 to \$15,000 (2) up to more than \$50,000 (1) (See Figure 4.2). The largest group of mothers (10) earned between \$20,000 and \$25,000 while eight earned between \$25,000 and \$30,000 and six earned between \$30,000 and \$35,000. Only five of the mothers had incomes of over \$35,000. The average income of

Newfoundland women in 1988 was \$10,812 per year (Statistics Canada, Cat. No. 13-217).

Fathers' personal incomes ranged between \$5,000 and \$10,000 (1) to greater than \$50,000 (2) (See Figure 4.2). Fathers were distributed more evenly in the categories of income with two earning between \$15,000 and \$20,000, two earning between \$20,000 and \$25,000, six earning between \$25,000 and \$30,000, five between \$30,000 and \$35,000, three between \$35,000 and \$40,000, six between \$40,000 and \$45,000 and five between \$45,000 and \$50,000. Seventeen of the fathers had personal incomes over \$35,000 compared to only five of the mothers in the sample. The average income of Newfoundland men in 1988 was \$17,854 (Statistics Canada, Cat. No. 13-217).

The majority of mothers (21) were in professional or managerial occupations with 7 being nurses and 4 teachers, while 15 fathers were in professional or managerial occupations with fathers being more evenly distributed across a range of occupations. Only 1 of the mothers was self employed while 3 of the fathers were fully self employed and one other was partially self employed.

The mothers were asked if they had other children. This was the first child for sixteen of the mothers, while 19 had

Income of the Sample

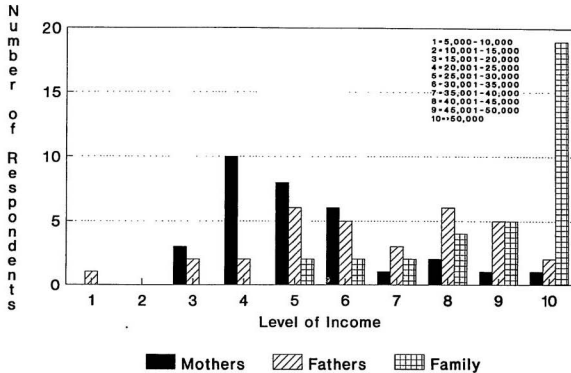


Figure 4.2

other children who were living with them. Most (13) of the mothers who had other children, had one other child, the remainder had two or three children except for one mother, who had six other children. The average number of children per family in the study is 1.7, the same as the average number of children under 17 years of age in Newfoundland families (Statistics Canada, Census Catalogue # 93106, 1986). Other children in the study families ranged in age from one year to older than 12 years, with the average age being 6.3 years.

None of these families had anyone else living with them for whom the family was required to provide care. Five of the families had someone else living in the household who helped out everyday with childcare or household tasks.

In summary, the mothers and fathers in this sample were better educated and had higher family incomes than the Newfoundland average. The socio-economic status of the sample may be due to self selection into the sample by respondents. The relatively high socio-economic status of the respondents may have been due to the fact that better educated people are more familiar with research and therefore more willing to participate. Seasonal and casual workers or other mothers in low income jobs may not have considered participating in the research if they did not qualify for maternity leave or benefits, due to insufficient work time or

insurable earnings. Lower income mothers who did not plan to return to work after child birth because child care costs would outweigh the economic benefits of working, may not have considered themselves still in the labour force and therefore excluded themselves. Due to the sampling method, the number of prospective respondents who matched the criteria for selection but refused to participate is unknown.

The socio-economic status of the sample will have influenced the findings. This bias in the sample and the small sample size mean that the findings of this study cannot be generalized to the Newfoundland urban population. Further study, using a different sampling method, would be needed to draw conclusions about mothers and fathers in lower socio-economic groups. This will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

Child birth

Most of the mothers in the sample (25) were in hospital for child birth for between 3 and 6 days. Only six had been hospitalized prior to their admission for the delivery and only one had to return to hospital afterwards. Most were hospitalized for only a few days, with the longest stay being 3.5 weeks. Only two of the infants stayed in hospital longer than their mothers. The longest period of hospitalization for an infant was one month, due to premature birth.

Thirty-four of the fathers attended the labour and delivery while one attended the labour only. Eighteen of the fathers attended pre-natal classes with their spouse/partner and most of the remainder had attended prenatal classes with their spouse/partner during a previous pregnancy.

Ten of the families reported they needed someone other than the father to care for the other children when the mother was hospitalized. The average cost to those who were required to pay for this care was about \$75 for about a week.

Ten of the mothers reported being early by one week or more, according to their expected date of delivery and six were late by one week or more. None of the mothers or the fathers reported that this caused them any difficulty at work.

The majority of mothers (26) estimated that they had lost money by being away from work due to child birth and infant care. These mothers estimated their loss to be between \$500 and \$15,000, while the average loss was \$4250. Not surprisingly, those in the highest income bracket suffered the greatest loss of income. Maternity benefits paid through Unemployment Insurance covered only 15 weeks paid at 60% of earnings, to a maximum of \$30,000 in 1989.

Only two of the fathers reported losing personal income

due to the birth of a child. This loss was reported to be about \$80 - one day's pay. The issue of the major difference of loss of wages between men and women due to child birth will be considered in Chapter 8.

Chapter 5
EMPLOYMENT AND LEAVE

The interviews were conducted when the infants were at least four months old. This time frame was chosen to explore how parents actually coped with caring for their infant and their work responsibilities. It was expected that in this time frame most mothers who had taken maternity leave would have returned to employment. This was found to be the case. Thirty of the thirty-five mothers had returned to paid employment or self employment at the time of the interview. Another mother did casual call-in work and one was a full time student. Only one had left the workforce to become a full time homemaker after the birth of her infant. Thirty-three of the fathers were employed for a salary or wage or self employed at the time of the interview. One was unemployed and one was a full time student.

Two thirds (23) of the mothers were members of a union, while only thirteen of the fathers were unionized. The rate of unionization is higher for women in public service industries, where the majority of mother respondents were employed. Maloney (1989) found that the incidence of maternity absences was highest (4.8%) in public and regulated service industries, which also have the highest rate of

coverage by collective agreements (60.2%). Maloney cautions that the link between unionization and maternity absences is tenuous and that union membership does not guarantee better maternity leave provisions and benefits than those provided by legislation. In the 1980's only 49% of major collective agreements in Canada contained maternity leave provisions; of those that did, 71% included provisions which exceeded legislated limits. In 1988, Labour Canada reported that paid maternity leave was provided in only 26% of major collective agreements (Maloney, 1989 p.32).

Work schedules and other work requirements are shown in Table 5.1. Most respondents (56) worked full time for an employer at the time they were interviewed. Four (4) fathers and 1 mother were self-employed. This mother and 1 father worked in their business part time. Three self-employed fathers reported working more than the normal working day (8 hours) in their own business.

Several mothers (8) and fathers (5) worked shifts and 13 mothers and 10 fathers worked most week-ends. Work travel, with absence from home overnight, was required of 8 mothers and 15 fathers. The range of required travel was from once a week to once a year, with most being required to be away once every 2-3 months. One mother and one father were required to be away for extensive blocks of time (1 month or more) each

Table 5.1
Reported Work Schedules and Requirements

Work Requirements	Mothers	Fathers
Worked full time for employer	27	29
Self- employed	1	4
Worked days, weekdays only	18	25
worked shifts (regular rotating)	5	3
Worked shifts (irregular)	3	2
Worked days + evenings	2	4
Worked most weekends	13	10
Never worked weekends	8	4
Required to be away from home overnight due to work travel	8	15
Child care difficulties due to travel often	1	1
Some child care difficulties due to travel	4	5

year. Travel caused child care difficulties frequently for 1 mother and 1 father and caused difficulties sometimes for 4 mothers and 5 fathers.

Child care arrangements

Four of the families in the sample could share child care because of parents' work schedules. Eight of the families took their infants to a non-relative's home for care while fourteen had a non-relative caregiver come to their home; one had a live-in relative caregiver; one took the infant to a relative's home and three had a relative come to their home to care for their infant while the parents were at work.

Twenty-five of the families paid for their infants' care. Most of those who had other children used the same child care arrangements for these children, while four used daycare centres for their other children. In this province, children under the age of two cannot be cared for in group daycare centres. At present, group day care is the only type of licensed child care in the province.

Leave/benefits available to the sample

All the mothers were eligible for maternity leave. The Newfoundland Labour Standards Act requires employers to allow all employed women 17 weeks of unpaid maternity leave, if they have worked for that employer for 12 months prior to the leave period. Ten of the mothers were eligible for only these 17 weeks. Twenty-two were eligible to be away from work for more than 17 weeks. Most of these were eligible for 33 weeks of unpaid maternity leave, the maternity leave most common in public service collective agreements. This 33 weeks of unpaid maternity leave is also extended to management employees in the public sector. One of the mothers was eligible for up to 5 years of unpaid extended child care leave. Figure 5.1 shows the availability of maternity leave.

All of the mothers took at least 17 weeks of leave, but some of those that were eligible to be away from work for a longer period took only the time to which benefits were available (15 weeks), plus the two week waiting period required to be eligible for benefits through Unemployment Insurance.

Most of the fathers (24) reported that their child was born outside their normal working hours so they did not need to take time away from work to be with the mother for the

Availability of Maternity Leave

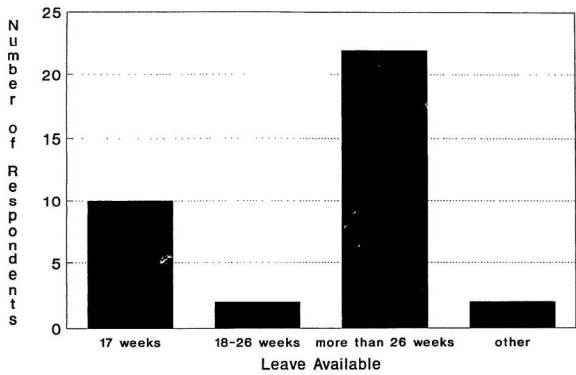


Figure 5.1

child birth. Eleven of the fathers said their child was born during their normal working hours. None of these fathers had any difficulties with getting time off work to be with their spouse/partner during labour and delivery. Sixteen of the fathers reported being eligible to take time off work because of child birth. Only one of these was eligible for paternity leave, while seven were eligible for family responsibility leave; eight were eligible for leave through other provisions (e.g. special leave, use of accumulative overtime or vacation time); three were self employed and therefore were eligible for whatever time they could take away from their business, and two weren't aware of what was available to them through formal eligibility. Fathers' eligibility for leave at the time of child birth is shown in Figure 5.2.

Fourteen of the fathers were eligible for less than one week of leave. Of those who took leave from work (17), four said it caused them difficulty at work. Difficulties cited were employers' negative reaction (2) and work overload on return to work (2). The issue of attitudes of employers towards paternity leave will be discussed in Chapter 8.

The majority of mothers (34) received Unemployment Insurance benefits for the standard fifteen weeks, while one did not receive Unemployment Insurance benefits because she had not been in the paid workforce long enough (20 weeks) to

Availability of Leave For Fathers

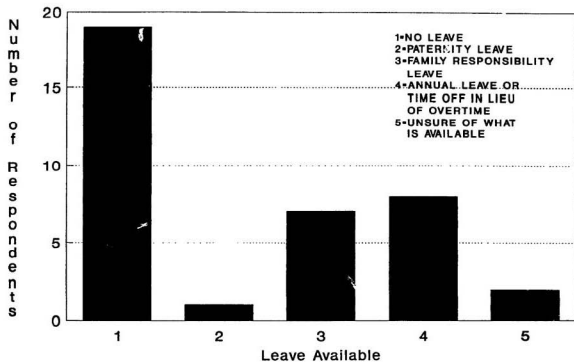


Figure 5.2

have enough insurable earnings. Only three of the mothers were eligible for "top-up" of their Unemployment Insurance benefits by their employer. These mothers received 93% of their normal salary for 17 weeks, including the 15 weeks of U.I. benefits. All mothers who had health insurance and a pension plan at work were eligible to continue these benefits, provided they paid for the employee share of the premiums during their leave period or agreed to pay these premiums after they returned to work.

Fathers who took leave from work always received 100% of their pay, except for two fathers who lost about one day's pay each. Health and pension benefits for fathers were not affected because of the short period of time they were actually away from work.

Chapter 6

DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD AND CHILD CARE TASKS

Respondents were asked how household and child care tasks were accomplished in their households. Ten of the 35 families had someone other than the mother and father to help out with household and child care tasks, mostly while the parents were at work. In seven of these cases, help was provided with household tasks as well as child care. Eight families paid for this help.

Twenty-two of the mothers breast-fed their babies and 13 were still breast-feeding at the date of the interview. In all cases except one the baby was also being fed with a bottle and/or cup and solid food. Nevertheless, the high incidence of breast feeding in this sample (63% compared to the Newfoundland rate of 30%) may have influenced the responses on who feeds the baby since babies who are breast-fed would be fed most of the time by mothers (Dept. of Health, 1990). The high incidence of breast feeding may be related to the socio-economic status and educational backgrounds of the sample.

How tasks were accomplished

Mothers and fathers were asked to categorize a list of household and child care tasks by who performed these tasks in their household. Four of the household tasks (housecleaning, cooking, dishes, laundry) are usually required on a daily basis. Four other household tasks were listed that required less frequent attention (home maintenance, food shopping, organizing the family's recreation and car maintenance). Nine child care tasks were listed. Five of these (feeding the baby, changing diapers, bathing, playing with the baby or other children, and getting up at night with the baby) required frequent attention, while four others (getting up at night with other children, arranging for sitters, helping with homework and staying home from work if the baby is sick) are generally required less often.

The mothers and fathers were asked to categorize these tasks in one of the following groups: father does this all the time; father does this most; shared equally; mother does this most; mother does this all the time; not applicable/other. Mothers and fathers responses are set out in Tables 6.1 and 6.2.

TABLE 6.1
 Division of Household Tasks
 by Mothers' Responses (M) and Fathers' Responses (F)

Household Tasks	Father all the time		Father most of the time		Shared Equally		Mother most of the time		Mother all the time		Other	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Housecleaning	0	1	2	1	13	8	10	11	9	12	1	2
Cooking	1	1	4	3	11	12	8	10	11	9	1	0
Dishes	2	1	2	4	14	14	6	4	10	9	1	3
Laundry	1	1	1	3	4	6	10	6	18	18	1	2
Home Maintenance	15	17	10	12	4	5	0	0	0	1	6	0
Org. Family Rec.	0	0	2	3	26	26	3	1	4	4	0	1
Food Shopping	3	5	3	4	9	12	10	3	11	11	0	0
Car Maintenance	27	31	2	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

TABLE 6.2
Division of Child Care Tasks
by Mothers' Responses (M) and Fathers' Responses (F)

	Father all the time		Father most of the time		Shared Equally		Mother most of the time		Mother all of the time		Other	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Feeding Baby	0	0	0	1	17	14	4	10	14	10	1	0
Changing Diapers	0	0	0	0	22	23	5	6	8	6	0	0
Bath Baby/ Children	0	0	0	0	12	16	12	6	10	12	1	0
Playing with baby Children	0	0	0	1	22	15	3	5	10	4	0	0
Getting up at Night with Baby	1	1	2	1	12	15	11	4	8	14	1	0
Getting up at Night other children	0	0	3	1	6	9	5	2	6	5	15	18
Arranging Sitter	2	0	0	4	13	10	9	3	9	15	2	3
Helping with Homework	0	0	1	0	4	3	5	4	1	1	23	27
Staying Home if Baby is sick	2	1	2	1	7	6	4	4	19	17	1	6

In general, there was more sharing of child care tasks than household tasks, but most mothers performed more than an equal share of both groups of tasks, as reported by both mothers and fathers.

Egalitarian and traditional families

Parental responses were used to rate the degree of sharing of household and child care work between marital partners. Six of the listed household items which have been traditionally done by women and all of the 9 child care tasks were used to derive a scale.

The two household tasks that were dropped to construct the scale were car maintenance and home maintenance, both of which have been traditionally done by men. The families in this study followed the traditional pattern with only 6 of the mothers and one father responding that car maintenance was shared equally, while the remainder said that father did this all or most of the time. No one responded that the mother was responsible for car maintenance all or most of the time. Home maintenance was not as traditionally polarized as car maintenance, but 25 fathers and 29 mothers said the father did this all or most of the time. These items were dropped in order to simplify the scale that was constructed to rate the families as egalitarian, semi-traditional or traditional.

All of the household tasks used for this scale were traditional "female" tasks. All of the child care tasks were included since they are all traditional "female" tasks. Support for this method of constructing the scale was found in Gray et al (1990), reported in the literature review earlier.

The extremes and midpoint of the constructed scale are as follows:

Very non-traditional (father doing all work)	= +60
Egalitarian (work equally distributed)	= 0
Very traditional (mother doing all work)	= -60

Each task reported by either the mother or father in the father all the time category, scored +2, father most of the time scored +1, shared equally scored 0, mother most of the time scored -1 and mother all the time scored -2. Any tasks reported in the other category were excluded from the analysis, since it indicated that someone other than the mother or the father performed this task most (or it wasn't applicable in their family), so neither a positive or negative score could be assigned.

Families with a high negative score were rated as traditional. Families with a low negative, low positive or 0 score were rated egalitarian. Families with a high positive score would have been rated non-traditional. The range of scores was from +3 to -40. No family was non-traditional in

their completion of household and child care tasks. Nine (9) families fell into the category of egalitarian, using the boundaries +10 to -10. Sixteen families had scores of -11 to -25 and were considered semi-traditional. Ten families were considered traditional with scores of -26 to -40 (See Figure 6.1)

Mother-father differences/similarities

Contrary to the findings expected in view of the literature reviewed earlier (see p. 32), mothers and fathers in individual families gave remarkably similar answers to questions about who performed household and child care tasks. Of the fifteen tasks used to score family type, there were 525 possibilities (15 tasks x 35 cases) for mothers and fathers to differ in their responses. Mothers and fathers differed in only 104 responses. In 69 of these responses, the difference was only slight (for example, a mother said she did a task most of the time while the father said she did that task all the time).

There were major differences in only 35 responses. Differences were classified as major if the mother and father disagreed completely on how the task was accomplished (for example, if a mother said the task was shared equally, while the father said the mother did this task all the time).

Distribution of Family Scores on Division of Labour

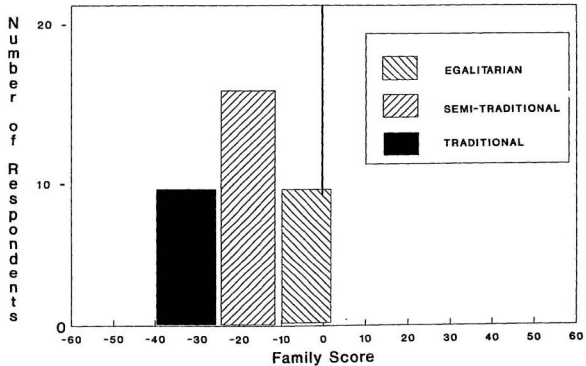


Figure 6.1

Mothers perceived that the father did more than he said he did in 16 of these responses. In 14 responses fathers perceived that the mother did more than she said she did. In only 5 cases (2 mothers and 3 fathers) was there a difference in which the respondent reported they did more themselves than their partner reported that the other did for that task.

A sampling approach in which the mother had to discuss the research project with her partner and obtain his consent may have biased the sample to include more couples who agreed on the division of household and child care tasks. Similarly, although telephone interviews were better than interviews at their home or with the respondents as a couple, the possibility of lack of privacy for some respondents even in telephone interviews may have biased the results.

Overall household responsibility

Mothers and fathers were also asked who took most responsibility for the overall organization of their household. This was defined as the organizing of daily/weekly/monthly tasks, by arranging to have them done, or doing these tasks personally. Twenty-one(21) of the mothers and 14 of the fathers said the mother was most responsible. One of the fathers and 2 of the mothers said the father took most responsibility. Twelve(12) of the mothers but 20 of the

fathers said responsibility was shared equally. Although there was agreement between some partners on this question, other mothers and fathers had different perceptions about who was responsible for household organization.

Most mothers (30) and fathers(25) were satisfied with the way household and child care tasks were completed in their family. Three of the mothers and 8 of the fathers were neutral on this issue. One of the fathers and 2 of the mothers were dissatisfied. The main barriers to change for the few who were dissatisfied were not enough time, work schedules and the traditional way these tasks have been arranged.

Satisfaction with parenthood

All of the respondents, mothers and fathers, were very satisfied or satisfied with being a parent. They all rated their satisfaction as being much greater, greater or the same as other mothers and fathers they knew. No differences were noted between first time parents and those who already had children.

Twenty(20) mothers and 13 fathers rated child care tasks as much more satisfying than any other work they do on a daily basis. Twelve fathers and 7 mothers rated child care as

somewhat more satisfying. One of the fathers who rated child care in this category, noted that while child care was more satisfying, it was also more exhausting. Nine(9) fathers and 5 mothers rated child care as equally satisfying. Only 1 mother and 1 father rated child care as somewhat less satisfying, compared to other work.

Satisfaction with time for child/children

Nineteen(19) fathers and 10 mothers were satisfied with the amount of time they had to spend with their children. Twenty-three(23) mothers and 10 fathers would like to have more time to spend with their children.

Mothers' answers to the question of how much more time they would like to have to spend with their children ranged from 40 more hours a week (stay home full time) to 8 more hours (1 more day) per week. The average number of extra hours mothers would like to have was 20 more hours a week. Fathers who wanted more time to spend with their children cited fewer hours per week. The average time they wanted was 11.6 hours. One father noted that he would like to be able to take the summer off.

These findings are consistent with the findings of a survey conducted by Statistics Canada as a supplement to the

June, 1985 Labour force Survey (Benimadnu, 1987). About one-third of the work force was content with their work time arrangements. Approximately 31% wanted a reduction in their work time (for a corresponding reduction in pay) and about 32% wanted an increase (with a corresponding increase in pay). Females tended to prefer a reduction in work time, although the differences were not great for all females versus all males (32% and 30% respectively). The greatest preference for work time reduction, however, was among females in the usual child bearing years (ages 25 to 34) and females with children under age 5. About 40% of both categories preferred a reduction in work time. In fact, wanting the extra time to take care of children and household work was ranked as most important by 42% of women, compared to 20% of the men.

Chapter 7
VIEWS ABOUT PARENTAL LEAVE

Maternity leave/paternity leave

All the mothers and 34 fathers in the sample felt that all mothers in the paid labour force should be eligible for maternity leave (see Figure 7.1). One father had mixed feelings about requiring employers to make maternity leave available. This father was self-employed, and may be an employer. This may have influenced his views.

Only 2 mothers and 5 fathers were satisfied with the current legislated provision of 17 weeks maternity leave, available under the Newfoundland Labour Standards Act. The majority of mothers (27) and 15 fathers favoured a maternity leave period of 26 weeks or more. Three mothers felt a one year leave period was appropriate and 1 mother favoured an extended leave period of 3-5 years. Fourteen (14) fathers felt that mothers should be eligible for a period of leave that would last between 18 and 26 weeks.

All of the mothers favoured some time off for fathers, around the time of child birth. Twenty-eight of the fathers felt fathers should be eligible for leave, 3 disagreed, 3 had mixed feelings and one did not respond.

Attitudes Toward Parental Leave

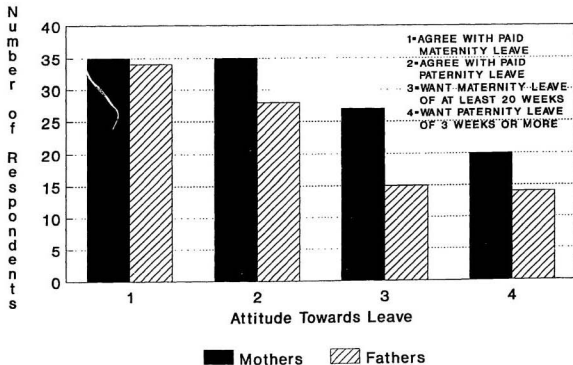


Figure 7.1

Twelve(12) mothers wanted fathers to be able to take at least two weeks off, 10 wanted 4 weeks and 7 wanted 8 weeks. Two mothers wanted fathers to have 10 weeks of leave. Ten weeks was the benefit period proposed under the bill to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act. This bill was being discussed by the House of Commons during the time the data for this study was collected. These amendments have now been implemented by the federal government.

Three of the mothers felt that fathers should be able to take a few days off to help out when the mother and infant returned home from hospital. One mother felt that mothers and fathers should be able to share a 6 months leave, with the proportion of the time taken by each left to the family's discretion.

Fourteen of the fathers felt that fathers should be eligible for a period of leave of between 3 and 17 weeks. Seven fathers felt 2 weeks would be sufficient and 10 fathers would be satisfied with a few days to a maximum of a week's leave around the time the child was born.

Maternity/paternity benefits

All of the mothers favoured a fully paid (23) or partially paid (12) maternity leave period. Similarly, many

fathers (25) favoured a fully paid maternity leave and 8 agreed with a partially paid period for mothers. Only one father disagreed with maternity benefits and one father did not respond to this question.

The mothers gave a variety of responses when asked who should pay for these maternity benefits (See Figure 7.2). The largest number (16) felt there should be a parental insurance system with premiums paid by employees, employers and government. Ten mothers said they felt employers and employees should pay the cost through the Unemployment Insurance system, as at present. Seven mothers agreed with the Unemployment Insurance system of maternity benefits but also felt that these benefits should be "topped-up" by employers. One mother did not see the need for a new parental insurance system but felt that the cost of benefits should be shared by employees, employers and government. One mother felt government should pay the entire cost of maternity benefits.

Fathers also gave a variety of answers about who should pay the cost of maternity benefits. Fifteen fathers favoured the current system of employees and employers paying for it through Unemployment Insurance, while 9 favoured a new parental insurance system paid for by employees, employers and government. Five fathers wanted government, employers and

Who Should Pay for Maternity Benefits

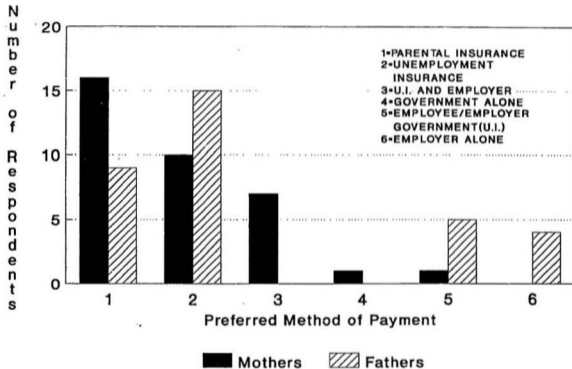


Figure 7.2

Unemployment Insurance to pay the costs and 4 fathers wanted employers to pay.

Agreement with fully paid or partially paid leave for fathers was similar for mothers and fathers. Twenty-seven(27) mothers agreed that fathers' leave should be paid, while 5 had mixed feelings and 2 disagreed with paid leave for fathers. Twenty-eight of the fathers agreed with paid leave for fathers, while 3 disagreed, 2 had mixed feelings and 2 did not respond to this question.

Mothers gave a wider variety of answers about who should pay the cost of paternity benefits, than they did about maternity benefits (See Figure 7.3). As with maternity benefits, the largest number (10) wanted a parental insurance system. Seven mothers wanted paternity benefits paid through Unemployment Insurance, through contributions by employees and employers. Five mothers felt paternity benefits should be paid through Unemployment Insurance plus a "top-up" by employers and five wanted the cost shared by employees, employers and government. Two mothers want government to pay the total cost of paternity benefits and 2 others wanted employers to pay all the cost. Nine(9) fathers wanted a new parental insurance system to cover the cost of paternity benefits, while 7 were satisfied with the cost being paid through Unemployment Insurance. Six fathers wanted employers

Who Should Pay for Paternity Benefits

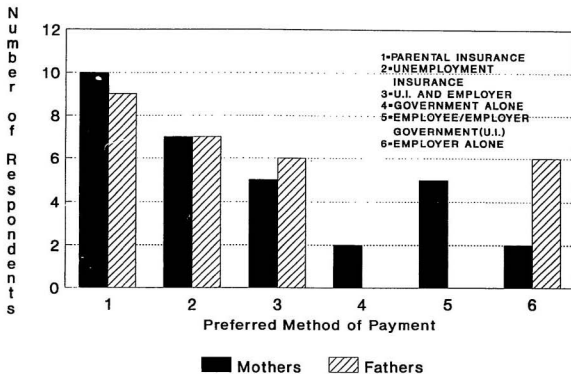


Figure 7.3

to pay all the cost and 6 wanted Unemployment Insurance, plus employer "top-up".

It should be noted that 10 of the fathers stated they would be satisfied with only a few days off at the time of child birth. This accounts for the some of the responses that employers should pay all the cost.

Sharing of leave

Thirty-one mothers and twenty-six fathers agreed with the concept of sharing a period of child care leave between the mother and the father. Only 1 mother disagreed with sharing and 3 did not respond to this question, while 6 fathers disagreed with sharing and 3 did not respond. Two mothers added conditions to their agreement with the concept of sharing. One mother wanted a period of maternity leave safeguarded for the mother, to allow her time to recover from childbirth and one mother noted that breast feeding mothers may want to take all the time available. When asked if they would share the leave, had that option been available to them, 19 of the mothers said they would have shared, 9 said they would not have shared and 7 were unsure what they would have chosen. Fourteen fathers said they would have shared, 14 said they would not have and 7 didn't know what their choice would have been, had that option been available to them.

Summary of views about maternity and paternity leave/benefits

Thirty-three (33) of the mothers and 30 of the fathers wanted a longer paid maternity leave than is currently available. All of the mothers (35) and 28 of the fathers wanted some period of paid paternity leave. Ten(10) mothers and 15 fathers agreed with maternity benefits being paid through Unemployment Insurance, but 16 mothers and 9 fathers favoured a new system of parental insurance for maternity benefits. Ten(10) mothers and 9 fathers wanted a new parental insurance system to pay paternity benefits, while 7 mothers and 7 fathers would be satisfied with paternity benefits being paid through Unemployment Insurance. These findings will be discussed further and used as the basis of recommendations in Chapter 8.

Association between attitudes towards leave and family score on household and child care tasks

Table 7.1 shows the association between attitudes towards maternity and paternity leave, the concept of sharing, the willingness to share leave, and family scores on the division of household and child care tasks. There was a high rate of agreement with the concept of sharing time off for infant care by both mothers and fathers. There were some respondents from all three types of families (egalitarian, semi-traditional,

TABLE 7.1
 Association between attitudes towards leave
 and sharing of household and child care tasks

	Egalitarian Scores +3 to -10 N = 9	Semi-Traditional Scores -11 to -25 N = 16	Traditional Scores -26 to -40 N = 10
Both mother and father agree with maternity leave of more than 17 weeks	9 (100%)	12 (75%)	7 (70%)
Both mother and father agree with paternity leave of 4 weeks or more	7 (78%)	3 (19%)	1 (10%)
Both mother and father agree with the concept of sharing	8 (88%)	13 (81%)	5 (50%)
Both mother and father responded that they would have shared	3 (33%)	4 (25%)	1 (10%)

and traditional) who agreed with sharing. However, five of the fathers and one of the mothers from the ten families with traditional scores (-26 to -40), disagreed with the concept of sharing time off.

Eight mothers and 8 fathers in the traditional group said they would not have shared or that they were unsure what they would have chosen, had the option of sharing time off been available to them. In only one family in this group (10%) did the mother and father say they would have shared. The three fathers who disagreed with paternity leave and one who had mixed feelings were also in the traditional family score group. The mothers in this group agreed with paternity leave but tended to feel that a short period of leave around the time of childbirth was sufficient.

In the egalitarian families (scores of +3 to -10) only one father and none of the mothers disagreed with the concept of mothers and fathers sharing a leave period for infant care. A larger percentage of mothers and fathers in this group (33%) said they would have shared, had that option been available to them. Two fathers in this group were unsure of their choice and two said they would not have shared. One of the fathers who said no, qualified it by saying that while he would have preferred sharing, circumstances at the time of his partner's maternity leave would not have allowed him to share the leave.

One mother in this group said she would not have shared. All of these respondents (mothers and fathers in the egalitarian family group) agreed with paternity leave, most for a period of 1 to 4 months. Only one father in this group felt a few days for paternity leave was sufficient and one mother said 2 weeks was sufficient.

There is a link between division of household and child care tasks and attitudes towards parental leave in this study. In all cases the direction of the association is consistent. Families with more egalitarian pattern of sharing household and child care tasks tend to favour longer maternity leave, a substantial period of paternity leave and would be more likely to choose a shared parental leave.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before the data was collected in this study, a number of propositions were stated. These propositions were based on a review of the literature, the researcher's experience as a direct practice social worker, a social policy analyst and as a working mother. Each of these propositions will be re-examined in light of the evidence provided by the findings. The sample was well educated and most were in a high income brackets, compared to the Newfoundland population. The reason for this bias may have been due to the criteria for selection of the sample, which required that both partners be in the labour force. As discussed earlier in Chapter 4, seasonal or casual workers may not have considered themselves in the labour force even though the term was defined to include them in the letter describing the research, given to all prospective participants. Low income mothers may not have planned to return to the labour force because of the high cost of child care and not selected themselves into the sample. It is most likely that a combination of these reasons resulted in a sample of high socio-economic status. The findings and the re-examination of the propositions must take this class bias into account.

Due to the sample, sample size and the non-random sampling method, the conclusions drawn can only be considered tentative and are not generalizable to the population of Newfoundland. Further research, using a different sampling method, needs to be done to gather information on the incidence of parental leave and benefits taken by lower income families. Seasonal, casual and low income workers may be suffering further economic hardship and other disadvantages by not being eligible for these benefits.

Propositions re-visited

1. In most dual earner families both mothers and fathers are absent from work for some period around the time of child birth.

This was true for all mothers in the study and for most fathers. Mothers were eligible for unpaid leave which ranged from 17 weeks to 5 years, but most took only 17 weeks - the two week waiting period plus the 15 weeks for which unemployment insurance benefits were available. Only 1 father was eligible for paternity leave and 7 were eligible for family responsibility leave of up to three days. Other fathers took vacation time or time off in lieu of overtime.

Most fathers were eligible to be absent from work for less than a week.

2. In most dual earner families with infants, the division of household and child care tasks still follows traditional patterns of mothers being most responsible for these tasks.

This was true of the families in this study. In 26 of the 35 families the household and child care tasks were done most of the time, and in some cases almost all the time, by the mother. There were no non-traditional families where the father did household and child care tasks most or all of the time. Only 9 of the families (26% of the sample) were egalitarian in their sharing of household and child care tasks.

Twenty-one(21) of the mothers said they were most responsible for overall household organization and fourteen of the fathers said the mother took most of this responsibility. Only 12 of the mothers, but 20 of the fathers said overall responsibility was shared equally. Clearly, some partners have different perceptions of their responsibility for household organization. However, detailed analysis shows these differences to be usually minor, with major discrepancies limited to a few couples. A sampling process requiring a

mother to discuss with her partner their participation as a couple in the research project may have influenced this result.

3. In most dual earning families with infants, decisions about the division of child care and household tasks are influenced by the availability/non-availability of paid leave from work for childbirth/infant care.

All the mothers were absent from work at least for 17 weeks. None of the fathers had paid leave for more than a few days. Although no direct conclusions can be drawn on the question of time off affecting division of household labour, the lack of paternity leave can be linked to the fact that most mothers did more than half the household and child care tasks. It would be reasonable to infer that patterns of child care and household tasks are established during maternity leave when the mother is at home caring for the child and that pattern continues after the mother returns to work.

4. Parental satisfaction will be greater for dual earner mothers and fathers of infants, if they share responsibility for child care and household tasks.

This proposition was not supported for this sample. All the mothers and the fathers reported a high degree of satisfaction

with parenthood. No differences in parental satisfaction were found between egalitarian and traditional families.

5. Employed mothers and employed fathers want access to paid leave from work around the time of child birth, for a sufficient period to allow them to share infant care.

Respondents reported a high degree of support for paid maternity leave and majority support for paid paternity leave. Most agreed with the concept of sharing infant care, but in only 8 of the 35 families did the mother and father agree that they would have shared the leave period, had that option been made available to them.

Summary of significant issues raised by the study and recommendations

The high cost of child bearing

Both the literature and the findings of this study show that the cost of child bearing, in economic terms, is disproportionately shared by females. This is not surprising since the system of leave and benefits supporting child birth and infant care was only available to females when this data was collected. Mothers lost substantial amounts in foregone wages by taking maternity leave. Fathers, on the other hand, lost little in personal economic terms because most had no

mechanism to allow them to take more than a few days off work. Fathers did share in the loss, in that the family had less disposable income.

Now that fathers will be eligible for Unemployment Insurance benefits associated with parenthood, it remains to be seen how many fathers will claim these benefits. If the experience in Sweden is any indication, only a minority of fathers will take this leave. Father's incomes, both in general and in this study, tend to be greater than mothers. This may discourage some families from sharing the leave, since it would be more economical for the mother to take the entire 25 week period of benefits.

Employer attitudes and fathers' response to paternity leave

Another issue that influences fathers' incidence of paternity absence in Sweden is employers' negative attitudes. Since very few fathers in this study actually took more than a day or two off, employers' attitudes did not appear to be a problem. Only two fathers in this group cited employer's negative attitude as a difficulty. If fathers take advantage of the new paternity benefits, negative attitudes by employers may become more of a problem. Fathers may not be willing to risk opportunities for advancement if they feel their employer would view their taking paternity leave as a lack of

commitment to work. If only a minority of fathers use the benefits, the fathers who do may share with mothers the disadvantages of taking this leave, rather than employers really accommodating workers' family responsibilities. Ironically, fathers who take leave may be making a greater sacrifice than mothers. They will likely have greater wage losses and employers may be more sympathetic to a mother who follows a traditional role in taking time off for infant care than to a non-traditional father who stays home to care for an infant.

Efforts must be made to raise employers' awareness about the need for both men and women workers to be able to balance work and family responsibilities. Fathers should be encouraged to share parental leave. The literature indicates that fathers taking leave would have a positive effect on individual family relationships, although the findings of this study cannot be used to support this since fathers were not eligible for and did not take much leave. The literature also indicates that if a significant number of fathers take leave, it would remove some of the burden from women, allowing them to compete in the workplace on an equal footing with male co-workers.

Recommendation # 1

The federal government should develop an awareness campaign about the new parental benefits which came into effect on November 18, 1990 with the amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act (See p. 10). This campaign should be general, but with specific messages targeted to employers and fathers.

Parental insurance vs. Unemployment insurance

A number of respondents, 16 mothers and 9 fathers, would prefer a new system of parental insurance for maternity benefits and 10 mothers and 9 fathers would prefer paternity benefits be paid through parental insurance. Although developing a new system of parental insurance has some disadvantages, so does the delivery of parental benefits through Unemployment Insurance. The new system of Unemployment Insurance for parental benefits retains some administrative rules that are not necessary for parental benefits. Examples of these rules are the two week waiting period the claimant must be absent from work, before the benefit period can start and the 20 weeks of insurable earnings required in order to be eligible. A further disadvantage of using Unemployment Insurance is the requirement of a separate 2 week waiting period for the mother and the father if they decide to share the benefits. This is

an economic hardship imposed by the Unemployment Insurance rules on families who decide to share the parental benefits. In addition, if they continue to be part of the Unemployment Insurance system, parental benefits will be tied to the same maximum benefit level as other Unemployment Insurance benefits. The Cooke Task Force on Child Care and Parental Leave (1985) recommended an improved system of parental benefits that would increase the benefit levels gradually, to 75% of maximum insurable earnings over five years and to 95% over 10 years.

While there are disadvantages to paying parental benefits through the Unemployment Insurance system, developing a new system of parental insurance may also have disadvantages. The administrative costs of establishing a new system may be extensive. Unless contributing to such a program is voluntary, decisions about who contributes to the parental insurance plan would have to be determined. It could be limited to all workers in their childbearing years, but since this varies in individuals, deciding on the age group which must contribute may be difficult. A voluntary program for parental insurance may limit the program to more affluent workers. While a number of options need to be explored, it may be that parental benefits could be administered through the Unemployment Insurance system, but with separate rules for eligibility and benefits.

Recommendation # 2

A review of the new system of Unemployment Insurance benefits for new parents should be completed one year after implementation. This review should include a study of the implications of separating parental benefits from regular Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Legislation on maternity/paternity leave

Most of the provinces, including Newfoundland, have not changed their labour standards legislation to include a right to leave for natural fathers. Unless covered by a paternity leave clause in a collective agreement or unless he works in an industry regulated by the Canada Labour Code, a natural father in Newfoundland will not have the right to a leave period for infant care, although adoptive fathers do have that right. Also, under the present Newfoundland Labour Standards Act mothers are only eligible for 17 weeks, while a more generous 25 weeks of Unemployment Insurance benefits are now available.

Recommendation # 3

The Newfoundland government should amend the Newfoundland Labour Standards Act to introduce a parental leave period for fathers that is at least 12 weeks in duration. This would allow a father to have 10 weeks of Unemployment Insurance

benefits plus the 2 week waiting period. This legislation should also extend the maternity leave period from 17 weeks to 32 weeks. This would cover a mother who combined maternity and parental benefits with sick benefits, to the maximum benefit period (30 weeks) plus the two week waiting period.

Conclusion

In two parent families, balancing work and family responsibilities is an issue for mothers and fathers. The findings in this study are generally compatible with the literature on the subjects of parental leave and the division of household labour. Now that parental benefits for infant care are available to mothers and fathers in Canada, new research is needed to assess the effects of these benefits on mothers and fathers in the workplace and in the home.

This study implies that changes are needed for parents in both the workplace and in the home. The literature indicates that women will continue to be stressed by overwork and will not achieve economic equality as long as they continue to shoulder the burden of an unequal division of household and child care labour. Fathers must be encouraged to take an active role in day to day child care. The literature indicates that if fathers are not eligible for paternity leave and benefits which would allow them to share infant care, they

are less likely to develop an equal nurturing role. In most families in this study mothers did more than half the household work, but most fathers in this study supported paternity leave and the concept of sharing infant care. Had they been able to use such provisions themselves, fathers might have engaged more fully in the range of household and child care tasks, including nurturing their children.

Public policy on parental leave has lagged somewhat behind attitudes of this sample of middle class and cooperative working parents. Benefits for fathers who wish to share infant care have only just become available. The federal government has made a public commitment to helping workers balance family responsibilities, but proposed changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act were not tabled until after a successful Charter Challenge to the Act by a natural father.

Fathers and mothers in this study agreed with the concept of sharing some of the period available for infant care, even when their present pattern of division of household labour and child care responsibilities was traditionally divided. Although families may be slower to exercise sharing of parental leave than they are to agree with the concept, the availability of parental benefits has been overdue. Now that parental benefits are available, the provincial government should legislate to extend the maternity leave period and to

include paternity leave so that the right to be absent from work will be compatible with these benefits.

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**General Information Letter for Prospective Respondents
in a Study of Parents, Child birth, Infant Care and Work**

Dear New Mother and New Father:

The Grace General and St. Clare's Hospitals have given me permission to ask for volunteers to participate in a research project I am conducting as part of the requirements for a Masters Degree in Social Work at Memorial University. The research is concerned with two-earner families with infants.

If you and your partner are in the labourforce (employed, unemployed but looking for work, or temporarily out of the labourforce due to maternity leave) and think that you both may be willing to participate in the study, please tell your nurse. She will give your name to the Nursing Supervisor who contacts me. I will visit you before your discharge from hospital to explain the research project to you in more detail.

I am interested in finding out if mothers and fathers are able to arrange time off from work for child birth and how you arrange child care and household tasks in your household. Hopefully the research will lead to a better understanding of how being in the paid labour force and having a new baby affects parents; and how public policy may be more effective in assisting parents to improve "the fit" between work and family responsibilities.

If you agree to be part of the study you will be asked to participate in telephone interviews I will be conducting when your baby is approximately four months old. The interviews, one with the mother and one with the father, will take about 45 minutes each and will be arranged to take place at a mutually agreeable time.

Your participation in this study will involve no risks to you. All information collected will be kept strictly confidential and will be reported in statistical summary form only. The questionnaire will be identified by number only and will be destroyed after the research project is completed. I will ask you both to sign a consent form which indicates your role in the research project and that you agree to participate. This form is for your protection. You may withdraw from the research project at any time, even after having given your consent.

If you agree to participate, I will ask you to provide me with your address and telephone number for a later contact as noted above.

The research report will be submitted to the School of Social Work, Memorial University and after completion, will be on file at Memorial University Library. I will provide a summary of the research report to any respondents, on request.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. I can be reached at 576-5009 (office) or 764-1412 (home).

Sincerely,

Dorothy Robbins
Masters Candidate
School of Social Work,
MUN
4 Mabledon Place
St. John's, NF A1A 3Y7

APPENDIX II**Parents, Child Birth, Infant Care and Work
Informed Consent Form for Research Subject**

I, the undersigned, understand that the purpose of this research project is to gather information about how much time parents are able to take off from paid work when they have a new child, and how they are able to arrange this time off; how new parents arrange responsibility for child care and household tasks in their family; and what kind of a system of parental leave/benefits new parents would like to have available, through public policy.

I understand that, in order to safeguard the confidential nature of the information that will be collected from me, an identification number will be used and all identifying material will be stored in a place only accessible to the investigator and will be destroyed when the study is completed. The information collected from you will be used with a similar accumulation of information from about 50 families and will be reported without names or other identifying information. It is my understanding that the information I volunteer will not be accessible to anyone other than the investigator.

I understand that there will be no risk to me resulting from my acceptance or refusal to participate in the project. My consent is voluntary and I may choose to withdraw it at any time.

I agree to participate in the research project by responding to a telephone interview at a later date, at a time mutually agreeable to myself and the investigator.

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX III

MOTHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR A RESEARCH ON
PARENTS, CHILDBIRTH, INFANT CARE AND WORK
(WORKING TITLE)

DATE OF INTERVIEW _____

TIME OF INTERVIEW _____

Questionnaire

Section A: General questions about the baby/ childbirth/other dependents.

These first few questions are about the baby, the time of birth and other family members.

- 1 Is your baby a boy or a girl?
 boy___ girl___
 If twins, are they boys?___ girls?___
 or, one of each?___
- 2 How old is the child?
 months ___
- 3 How long altogether were you in hospital prior to the birth and immediately after?
 less than 24 hrs ___ 24-48 hrs ___
 3 to 6 days ___ a week ___
 more than a week ___
- 4(a) Were you hospitalized during the pregnancy prior to the time you were admitted for the birth?
 yes___ no___
- (b) If yes, how long?
 days___
- (c) Have you had to go back to hospital at any time since the birth?
 yes___ no___

- (d) If yes, for how long?
 days___
- 5(a) Do you have any other children who live here with you? (Not including new baby)
 number___
- (b) ages___ ___ ___ ___
- 6(a) Do you have anyone else living here who the family looks after?
 yes___ no___
- (b) If yes, who_____
- 7(a) Do you have anyone else living here who helps with household and child care tasks?
 yes___ no___
- (b) If yes, who_____
- 8(a) If other children are in the home or other dependent persons, who looked after them during your time in hospital?
- father _____
 father and other relative___
 other relative _____
 father and non-relative ___
 non-relative _____

- 8(b) If someone besides the father was involved in caregiving, did you pay that person for their services?

yes___ no___

- (c) If so, how much did this care cost? (approx.)

\$_____

- 9(a) Did you and the baby come out of hospital at the same time?

yes___ no___

- (b) If no, why? _____

- (c) If the baby was in hospital longer than the mother, did the baby come home -

1 to 4 days later ___ 5 to 7 days later ___
 8 to 13 days later ___ 2 weeks + later ___
 baby still in hospital___ other (explain) ___

- 10(a) Was the baby early or late, according to the expected date of delivery?

on time (within one week) ___
 early by ___ weeks
 late by ___ weeks
 don't know ___

- (b) If the baby was not on time did this cause you difficulty?

yes___ no___

10(c) If yes, what kind of difficulty?

difficult to arrange time off from work ___
 difficulty in making care arrangements ___
 for other children or dependents ___
 other (explain) _____

Section B: Employment

These next series of questions
 are about your employment.

11(a) Are you currently employed for a salary or
 wage?

yes___ no___

(b) If yes, do you work-

full time _____
 part time _____
 other (explain) _____

(c) Are you self-employed?

yes___ no___

(d) If yes, do you work at you business -

less than the number of hours in a
normal working day (approximately 8)___

more than the number of hours in a
normal working day _____

(e) What is your occupation?

12 If you are not employed are you-

on maternity leave _____

laid off _____

a student _____

full time looking after children at home_____

other (explain) _____

13(a) Are you a member of a union?

yes___ no___

(b) If no, why not?

management _____

no union at work_____

other (explain) _____

14(a) Are you eligible for maternity leave/child-care leave?

yes___ no___ don't know___

- 14(b) If yes, how long a period are you eligible to be away from work for childbirth/infant care?

less than 1 week ___
 1 to 17 weeks ___
 18 to 26 weeks ___
 more than 26 weeks ___
 other (explain) ___

- (c) Do you qualify for this leave through the right to take-

maternity leave ___
 family responsibility leave ___
 time off in lieu of overtime ___
 annual leave ___
 don't know ___
 other (explain) ___

- (d) If no, why were you not eligible?

employer does not grant such leave ___
 didn't work long enough for the
 same employer ___
 don't know ___
 other (explain) ___

- 15(a) Are you/were you eligible to receive maternity benefits through U.I.

yes___ no___ don't know___

15(b) If no, why not?

not in the labour force _____
 not in the labour force long enough _____
 before the leave period _____
 (less than 20 weeks) _____
 in the labour force but don't contribute _____
 to U.I. (e.g. self-employed) _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

16(a) Are you/were you eligible for a top up to U.I. benefits?

yes___ no___ don't know___

(b) If yes, what percentage of salary are you eligible for?

%___

(c) Did you receive any other benefits while away from work?

health/insurance coverage___
 pension premium coverage _____
 (employers share) _____
 other (explain) _____

17 If the time you took off from work was partially or-totally unpaid, how much money do you estimate that you lost due to time off work?

\$_____

- 18 What kind of hours do you normally work at your paid job?

days - Monday to Friday (9 to 5) ___
 days - Monday to Friday (flextime)___
 shifts - regular rotating ___
 day shift - permanent ___
 night shift - permanent ___
 evening shift - permanent ___
 shifts - irregular ___
 non-shifts - irregular ___
 autonomous working hours ___
 don't work at a paid job ___
 other explain ___

- 19 Do you have to work at your job on weekends?

yes, most of the time ___
 sometimes ___
 hardly ever ___
 never ___
 don't work at a paid job___

- 20(a) If you have returned to paid work, what arrangements have you made for the care of the baby?

have not yet returned to work ___
 father looks after baby ___
 work schedule allows father and mother to share care ___
 live in help (relative) ___
 live in help (non-relative) ___
 take baby to caregiver's home (relative)___
 take baby to caregiver's home (nonrelative) ___
 have caregiver come in (relative) ___
 have caregiver come in (nonrelative) ___

- 20(b) Do you pay for this care?

yes___ no___

- 21 If you have other children, is this the same arrangement you use for child care?

yes, same arrangements as for infant ___
 yes, same type of arrangement, but
 different caregiver ___
 no, use day care centre for other
 children ___
 don't have other children in need of
 care ___
 other (explain) ___

- 22(a) Does your work require you to travel?

yes___ no___

- (b) If yes, are you away overnight?

- (c) If yes, how often are you required to travel?

once a week ___
 once every 2 weeks ___
 once a month ___
 once every 2 to 3 months ___
 twice a year ___
 once a year ___
 away for blocks at a time (explain)___

other (explain) ___

- (d) If you are required to travel, does this cause difficulties with child care arrangements?

quite often ___
 sometimes ___
 rarely ___
 never ___

23(a) Do you feel you have enough time to spend
with your child/children?

yes___ no___

(b) If no, approximately how many more hours a
week would you like to have available?

hours per week___

Section C: Attitude Towards Parental Leave

This section is about how you
feel about leave for childbirth
and the care of the baby.

24 As you know most mothers in the paid labour
force can get leave from work at the time of
birth of a baby or when they adopt. Do you
think this leave should be available to all
mothers who are in the labour force?

yes___ no___
mixed feelings___ don't know___

- 25 Adoptive fathers are eligible for leave from work around the time of adoption, sharing, at the family discretion, that time with the adoptive mother. The federal government has just announced that either natural fathers or natural mothers who have paid U.I. premiums for the required number of weeks will be eligible for a ten week period after the expiration of the mother's 15 weeks of maternity benefits, starting in January 1990. Do you think natural fathers should be eligible for leave around the time of birth of a child, and time off from work to share infant care?

yes _____ no _____
 mixed feelings _____ don't know _____

- 26(a) Should leave for the mother be paid or unpaid?

paid _____ unpaid _____ other (explain) _____

- (b) If you think it should be paid, who should pay for it?

employer _____
 employer/employee, through U.I. _____
 employer plus U.I. _____
 other parental insurance system _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

- 27(a) Should leave for the father be paid?

yes _____ no _____
 mixed feelings _____ don't know _____

27(b) If you think it should be paid, who should pay for it?

employer _____
 employer/employee, through U.I. _____
 employer plus U.I. _____
 other parental insurance system _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

28(a) How much time should be available for leave for childbirth and infant care for the mother?

a few days at the time of birth _____
 1 week _____
 2 weeks _____
 2 to 17 weeks _____
 18 to 26 weeks _____
 more than 26 weeks _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

28(b) How much time should be available for leave for childbirth and infant care for the father?

a few days at the time of birth _____
 1 week _____
 2 weeks _____
 2 to 17 weeks _____
 18 to 26 weeks _____
 more than 26 weeks _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

- 29 Should parents be able to share the part of the leave designated for infant care leave at their discretion?

yes___ no___ don't know___

- 30 If sharing of paid infant care leave for both parents were available now, would you and your spouse/partner take advantage of the shared leave?

yes___ no___ don't know___

Section D: Involvement of parents with child care and household tasks.

These next series of questions are related to how you organize household tasks and child care.

- 31(a) Do you have anyone who helps out your family with household tasks and child care besides the mother and father?

yes___ no___

- (b) If yes, how often is that person available?

every day _____
 every few days _____
 once a week _____
 once every two weeks _____
 live in _____

- (c) Does this person do both household tasks (e.g. cleaning, cooking, etc.) and look after the baby and/or other children?

both _____ household tasks only _____
 child care only _____ other (explain) _____

31(d) Is this person -

a relative___ nonrelative___
paid ___ unpaid ___

32(a) Is your baby breast fed?

yes___ no___

(b) If yes, is the baby also fed with a bottle,
a cup and/or solid food (e.g. cereal)?

yes___ no___

33 Who in your family most often does the following tasks?

	Father much more than mother	Father more than mother	Father & Mother equally	Mother much more than father	Mother more than father	Other, unspecified	
a. housecleaning							a.
b. cooking/preparing meals							b.
c. doing dishes							c.
d. doing laundry							d.
e. home maintenance							e.
f. organizing the family's recreation							f.
g. help with homework							g.
h. arranging for alternate child care (e.g.) evening babysitters and/or child care while at work							h.
i. feeding the baby							i.
j. getting up at night with the baby							j.
k. getting up at night with the other children							k.
l. bathing the baby and/or other children							l.
m. playing with/reading to the baby/other children							m.
n. staying home from work if the baby or other children are sick							n.
o. changing the baby and/or other children in diapers							o.
p. food shopping							p.
q. car maintenance							q.

34(a) In your household, who takes most

responsibility to make sure household/childcare tasks are done? Responsibility for purposes of this research, does not mean that the person who takes responsibility always does the tasks, but that the person does them or arranges to have them done.

mother____ father____
share equally____ other (explain)____

(b) How do you feel about the way responsibility is taken for these tasks?

very satisfied ____ satisfied ____
neutral ____ dissatisfied ____
very dissatisfied____

(c) If you are not satisfied with the way responsibility is taken for these tasks, what is the main barrier preventing change in the way the family responsibilities are divided?

spouse/partner unwilling to change ____
traditional way we've done thing never
discussed change ____
work schedules ____
other (explain) ____

Section E: Parent satisfaction

Now I would like to ask you
some questions about how you
feel about your present life.

35 How satisfied are you with being a parent?

very satisfied ___
satisfied ___
somewhat satisfied ___
very dissatisfied ___
dissatisfied ___

36 How would you compare your satisfaction as a
parent with other parents you know?

much greater ___
greater ___
same ___
much less ___
less ___

- 37 Every kind of work has certain day to day satisfaction, but some people find some kinds of work more satisfying than others. Compared with other kinds of work you do, how would you rate the satisfaction of caring for children?

much more satisfying _____
 somewhat more satisfied _____
 equally satisfying _____
 somewhat less satisfying _____
 much less satisfying _____

Section F: Demographic Information

These next few questions are related to characteristics about you and your family. These are the final few questions.

- 38 What is your age in years?
 years _____
- 39 What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- less than high school _____
 high school graduation _____
 some post-secondary _____
 post-secondary diploma _____
 university degree _____
 graduate degree(s) _____

- 40 What was your personal income from all sources before taxes last year?

less than \$5,000 _____
 5,001 to 10,000 _____
 10,001 to 15,000 _____
 15,001 to 20,000 _____
 20,001 to 25,000 _____
 25,001 to 30,000 _____
 30,001 to 35,000 _____
 35,001 to 40,000 _____
 40,001 to 45,000 _____
 45,001 to 50,000 _____
 Greater than \$50,000 _____

- 41 What was your family income from all sources before taxes last year?

less than \$5,000 _____
 5,001 to 10,000 _____
 10,001 to 15,000 _____
 15,001 to 20,000 _____
 20,001 to 25,000 _____
 25,001 to 30,000 _____
 30,001 to 35,000 _____
 35,001 to 40,000 _____
 40,001 to 45,000 _____
 45,001 to 50,000 _____
 Greater than \$50,000 _____

- 42 This final section is for you to make comments. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?

APPENDIX IV

FATHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR A RESEARCH ON
PARENTS, CHILDBIRTH, INFANT CARE AND WORK
(WORKING TITLE)

DATE OF INTERVIEW _____

TIME OF INTERVIEW _____

Questionnaire

Section A: General questions about the time of child birth.

These first few questions are about the time of the baby's birth.

- 1(a) Was your baby born at a time when you would normally be at work?

yes ___ no ___

- (b) If no, please explain:

baby born after work hours ___
 baby born on weekend or
 statutory holiday ___
 unemployed ___
 not in the labour force ___
 other (explain) ___

- 2(a) Did you attend pre or post natal classes with your spouse/partner.

yes___ no___

- (b) Did you attend the labour, delivery, or both?

labour only___ delivery only___
 both ___ neither ___

- 3(a) Was the baby more than one week early or late, according to the expected date of delivery?

on time (within one week) ___
 early by ___ weeks
 late by ___ weeks
 don't know ___

3(b) If the baby was not on time did this cause you difficulty?

yes___ no___

(c) If yes, what kind of difficulty?

difficult to arrange time off from work___
 difficulty in making care arrangements ___
 for other children or dependents ___
 other (explain) _____

Section B: Employment

These next series of questions are about your employment.

4(a) Are you currently employed for a salary or wage?

yes___ no___

(b) If yes, do you work:

full time _____
 part time _____
 other (explain)_____

4(c) Are you self-employed?

yes___ no___

(d) If yes, do you work in your business:

more than a normal work day
(approximately 8 hours) ___

less than a normal work day ___

(e) What is your occupation?

5 If you are not employed are you:

on special leave _____
laid off _____
a student _____
looking after children at home _____
other (explain) _____

6(a) Are you a member of a union?

yes___ no___

(b) If no, why not?

management _____
no union at work _____
other (explain) _____

7(a) Are you eligible for paternity leave or leave at the time a child is born?

yes___ no___ don't know___

(b) If yes, how long a period are you eligible to be away from work for childbirth/paternity leave?

less than 1 week ___
 1 to 17 weeks ___
 18 to 26 weeks ___
 more than 26 weeks ___
 other (explain) ___

(c) Do you qualify for this leave through the
right to take:

paternity leave ___
 family responsibility leave ___
 time off in lieu of overtime ___
 annual leave ___
 special leave ___
 don't know ___
 other (explain) ___

(d) If you took this leave, did it cause you any difficulty at work?

yes___ no___

7(e) If yes, what kind of problems?

employer's negative reaction _____
 co-worker's negative reaction _____
 loss of opportunity for advancement _____
 other (explain) _____

(f) If no, why were you not eligible?

employer does not grant such leave _____
 didn't work long enough for the _____
 same employer _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

8(a) If you were on leave for childbirth or paternity leave was this leave:

paid_____ unpaid_____

(b) If paid, what % of wages were paid?

% _____

(c) Did you receive any other benefits while away from work?

health insurance coverage _____
 pension premium payments _____
 (employer's share) _____
 other (explain) _____

- 9 If the time you took off from work was partially or totally unpaid, how much money do you estimate that you lost due to time off work?

\$ _____

- 10 What kind of hours do you normally work at your paid job?

days - Monday to Friday (9 to 5) _____
 days - Monday to Friday (flextime) _____
 shifts - regular rotating _____
 day shift - permanent _____
 night shift - permanent _____
 evening shift - permanent _____
 shifts - irregular _____
 non-shifts - irregular _____
 autonomous working hours _____
 don't work at a paid job _____
 other explain _____

- 11 Do you have to work at your job on weekends?

yes, most of the time _____
 sometimes _____
 hardly ever _____
 never _____
 don't work at a paid job _____

- 12(a) Does your work require you to travel?

yes___ no___

- (b) If yes, are you away overnight?

yes___ no___

12(c) If yes, how often are you required to travel?

once a week _____
 once every 2 weeks _____
 once a month _____
 once every 2 to 3 months _____
 twice a year _____
 once a year _____
 away for blocks at a time (explain) _____

other (explain) _____

(d) If you are required to travel, does this cause difficulties with child care arrangements?

quite often _____
 sometimes _____
 rarely _____
 never _____

13(a) Do you feel you have enough time to spend with your child/children?

yes _____ no _____

(b) If no, approximately how many more hours per week would you like to have available?

hours per week _____

Section C: Attitude Towards Parental Leave

This section is about how you feel about leave for childbirth and the care of the baby.

- 14 As you know most mothers in the paid labour force can get leave from work at the time of birth of a baby or when they adopt. Do you think this leave should be available to all mothers who are in the labour force?

yes _____ no _____
 mixed feelings _____ don't know _____

- 15 Adoptive fathers are eligible for leave from work around the time of adoption, sharing, at the family discretion, that time with the adoptive mother. The federal government has just announced that either natural fathers or natural mothers who have paid U.I. premiums for the required number of weeks will be eligible for unemployment insurance, for parental leave, for a ten week period after the expiration of the mothers 15 weeks of maternity benefits, starting in January, 1990. Do you think natural fathers should be eligible for leave around the time of birth of a child, and have time off from work to share infant care?

yes _____ no _____
 mixed feelings _____ don't know _____

- 16(a) Should leave for the mother be paid or unpaid?

paid _____ unpaid _____ other (explain) _____

16(b) If you think it should be paid, who should pay
for it?

employer _____
 employer/employee, through U.I. _____
 employer plus U.I. _____
 other parental insurance system _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

17(a) Should leave for the father be paid?

yes _____ no _____
 mixed feelings _____ don't know _____

(b) If you think it should be paid, who should pay
for it?

employer _____
 employer/employee, through U.I. _____
 employer plus U.I. _____
 other parental insurance system _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

18(a) How much time should be available for leave
for childbirth and infant care for the father?

a few days at the time of birth _____
 1 week _____
 2 weeks _____
 2 to 17 weeks _____
 18 to 26 weeks _____
 more than 26 weeks _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

- 18(b) How much time should be available for leave for childbirth and infant care for the mother?

a few days at the time of birth___
 1 week _____
 2 weeks _____
 2 to 17 weeks _____
 18 to 26 weeks _____
 more than 26 weeks _____
 don't know _____
 other (explain) _____

- 19 Should parents be able to share the part of the leave designated for infant care, at their discretion?

yes___ no___ don't know___

- 20 If equal sharing of paid infant care leave were available for both parents now, would you and your spouse/partner take advantage of the shared leave?

yes___ no___ don't know___

Section D: Involvement of parents with child care and household tasks.

These next series of questions are related to how you organize household tasks and child care.

21. Who in your family most often does the following tasks?

	Father much more than mother	Father more than mother	Father & Mother equally	Mother much more than father	Mother more than father	Other, explain.
a. housecleaning						
b. cooking/preparing meals						
c. doing dishes						
d. doing laundry						
e. home maintenance						
f. organizing the family's recreation						
g. help with homework						
h. arranging for alternate child care (e.g.) evening babysitters and/or child care while at work						
i. feeding the baby						
j. getting up at night with the baby						
k. getting up at night with the other children						
l. bathing the baby and/or other children						
m. playing with/reading to the baby/other children						
n. staying home from work if the baby or other children are sick						
o. changing the baby and/or other children in diapers						
p. food shopping						
q. car maintenance						

- 22(a) In your household, who takes most responsibility to make sure household/child care tasks are done? Responsibility for purposes of this research, does not mean that the person who takes responsibility always does the tasks, but that the person does them or arranges to have them done.

mother _____
 father _____
 shared equally _____
 other (explain) _____

- 22(b) How do you feel about the way responsibility is taken for these tasks?

very satisfied ___ satisfied ___
 neutral ___ dissatisfied ___
 very dissatisfied ___

- (c) If you are not satisfied with the way responsibility is taken for these tasks, what is the main barrier preventing change in the way the family responsibilities are divided?

spouse/partner unwilling to change ___
 traditional way we've done things never
 discussed change _____
 work schedules _____
 other (explain) _____

Section E: Parent satisfaction.

Now I would like to ask you some questions about how you feel about your present life.

23 How satisfied are you with being a parent?

very satisfied ___
satisfied ___
somewhat satisfied ___
very dissatisfied ___
dissatisfied ___

24 How would you compare your satisfaction as a parent with other parents you know?

much greater ___
greater ___
same ___
much less ___
less ___

- 25 Every kind of work has certain day to day satisfaction, but some people find some kinds of work more satisfying than others. Compared with other kinds of work you do, how would you rate the satisfaction of caring for children?

much more satisfying ___
somewhat more satisfying___
equally satisfying ___
somewhat less satisfying___
much less satisfying ___

Section F: Demographic Information

These next few questions are related to characteristics about you and your family. These are the final few questions.

- 26 What is your age in years?

years___

- 27 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

less than high school ___
high school graduation___
some post-secondary ___
post-secondary diploma___
university degree ___
graduate degree(s) ___



