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EXAMINING EMPLOYEE USE OF
FAMILY-FRIENDLY BENEFITS
WITH THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

by

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M.S. University of Central Florida, 1999

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of Psychology
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Major Professor: Barbara A. Fritzsche

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the factors that may be related to employees' decisions to use the family-friendly benefits (e.g., maternity/paternity leave, flexible work schedule) that are offered to them by their employers. Research has shown that both employees and organizations benefit when employees use family-friendly benefits. However, research has also shown that many employees do not take advantage of such benefits. Studies examining this issue are limited, and much of the research that has been conducted is anecdotal and atheoretical. The present study overcame this problem by empirically examining the use of family-friendly benefits within the theoretical context of Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior. The results of this study support the theory of planned behavior. Specifically, the results indicated that whether an individual perceived he/she had control over the use of family-friendly benefits was the most predictive of whether he/she intended to use them. Whether the individual perceived that others would approve of these behaviors was also predictive of intention to perform the behaviors. In addition, an individual's intention to take leave or use a flexible work schedule was the most predictive of whether he or she actually engaged in the behaviors. Implications for practice as well as future research directions are also discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

The demographics of the workforce are continually changing (Mor Barak, 2000; Offermann & Gowing, 1990). In 1998, 60% of women participated in the labor force (Cleveland, Stockdale, & Murphy, 2000). This is up from 1970, when only 43% of women participated in the labor force, and from 1980, when 50% of women engaged in paid work (Cleveland et al., 2000). Of these women, mothers with infants represent one of the fastest growing segments of this labor market (Offermann & Gowing, 1990), with 62% of mothers with children under the age of 6 participating in the labor force. In addition, 75% of mothers with children between the ages of 6 and 17 are employed (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). As the number of working women increases, so does the number of dual-earner families (Perlow, 1995; Zedeck, 2000). Zedeck and Mosier (1990) define a dual-earner family as one in which “both partners regularly participate in less personally involving paid market work, mainly out of economic necessity” (p. 242). In the 1990’s, approximately 40% of the workforce was comprised of dual-earner couples (Zedeck, 2000).

The large participation of mothers in the workforce is in stark contrast to the days of the breadwinning husband and the homemaking wife. In fact, only 10% of U.S. households are comprised of this traditional single-earner relationship (Cleveland et al., 2000). There are multiple reasons for the increasing number of mothers in the workforce. Many households cannot be supported fully by just one partner’s income (Cleveland et al., 2000). Further, women earn more than their spouses in many dual-career couples, and thus these families are becoming more dependent on the woman’s economic contribution (Blau, Ferber, & Winkler, 1998). In addition, women also have an interest in pursuing meaningful careers (Shamir, 2000). These careers are important for women as research suggests that having a career has a positive impact

on a woman's self-esteem and emotional well-being (Cleveland et al., 2000). As more and more mothers enter and participate in the workforce, these women will increasingly be faced with the challenge of balancing work and family.

The challenge of balancing work and family, however, is not solely a "women's issue." The influx of women and mothers into the workforce will also result in a greater need for men to take on childcare responsibilities (Allen, Russell, & Rush, 1994; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1997). This is coupled with the fact that men want to spend more time with their children (Gerson, 1993; Haas & Hwang, 1995). For instance, research has indicated that most men view their work role as less important than their family role, and many are worried that they do not spend enough time with their children (Haas & Hwang, 1995). Research has also found that many men want the option of staying home with a sick child or the opportunity to stay at home or work part-time when children are young (Haas & Hwang, 1995; Williams, 2000). In one study, 75% of the men surveyed indicated they would choose the "daddy track" over the fast track (cited in Williams, 2000). This research suggests that men, like women, are increasingly confronted with the issue of balancing work and family.

It is not just dual-earner couples who must deal with work and family issues; single parents also comprise a large proportion of the workforce. In fact, single-parent families comprise 23% of the workforce and represent the fastest growing segment (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). Aside from childcare responsibilities, many employees have elder care responsibilities. Friedman, 1991 (as cited in Friedman & Galinsky, 2000) reported that 20% of employed individuals provide care for an elder family member. Further, there are many employed women who, although currently childless, will eventually have children. Cleveland et al. (2000) reports that 80% of employed women are of childbearing age, and of these women,

90% will become pregnant. All of these individuals, parents and caregivers of aging relatives, will have to find a way to balance work and family.

Family-Friendly Benefits

To attract and help employees with family responsibilities, an increasing number of organizations are adopting family-friendly benefits (Allen et al., 1994; Gueutal, Luciano, & Michaels, 1995; Haas & Hwang, 1995; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Family-friendly benefits have been defined as “services that enable employees to better manage the interface between work and family” (Thompson et al., 1999, p. 395). Businesses now recognize that organizational policies related to balancing work and family facilitate the retention of productive employees in a competitive job market, thus maintaining organizational productivity (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Scharlach, 2001; Friedman & Galinsky, 2000; Haas & Hwang, 1995; Halpert & Burg, 1997). Galinsky, Bond, and Friedman (1993) found that work-life balance was among the three most important factors that job applicants consider when accepting a new job (cited in Rau & Hyland, 2002).

Two studies (Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997; Rau & Hyland, 2002) have empirically examined applicant attraction to organizations that offer family-friendly benefits. Not surprisingly, these studies have typically found that individuals are attracted to organizations that are family-friendly. For instance, a study conducted by Rau and Hyland (2002) in which participants read a recruitment brochure for a fictitious firm and indicated their attraction to the organization, found that individuals with a high level of work-family conflict were more attracted to the organization that offered a flexible schedule than an organization that did not. Honeycutt and Rosen (1997) obtained similar results. They provided an announcement for a

hypothetical job opening to a sample of 263 individuals, the majority of whom (89%) were employed full time. The announcements were manipulated such that each one offered one of three types of career paths: tradition, dual, or flexible. A tradition career path was defined as one in which employees were required to put their careers ahead of their families. A dual career path was one in which employees could choose to put their careers first or choose a career that would allow them to balance work and family. Finally, a flexible career path was defined as one in which the organization offers benefits and leave policies that allow employees to take care of family responsibilities without sacrificing their ability to get rewards at work. Each participant read one of the three announcements and completed a measure of their attraction to the organization. The results indicated that individuals were more attracted to the organization that offered flexible career paths (Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997). In summary, research indicates that work-life balance is important to applicants and that applicants are attracted to organizations that are family-friendly.

Several types of family-friendly benefits exist, and they are typically categorized into maternity and parental leave, child and dependent care programs, alternative work schedules and locations, and employee assistance and relocation programs (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 requires that all private sector employers of 50 or more individuals provide their employees with up to 12 weeks unpaid leave following the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child (Cascio, 1998). Although the law does not require it, some organizations offer fully or partially paid parental leave (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Childcare can range from company sponsored, on-site daycare centers to payment for off-site childcare (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). The alternative work schedule is typically one of two types – flexible work schedules and part-time employment (Friedman &

Galinsky, 2000; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Organizations that offer employees a flexible work schedule allow them to schedule their day such that the employee chooses when to begin and end work each day, so long as he or she works a full day and works during a “core” period of the day (Pleck, 1993; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Telecommuting is another common benefit that organizations offer in an attempt to help employees manage their jobs and families.

Telecommuting allows employees to perform job assignments away from the office, and then electronically transfer this work to the office (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

Benefits for Employees and their Families of Family Friendly Benefits

It has been widely noted that there is a lack of empirical research concerning the positive effects of family-friendly benefits on employees (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, & Neuman, 1999; Hill, Miller, Weiner, & Colihan, 1998). However, the research that has been conducted suggests that there are several personal and work-related advantages for both the employees who utilize family-friendly benefits and the organizations that offer them. Concerning personal outcomes for employees, Winett and Neal (1980) found that individuals who engaged in a flexible work schedule spent more time with their spouse and children (Pleck, 1993). Similarly, a study by Maklan, (1977) found that men who worked a compressed work week (e.g., a four-day, 40-hour work week) spent more time with their children. In addition to having more time with their working parents, children may also benefit in other ways when parents not only have careers, but also use family-friendly benefits. Research has found that children in dual-career families are more independent than those in traditional families (Cleveland et al., 2000). In addition, children whose mothers have careers also have higher self-esteem than those whose mothers do not have careers. Thus, organizations that offer and encourage the use of family-friendly benefits afford

parents the opportunity to not only spend additional time with their children, but also the chance to enhance their children's self esteem and independence. Because children are our society's future, when organizations offer family-friendly benefits, not only do parents benefit, society as a whole benefits as well.

Thomas and Ganster (1995) also demonstrated that utilizing family-friendly benefits, such as flexible scheduling, related to positive outcomes, including reduced stress and depression. Thomas and Ganster surveyed 398 employees about the availability of family-supportive policies and family-supportive supervisors, and assessed their job satisfaction, work-family conflict, psychological and behavioral indicants of strain, depression, blood pressure, and cholesterol level. Results indicated that supervisor support was positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to work-family conflict. In addition, employee use of flexible schedules was negatively related to somatic complaints. Finally, supervisor support was indirectly related to lower levels of depression and cholesterol through its effects on work-family conflict. Although causality cannot be established in this study, the results suggest that family-supportive policies and family-supportive supervisors may lessen the stress related to managing multiple roles and are related to lower depression, somatic complaints, and blood cholesterol.

In a meta-analysis of 39 studies on flextime and compressed work weeks, Baltes et al. (1999) found that flextime was associated with greater productivity and job satisfaction, as well as satisfaction with one's work schedule (Baltes et al., 1999). In addition, participation in a compressed workweek was positively related to job satisfaction and satisfaction with one's work schedule. Hill et al. (1998) obtained similar results when they examined the effects of telecommuting on several work-related variables. Using a quasi-experimental design, they surveyed 249 IBM employees, some of whom worked in a traditional office and others who

worked from home. The results of the survey indicated that individuals who telecommuted reported higher levels of productivity and greater flexibility in the timing and location of work (Hill et al., 1998).

Benefits to the Organization of Family-Friendly Benefits

There are also several advantages to organizations when they offer and employees utilize family-friendly benefits. Generally, family-friendly benefits seem to increase retention and productivity of employees. For example, Grover and Crooker (1995) surveyed 1,517 individuals employed at organizations across the country concerning the availability of family-friendly benefits such as flexible scheduling, maternity and paternity leave, and childcare assistance at their place of employment. They also assessed participants' affective commitment and turnover intention. Affective commitment was defined as a "value-sharing, attitudinal attachment to the organization involving components of pride and loyalty" (Grover & Crooker, 1995, p. 273). Individuals working for organizations with family-friendly benefits had more affective commitment and less intention to leave than individuals working for organizations without such benefits. Scandura and Lankau (1997) also found that flexible work hours were positively associated with organizational commitment. Similarly, Toney, Ellis, and Graczyk (2001) found that a supportive organizational work/life culture was positively related to affective commitment.

A study by Flye, Agars, and Kottke (2003) also found positive benefits associated with family-friendly organizations. In their study, Flye et al. surveyed 313 employees working at 17 organizations. Specifically, they assessed perceptions of three variables: organizational work-family culture, presence of work-family policies, and supervisory support. Flye et al. defined a work-family culture as one in which "there are no negative career implications for employees

who utilize work-family policies, there are no expectations that employees prioritize work above family nor are there expectations that employees need to work extremely long hours to be viewed favorably by management, [and] employees perceive management to be sensitive about their family responsibilities” (p. 2). They assessed organizational attachment using scales of affective, continuance, and normative commitment, as well as turnover intention. Flye et al., (2003) found that both perceptions of a work-family culture and of supervisor support were positively related to organizational attachment. Because organizational commitment is negatively related to intentions to search for another job and leave an organization, (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) these studies suggest that if organizations want to keep valuable employees, they should strive for a culture that supports work/life balance.

Flexible work schedules (Baltes et al., 1999; Friedman & Galinsky, 2000; Latack & Foster, 1985), part-time work, including the option of job sharing (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990), and telecommuting (Friedman & Galinski, 2000) have all been shown to increase productivity, and to decrease absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover. For instance, the National Council of Jewish Women found that women who worked for organizations that made accommodations such as job-protected leave and flexible schedules took fewer sick days, and were more likely to return to work after maternity leave (Friedman & Galinski, 2000). They also reported greater job satisfaction (Friedman & Galinski, 2000). According to Toney et al. (2001), turnover is an important variable to examine as it is related to increased recruitment and training costs. In sum, research indicates that there are several benefits to both individuals and organizations that result when family-friendly benefits are utilized, including the ability to spend more time with children, reduced stress and depression, greater job satisfaction, organizational loyalty and commitment, increased productivity, lowered absenteeism and tardiness.

Disadvantages of Family-Friendly Benefits

Although the aforementioned research indicates that there are several advantages to utilizing family-friendly benefits, there may also be disadvantages, such as strained family relationships and increased stress (Rau & Hyland, 2002). Specifically, Kurland and Bailey (1999) propose that strained family relationships may result if an individual's spouse and or children do not respect home office boundaries (Rau & Hyland, 2002). In addition, an individual's level of stress may increase if he or she cannot separate his or her work and family selves (Boston College Center for Work and Family, 2000, as cited in Rau & Hyland, 2002). However, empirical evidence is minimal regarding any disadvantages that are associated with the use of family friendly benefits. One study (Martens, Nijhuis, Van Boxtel, & Knottnerus, 1999) found that flexible work schedules were associated with greater health complaints and lower psychological well being. However, these flexible schedules were in the form of continuous hours, temporary contracts, irregular working hours, and were not necessarily used as a means to balance work and family (Martens et al., 1999).

Employee Use of Family-Friendly Benefits

Despite the advantages associated with using family-friendly benefits, and the fact that employees are more attracted to organizations that offer them, research has shown that many employees have elected not to use these benefits (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Scharlach, 2001; Powell, 1999). Galinsky et al. (1993) found that less than 2% of employees at 80 large US companies participated in programs designed to help employees balance their work and family lives. In addition, a study conducted by Finkel, Olswang, and She (1994) found that only 30% of

female professors took the full amount of paid leave offered to them following the birth of a child. In fact, 40% opted not to take any leave at all. Although women have been reluctant to take advantage of family-friendly benefits, research has shown that men are even less inclined (Pleck, 1993). For instance, rather than taking advantage of benefits such as paternity leave, men typically take a few vacation days following the birth of a child (Pleck, 1993). This is in stark contrast to research that indicates that men want to spend more time with their children (e.g., Haas & Hwang, 1995; Williams, 2000) and begs the question, “Why aren’t employees using family-friendly benefits?”

Barriers to Employee Use of Family-Friendly Benefits.

Although little empirical research exists, Fredriksen-Goldsen and Scharlach (2001) suggest that an employee’s level of income is the greatest barrier to the utilization of leave following the birth of a child. If leave is unpaid, many employees cannot afford the loss of income and choose not to take leave (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Scharlach, 2001). No empirical research, however, was found to support this notion.

Researchers have also suggested that many employees may be hesitant to utilize family-friendly benefits for fear of negative consequences (Finkel et al., 1994; Haas & Hwang, 1995; Perlow, 1995; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). This fear may stem from perceptions that organizations view employees with family responsibilities as less committed (Lyness, Thompson, Francesco, & Judiesch, 1999). Specifically, the culture of many organizations often supports the belief that “career dedication should be measured by the amount of time an employee spends at work, that career paths should be straight and uninterrupted, and that parental leave is only appropriate for employees not on the fast track” (Lyness et al., 1999, p.

491). Organizations often “superimpose” family-friendly benefits onto this traditional work culture, sending conflicting messages to employees about their use (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Scharlach, 2001). Thus, if an organization values and rewards employees who spend long hours at work, employees may be less likely to take advantage of family friendly benefits such as leave and part-time work, because such benefits contradict organizational culture (Lyness et al., 1999).

Although the empirical research is sparse, the studies that have been conducted support the notion that employees are hesitant to use family-friendly benefits for fear of negative repercussions. For instance, a field study conducted by Perlow (1995) found that one of the barriers that employees face in their attempt to balance their work and family lives is the underlying assumption that an employee’s presence at work is directly related to his or her contribution to the job. In addition, Finkel et al. (1994) found that in a sample of male and female faculty members, 70% felt that taking leave would be detrimental to them professionally. In addition, 56% of the sample indicated that their department would pressure them to return to work following childbirth, despite leave policies. They further reported that this pressure would affect the leave they chose to take.

Haas and Hwang (1995) examined the “father-friendliness” of an organization and its relationship to fathers’ use of family leave. Father-friendliness refers to the extent to which the organization’s culture supported men in parenting roles (Haas & Hwang, 1995). Results of this study indicated that very few of the 200 largest companies in Sweden had cultures that supported men’s use of family-friendly policies. Specifically, these men reported that they perceived that their coworkers and supervisors felt that work should be their prime focus in life and that organizational commitment should be gauged by the employee’s willingness to work long hours (Haas & Hwang, 1995).

A study conducted by Judiesch and Lyness (1999) suggests that employees' fears about maternity or paternity leaves resulting in negative repercussions may be warranted. In their study of over eleven-thousand managers, Judiesch and Lyness (1999) examined the relationship between taking a leave of absence and career success. A leave of absence was defined as "a paid or unpaid employer-approved period of time away from work during which an employee remains continuously employed (p. 641). Leaves of absence could be taken for medical reasons or to take care of family responsibilities. Career success was operationalized as promotions, percent increase in salary, and performance ratings. The results of the study found that there was a negative relationship between taking a leave of absence and performance evaluations made that same year. In addition, individuals who took a leave of absence had fewer subsequent promotions and smaller salary increases. These negative career repercussions did not differ based on whether the leave was for illness or to take care of family responsibilities, which suggests that it is the leave itself rather than the reason for the leave that resulted in negative career repercussions.

Statement of the Problem

Research has shown that the number of women entering the workforce is increasing, as is the number of dual-earner and single parent families (Mor Barak, 2000; Offermann & Gowing, 1990; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999; Perlow, 1995; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Further, more and more individuals are becoming responsible for the care of aging relatives (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). These trends mean that more and more employees, men and women alike, will continue to be faced with the challenge of balancing work and family. In response to this, organizations are increasingly offering family-friendly benefits as a way to attract employees and

help them manage their family responsibilities (Allen et al., 1994; Gueutal et al., 1995; Haas & Hwang, 1995; Thompson et al., 1999; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

Evidence suggests that there are several advantages for the employees who use family-friendly benefits, such as reduced stress, depression, somatic complaints, and cholesterol, and increased job satisfaction and productivity (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Scandura & Lankau, 1997; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Indeed, individuals who are looking for new positions are attracted to organizations that offer family friendly benefits (Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997; Rau & Hyland, 2002). Yet ironically, according to empirical research, most employees do not utilize these benefits (Finkel et al., 1994; Galinski et al., 1993). There appears to be low correspondence between employees' attitudes toward family-friendly benefits and their actual behavior. Generally speaking, this may not be all that surprising given the large amount of literature documenting little or no direct relationship between attitude and behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Rokeach, 1980; Wicker, 1969). However, attitudes are only one of many possible determinants of intentions, which have been shown to be the immediate determinant of behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Fishbein, 1979). This position forms the foundation of Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior (see Figure 1) provides a parsimonious theoretical depiction of the links between beliefs and behavior and can be used to identify important predictors of intention and behavior (Parker, Stradling, & Manstead, 1996). This theory is an improvement over previously unsuccessful attempts to predict behaviors from general dispositions, personality traits, and locus of control (Ajzen, 1991). The theory has been applied

to a variety of domains, including leisure pursuits (Ajzen & Driver, 1992), exercise (Theodorakis, 1994), obeying the law (Parker, Stradling, & Manstead, 1996), condom use (Reinecke, Schmidt, & Ajzen, 1996), and abortion (Petkova, Ajzen, & Driver, 1995). Within these domains, the theory of planned behavior has been validated with a multitude of behaviors ranging from “very simple strategy choices in laboratory games to actions of appreciable personal and social significance” (Ajzen & Madden, 1986, p. 454-455). For example, in the case of behaviors such as exercise and condom use, the theory of planned behavior has been instrumental in identifying the factors related to engaging in these behaviors. This information can be used to develop interventions to encourage healthy behaviors, such as condom use and exercise, and discourage negative behaviors, such as disobeying the law (Parker, Stradling, & Manstead, 1996).

The theory of planned behavior is based on the assumption that humans are rational beings who systematically use the information available to them to guide their behavioral intentions (Fishbein, 1979). In this theory, intention is defined as the subjective probability that an individual will perform some behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The theory asserts that there are three predictors of an individual’s intention to perform some behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). These predictors include attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. An individual’s attitude toward performing the behavior is defined as “the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question” (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). The theory further asserts that an individual’s attitude toward performing a behavior is a function of the perceived consequences of performing that behavior, as well as the individual’s evaluation of those consequences (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The relationship between these components of the theory are depicted in the following formula: A_B

$\propto \sum b_i e_i$, where A_B refers to the individual's attitude toward performing the behavior B, b_i = the individual's belief that performing behavior B will result in consequences, and e_i = the individual's evaluation of the outcome, I (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

The second predictor, subjective norm, is defined as “the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior” (Ajzen, 1991, p.188). As with attitudes toward a behavior, subjective norms are also a function of two components: normative belief and motivation to comply. Specifically, $SN \propto \sum b_i m_i$, where b_i = normative belief and m_i = motivation to comply (Ajzen, 1991). According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), normative beliefs are the expectations that individuals perceive referent others to have. Referent others could include family members, friends, a supervisor, or society as a whole (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Motivation to comply refers to the individual's desire to submit to these expectations.

Finally, perceived behavioral control refers to an individual's “perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior of interest” (Ajzen, 1991, p. 183). This third predictor of intentions takes into account the fact that even though an individual may have a positive attitude toward performing the behavior and view the subjective norms regarding the act as favorable, he or she may have doubts concerning the feasibility of performing the behavior (Pinder, 1998). Perceived behavioral control is depicted by the following formula: $PBC \propto \sum c_i p_i$, where c_i refers to control belief and p refers to the perceived power a control factor has to facilitate or inhibit performance of the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

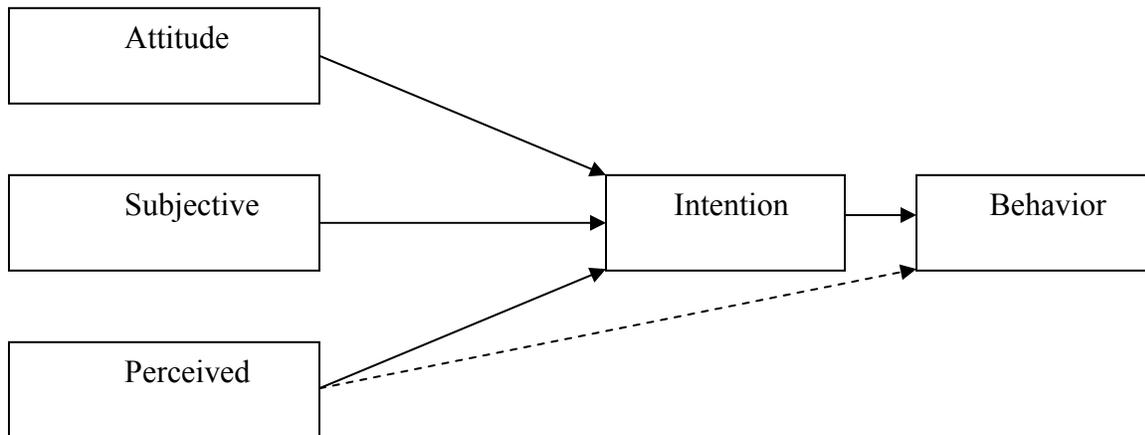


Figure 1: Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior

According to Ajzen (1991), the more favorable the individual's attitude toward and subjective norm about the behavior and the greater his or her perceived behavioral control, the stronger the individual's intention to perform the behavior. In addition, the relative importance of these three factors in the prediction of intention will vary across behaviors and situations, such that in some situations, only attitudes have a significant impact on intentions whereas in others, all three factors contribute to the prediction of intentions (Ajzen, 1991). For example, in Theodorakis's (1994) study of exercise behavior, attitudes toward and perceived behavioral control over this behavior contributed to the prediction of intentions to exercise, but subjective norms did not. In Reinecke, Schmidt, & Ajzen (1996) study of condom use, however, all three variables contributed to the prediction of intentions to use condoms.

Concerning the prediction of actual behavior, there are two versions of the theory of planned behavior. These versions differ in the role that perceived behavioral control plays in the prediction of the actual behavior. In the first version of the theory, the effect that perceived

behavioral control has on behavior is completely mediated by intention. In the second version of the theory, perceived behavioral control along with an individual's intention to perform a behavior directly predict whether he or she will perform the behavior (Ajzen and Madden, 1986). The theory further asserts that the stronger an individual's intention to perform a behavior, the greater the likelihood that he or she will actually perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

As noted earlier, Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior has received much empirical support for its ability to predict and explain an individual's behavior in a wide variety of specific situations (Ajzen, 1991; Prislin & Kovrlija, 1992; Reinecke, Schmidt, & Ajzen, 1996; Schifter & Ajzen, 1985; Theodorakis, 1994). For example, Ajzen (1991) reviewed the results of 16 studies that examined the prediction of behavioral intentions from the aforementioned variables and found that the average multiple correlation was .71. In addition, Prislin and Kovrlija (1992) obtained a multiple R of .62 when attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control were used to predict class attendance. Also, Theodorakis (1994) obtained a multiple correlation of .58 between the three predictors and intentions to exercise. Similarly, in his investigation of exercise, Kimiecik (1992) obtained a multiple correlation of .66. Kimiecik also found that intentions and perceived behavioral control accounted for 49% of the variance in engaging in exercise. The results of the aforementioned studies clearly demonstrate that behavioral intention can largely be predicted by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, as specified in Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior.

Additional Predictors

One limitation of the theory of planned behavior is its omission of dispositional variables (Brown, 1999). According to Ajzen (1991), the theory of planned behavior is open to the inclusion of additional predictors if it can be demonstrated that these predictors explain a significant amount of variance in intentions and behaviors above and beyond the variables in the theory. In Theodorakis's (1994) study of exercise behaviors, Theodorakis could better predict exercise behavior by including attitude strength and role identity as predictors. Similarly, Charng, Piliavin, and Callero (1988) found that the addition of role identity improved the prediction of blood donation over and above attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Theodorakis, 1994).

Schifter and Ajzen (1985) included ego strength as a predictor in their study of weight reduction behavior. The authors hypothesized that individuals with high ego strength would be more likely to follow through with their intentions to lose weight. They found that ego strength moderated the relationship between intentions and behaviors such that this relationship was stronger for individuals with high ego strength. As with the studies conducted by Theodorakis (1994) and Charng et al. (1988), Schifter and Ajzen's results suggest that the theory of planned behavior can be enhanced by the inclusion of additional predictors.

There may also be other variables outside of Ajzen's (1991) theory that are related to intentions to use family-friendly benefits, such as identity salience, work-family conflict, and gender. Identity theory, for example, may also provide additional insight into how individuals make decisions concerning the use of family-friendly benefits. Originated by Stryker (1968), identity theory postulates that individuals occupy a variety of social roles, including spouse, parent, and employee (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1995). These social roles form the basis of an

individual's identity, and these identities, in turn, give an individual a sense of purpose in life (Thoits, 1991). A key concept of identity theory is the notion that these identities guide an individual's behavior (Desrochers, Andreassi, & Thompson, 2002; Thoits, 1991). Identity theory further asserts that individuals differ in regards to the salience of each role they occupy, such that for one individual, his or her role as a spouse may be more salient than his or her role as an employee (Frone et al., 1995). It is these differences in role significance that lead to differences in identity salience.

Identity salience is defined as "the probability of invoking [the identity] in a given situation or across different situations" (Nuttbrock & Freudiger, 1991, p. 147). Specifically, the various identities that an individual possesses exist in a hierarchy of salience, such that the identities that are highest in the hierarchy are most likely to be invoked in situations that involve various aspects of an individual (Desrochers, et al., 2002). One such situation could be a male employee whose wife has just given birth to a child. It could be argued that someone whose family identity is higher on his or her salience hierarchy than his or her work identity would utilize family-friendly benefits, whereas someone whose work identity is higher would chose not to utilize family-friendly benefits.

Research has generally supported identity theory. For instance, Nuttbrock and Freudiger (1991) studied the relationship between the salience of mothering identity and various mothering behaviors. Identity salience was defined as the tendency to invoke a mothering identity while in the presence of friends, and was measured by asking participants to indicate the extent to which they talk about and show pictures of their children (Nuttbrock & Freudiger, 1991). The mothering behaviors included burden acceptance, conceptualized as a willingness to perform the parenting role, and personal sacrifice, defined as a willingness to provide time, energy and

resources for a child (Nuttbrock & Freudiger, 1991). Results suggested that identity salience was positively related to the mothering behaviors of burden acceptance and personal sacrifice such that the greater a woman's mothering identity, the more likely she was to perform the parenting role without assistance from others and sacrifice time, energy, and resources for the sake of her child.

Lobel and St. Clair's (1992) research also supports identity theory. They examined the relationship between career identity salience and an employee's work effort. Using a sample of 795 employed individuals who were either married and/or had children, they found a positive relationship between career identity salience and work effort. A positive relationship between identity salience and role behavior was also found in Stryker and Serpe's (1982) research on religious activity such that the higher an individual's religious identity salience, the more hours he or she spent per week participating in religious activities. Callero's (1985) study of blood donation also found a positive relationship between identity salience and donating in that the higher the individual's reported blood donor identity salience, the more times he or she donated blood during a 6 month time period. The findings of these studies support the notion that identity salience motivates an individual to perform behaviors in support of that identity and suggest that identity may be an important variable to include in the study of family-friendly benefit usage.

Role conflict is another variable that may be related to one's use of family-friendly benefits. As noted earlier, Rau and Hyland (2002) found that individuals with high role-conflict were more attracted to an organization that offered a flexible work arrangement than one that did not. In contrast, those with low role conflict were slightly less attracted to the same organization (Rau & Hyland, 2002). The authors argued that a flexible work schedule is appealing to those

with high role conflict because it provides them away to deal with competing demands from work and family. For those with low conflict, the appeal of a flexible work schedule may be minimal.

Gender-role theory may add additional insight into benefit usage. Gender-role theory asserts that society holds expectations for the appropriate behaviors in which men and women should engage (Judiesch & Lyness, 1999). Specifically, men are expected to adopt the role of the breadwinner, and women the role of caretaker (Bailyn, 1993; Judiesch & Lyness, 1999). To perform their role as breadwinner, men are often expected to work late, travel, and have uninterrupted careers (Doss, 2003; Judiesch & Lyness, 1999). Men may thus refrain from using family-friendly benefits to conform to society's expectations for them. In addition, Pleck (1993) asserts that men who attempt to accommodate family-related responsibilities by engaging in a flexible work schedule may find it easier to let co-workers believe that something other than family responsibilities is motivating his schedule.

Because women are expected to adopt the caretaker role, they may feel more comfortable using family-friendly benefits. However, research (e.g., Finkel et al., 1994) indicates that like men, women are making a similar choice not to use these benefits. Women may refrain from utilizing family-friendly benefits for fear that they will be seen as less committed or that others will feel that if they cannot balance work and family on their own, they should not be doing both (Starrels, 1992). In addition, because gender stereotypes already result in women receiving lower performance evaluations than men (Cleveland, 2000), women may refrain from using family-friendly benefits so as not to give supervisors another reason to give them negative evaluations.

Fishbein (1979) provides a lengthy discussion about “external variables,” such as dispositional and personality variables, and their relationship to the predictors contained within the theory of planned behavior. Fishbein (1979) asserts that these variables influence intentions indirectly by influencing the predictors of intention (e.g., an individual’s attitude toward the behavior). Fishbein (1979) presented the results of a study conducted by Jaccard and Davidson (1975) that investigated women’s intentions to have a child in the next two years. They found that all of the external variables that were significantly related to intention to have a child in the next two years (e.g., attitude toward working, religiosity, age) were also significantly related to the women’s attitude toward the same behavior (Fishbein, 1979). Further, they found that the external variables that were not related to behavioral intentions (e.g., need for achievement, self-esteem, income) were also not related to attitudes toward the behavior, suggesting that for an external variable to be related to intention, it must first be related to attitudes toward the behavior. These results support Fishbein’s (1979) notion that these external variables influence behavioral intention indirectly through their effect on the predictors of intention. Further examination of these external variables can shed light on individual differences in attitudes and subjective norms and ultimately increase our knowledge of individuals’ intentions to engage in a particular behavior. As such, the present study will examine the relationship between the “external variables” mentioned earlier (e.g., identity salience, work-family conflict) and participants’ attitudes toward and subjective norms regarding the use of family-friendly benefits.

The Present Study

Due to the limited amount and the anecdotal nature of much of the research in the area of family-friendly benefit utilization, the present study empirically examined the factors that may

be related to an individual's decision to utilize family-friendly benefits. Some of the family-friendly benefit research cited earlier suggests that predictors within the theory of planned behavior may be related to an individual's intention to use such benefits. For example, research (e.g., Finkel et al., 1994; Haas & Hwang, 1995) has suggested that employees feel that co-workers and supervisors would view them negatively if they used family-friendly benefits. This research appears to measure what Ajzen (1991) refers to as normative beliefs. In addition, Finkel et al., (1994) found that more than half of their study participants anticipated that their department would pressure them to shorten their parental leave time and that this pressure would in turn influence their decision on the length of leave. This research appears to assess what Ajzen (1991) refers to as motivation to comply. In light of Ajzen's (1991) theory, the present study further examined the relationships between attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control and intentions to use family-friendly benefits as well as the relationship between intentions and perceived behavioral control and actual use of family-friendly benefits. The study also examined whether additional variables, including identity salience, work-family conflict, and gender, were related to predictors within the theory of planned behavior. Participants included two groups of individuals; pregnant women who worked full time while pregnant and men who were married to pregnant women who worked full time while pregnant.

The present study focused on two distinct behaviors: taking maternity/paternity leave and engaging in a flexible work schedule so as to handle childcare responsibilities. Each component of Ajzen's (1991) theory was measured to test the applicability of the theory of planned behavior as it pertains to employees' attitudes toward taking maternity/paternity and engaging in a flexible work schedule. In addition, each component was measured to determine its relative importance in the prediction of employee's intention to engage in these behaviors and actually engaging in

these behaviors. Data was collected in two phases. In the first phase, participants were asked about their attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and intentions, as well as their career and family identity salience and work-family conflict. In the second phase, participants were asked about their actual use of the family-friendly benefits noted above.

This study was important for several reasons. As noted earlier, research in this area is limited, and much of the research that has been conducted is anecdotal and atheoretical. The present study overcame this problem by empirically examining the use of family-friendly benefits within the theoretical context of Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior. This study also increased our knowledge of the three factors - attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control – and how they predict whether an individual will use family-friendly benefits. This study also shed light on the relationships between use of family-friendly benefits, and the additional possible predictor variables, such as identity salience and role conflict.

From a practical perspective, given the advantages of utilizing family-friendly benefits, and yet hesitancy of employees to use such benefits, the results of this study can provide an impetus to enhance their usage. Fishbein and Middlestadt (1987) assert that the more known about the factors underlying a decision to perform a given behavior, the better the chances of influencing that decision (Theodorakis, 1994, p. 149). Thus, by examining the factors related to an employee's decision to utilize family-friendly benefits, interventions can target any factor or factors(s) that may decrease an employee's intention to utilize them, potentially helping employees overcome their reluctance to use these benefits (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999).

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were made:

- H1 A greater number of women are expected to use maternity/paternity leave and a flexible work schedule than men.
- H2 Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are expected to predict intentions to take maternity/paternity leave.
- H3: Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are expected to predict intentions to utilize a flexible work schedule to accommodate childcare needs.
- H4: Intentions to take maternity/paternity leave and perceived behavioral control regarding taking maternity/paternity leave are expected to predict actual taking of maternity/paternity leave.
- H5: Intentions to utilize a flexible work schedule to accommodate childcare needs and perceived behavioral control regarding utilize a flexible work schedule to accommodate childcare needs are expected to predict actual utilization of a flexible work schedule to accommodate childcare needs.
- H6: Normative beliefs supporting the use of family-friendly benefits are expected to be greater for women than men.

- H7: It is expected that career identity salience will be negatively related to more favorable attitudes toward the use of family-friendly benefits such that the higher the career identity salience the less favorable the attitudes toward the use of family friendly benefits.
- H8: It is expected that role conflict will be positively related to more favorable attitudes toward the use of family-friendly benefits such that the higher the role conflict the more favorable the attitudes toward the use of family friendly benefits.

METHOD

Pilot Study

Because of the specificity of this research and the fact that researchers have not previously utilized Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior to study employee use of maternity/paternity leave and a flexible work schedule, it was necessary to develop measures of the constructs contained in the theory rather than using measures that had already been validated. It should be noted that the procedures used for developing these measures were the same as those typically utilized in research examining the applicability of the theory of planned behavior. Per Ajzen (1991), a pilot study was conducted to develop items for the measures of the theory of planned behavior constructs used in the main study.

Participants

Participants included 12 men and 12 women, who, at the time of the study, were working at least 30 hours per week and had at least one child under the age of 6 living in the home. Participants ranged in age from 24 to 42 ($M = 34$, $SD = 3.99$) and worked an average of 41.75 hours per week. Participants had been at their present job an average of 5.1 years ($SD = 4.35$). Participants had various occupations, including management, accounting, instructional design, and administration.

Procedures

Participants read a Consent Form (see Appendix A) then completed a Demographics Questionnaire (see Appendix B) and the Pilot Study Survey (see Appendix C). To develop a measure of perceived consequences of utilizing family-friendly benefits (i.e., the first component

of attitude), pilot study participants were asked to list the positive and negative outcomes associated with taking maternity/paternity leave and utilizing a flexible work schedule. The most frequently cited outcomes were used in the main study. To develop a measure of subjective norms, pilot study participants were asked to indicate if there are any “important others” in their lives who might approve or disapprove of their taking maternity/paternity leave and utilizing a flexible work schedule. The most frequently cited “important others” were used in the measure of subjective norms contained in the main study. To develop a measure of perceived behavioral control, pilot study participants were asked to indicate the factors that would hinder their ability to take maternity/paternity leave and utilize a flexible work schedule. The most frequently cited hindrances were used in the main study.

Main Study – Phase I

Participants

Ninety-five individuals (52 women and 43 men) served as participants in the main study. Ages ranged from 21 – 53, with a mean age of 31.79 ($SD = 4.95$). To participate in the study, female participants had to be married, pregnant, and working at least 30 hours per week and male participants had to be working at least 30 hours per week and married to a pregnant woman who was working at least 30 hours per week. Married participants working full time were used to reduce any confounds that may exist with single parents or those not working full time, such as the inability to take advantage of benefits or the unavailability of benefits.

Participants reported working an average of 41.85 hours ($SD = 5.53$) per week and reported that their spouses work an average of 43.40 hours ($SD = 7.96$) per week. They have

been at their present job an average of 4.47 years ($SD = 3.58$). Participants have various occupations, including management, accounting, teaching, sales, and law enforcement. More than half of the participants (60%) view their occupation as a career (i.e., something the individual participates in for personal satisfaction) as opposed to a job (i.e., something the individual participates in out of economic necessity).

Concerning their families, 30.5 percent of the participants had at least one child prior to this pregnancy. Of these individuals, 69% had one child, 24.1% had two children, and 6.9% had three children. None of the participants reported having more than three children.

Materials and Procedure

The researcher gave each participant a packet of materials that included a Consent Form (see Appendix D), a Demographics Questionnaire (see Appendix E), and the Phase I Survey (see Appendix F). Participants completed these documents and returned them to the researcher. Below is a detailed description of the constructs measures in the Phase I Survey.

Attitude Toward Behavior: Attitude toward behavior was conceptualized as the degree to which an individual has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of taking maternity/paternity leave and utilizing a flexible work schedule to handle childcare demands. This variable was assessed by measuring perceived behavioral consequences and the evaluation of those consequences. To assess perceived behavioral consequences, participants were given a list of potential consequences associated with taking maternity/paternity leave and utilizing a flexible work schedule and asked to indicate how likely that consequence would occur if they utilized family-friendly benefits. As noted earlier, this list represented the consequences most

frequently cited by pilot study participants. Participants made these ratings on a seven-point scale with 1 = *unlikely* and 7 = *likely*.

To assess the evaluation of those consequences, participants were given the same list of consequences and asked to indicate their evaluation of those consequences using a seven-point scale, where 1 represented “bad” and 7 represented “good”. Per Ajzen (1991), the rating for each consequence was multiplied by the rating of each consequence’s evaluation and the resulting products were summed to derive an *Attitude Toward Behavior* score. The reliability of this and the other measures used in the study was estimated using coefficient alpha. The reliability of the *Attitude Toward Taking Leave* and *Attitude Toward Using a Flexible Work Schedule* measures were $\alpha = .65$ and $\alpha = .54$, respectively. Although somewhat low, this is similar to the reliability coefficient of .61 obtained by Ajzen and Madden (1986) for their measure of attitude.

Subjective Norms: Subjective norms were operationalized as the perceived social pressure to take or not take maternity/paternity leave and use or not use a flexible work schedule. Subjective norms were measured by assessing participants’ normative beliefs and motivation to comply. To measure normative beliefs, participants were asked to rate the extent to which various referent others (e.g., spouse, coworkers, supervisor) would approve or disapprove of their taking maternity/paternity leave and utilizing a flexible work schedule. Per Ajzen (1991), participants made this rating on a bipolar scale, with -2 = *strongly disapprove* and +2 = *strongly approve*. To assess motivation to comply, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they want to comply with each referent other’s beliefs on a scale ranging from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *very much so*. Each normative belief was multiplied by the individual’s motivation to comply with each referent, and the resulting products were summed to derive a *Subjective Norm* score.

The reliability of the *Subjective Norm* scores for taking leave and using a flexible work schedule were $\alpha = .69$ and $\alpha = .78$, respectively.

Perceived Behavioral Control: Perceived behavioral control was conceptualized as the perceived ease or difficulty of taking maternity/paternity leave and utilizing a flexible work schedule. Per Ajzen and Madden (1986), to measure perceived behavioral control, participants were asked the extent to which they agree that certain factors (e.g., work responsibilities, decreased income, scheduling difficulties) would hinder their ability to utilize family-friendly benefits. The factors included in this set of questions were those mentioned most frequently in the pilot study. Participants indicated their agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Responses were first reverse coded, so that a higher score indicated greater perceived behavioral control, and then summed to produce an indirect measure of perceived behavioral control. The reliability of the *Perceived Behavioral Control* scores for taking leave and using a flexible work schedule were $\alpha = .70$ and $\alpha = .80$, respectively.

Intention: The Phase I survey also included eight questions designed to assess participants' intentions to utilize family-friendly benefits. Four such questions addressed participants' intentions to take maternity/paternity leave and the other four focused on participants' intentions to utilize a flexible work schedule. The questions asked whether participants "intended to", "would try to", "have decided to," and "are determined to" utilize the two family-friendly benefits mentioned above. Participants made their responses using a seven-point scale ranging from *extremely likely* to *extremely unlikely*. The reliability of the *Intention* scores for taking leave and using a flexible work schedule were $\alpha = .99$ and $\alpha = .98$, respectively.

Identity Salience: Identity salience was assessed with a five-item scale used by Lobel and St. Clair (1992). Lobel and St. Clair (1992) reported an internal consistency reliability estimate of .76 on this measure. One such item was, “The most important things that happen to me involve my job.” Participants made their responses on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). Items were reverse coded as appropriate such that a high score indicated that the salience of an individual’s career identity was higher than the salience of his or her family-identity. The reliability of the *Identity Salience* score was $\alpha = .58$.

Role Conflict: Role conflict was assessed with Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000) 18-item scale that measures work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW). Carlson et al., (2000) reported internal consistency reliabilities for the six subscales contained in the measure ranging from .78 to .87. One such item was, “The time I spend with my family often causes me to not spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career.” Participants made their responses on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), with higher numbers indicating more role conflict. The reliability of the *Role Conflict* score was $\alpha = .81$.

Main Study – Phase II

Materials and Procedure

The same individuals who participated in Phase I served as participants in Phase II. The Phase II data collection took place approximately four months after each participant’s due date, as indicated on his or her Phase I Demographics Questionnaire. The four-month time lapse allowed enough time to pass such that the individual’s 12-week FMLA time would be over, and

also allowed for an additional month for the individual to be back at work, thus providing a more accurate assessment of his/her role conflict. At this time, the researcher made a follow-up phone call to each participant inquiring whether they took maternity or paternity leave, the length of time they took leave (if applicable), whether they engage in a flexible work schedule, and the nature of the flexible work schedule (if applicable). Finally, participants responded to the same identity salience and role conflict questions they completed in Phase I (see Appendix G for the Phase II Survey). Upon completion of the study, the researcher mailed each participant a Debriefing Form that explained the nature of the present research (see Appendix H).

RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and coefficient alphas for the theory of planned behavior variables are presented in Table 1. Note that Tables 2 and 3 present this information for the female and male participants separately. As Table 1 shows, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control related to taking leave were significantly correlated with intention to take leave ($r = .311, .423, \text{ and } .611$, respectively, $p < .01$). Similarly, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control regarding the use of a flexible work schedule were significantly related to intention to use such a schedule ($r = .365 \text{ and } .558$, respectively, $p < .01$). In addition, perceived behavioral control and intention to take leave were significantly related to taking leave ($r = .235, p < .05$ and $r = .337, p < .01$), and the length of time an individual took leave ($r = .397 \text{ and } .482$, respectively, $p < .01$). Finally, perceived behavioral control and intention to use a flexible work schedule were significantly related to actual use of a flexible work schedule ($r = .230, p < .05$ and $r = .458, p < .01$). As Table 1 also shows, coefficient alpha for all of the measures was acceptable with the exception of the measures of attitude toward taking leave ($\alpha = .65$) and attitude toward using a flexible work schedule ($\alpha = .54$).

Concerning their actual behavior, 82 participants (86.3%) took leave from work following the birth of their child. Forty-nine women took leave (94.2%), as did thirty-three men (76.7%). For the sample as a whole, the length of their leave ranged from half a week to 20 weeks, with a mean of 6.99 weeks and a mode of 12 weeks. In addition, 26 participants (27.4%) reported that they engaged in a flexible work schedule to help handle childcare demands. The type of flexible work schedule respondents indicated using could be broken down into three categories: a reduced work-week, such as working only 20 hours per week, a flexible start and

end time, and working longer days so as to take a different day off. Analyses were conducted to determine whether any demographic variables were related to use of either family-friendly benefit, but results indicated that none of them were.

It should be noted that 17 participants indicated they did not return to paid employment outside the home following the birth of their child, and 4 participants indicated they now work from home. Additional analyses were conducted to determine whether the individuals who did not return to paid employment outside the home differed from those who did in their attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and intentions to use family-friendly benefits. The results indicated that there were no differences on any of these variables with the exception of perceived behavioral control over taking leave ($t(93) = 3.23, p = .002$) and intentions to take leave ($t(90) = 2.11, p = .038$). Specifically, those who did not return to paid employment outside the home perceived greater control over taking leave ($M = 18.94, SD = 1.60$) than those who did return to paid employment outside the home ($M = 16.32, SD = 3.25$). In addition, those who did not return to paid employment outside the home had greater intentions to take leave ($M = 27.33, SD = 2.09$) than those who did return to paid employment outside the home ($M = 22.38, SD = 9.02$).

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Intercorrelations for Theory of Planned Behavior Variables – Total Sample

Variable	M	SD	ATL	SNL	PBC	INT	TL	LL	ATF	SNF	PBCF	INTF	UFWS
Attitude Toward Leave (ATL)	208.49	38.27	.65										
SN for Taking Leave (SNL)	29.54	14.07	.302**	.69									
PBC over Taking Leave (PBCL)	16.79	3.18	.268**	.334**	.70								
Intention to Take Leave (INT)	23.18	8.49	.311**	.423**	.611**	.99							
Took Leave (TL)	--	--	.115	.199	.235*	.337**	--						
Leave Length (LL)	5.07	5.23	.239*	.248*	.397**	.482**	-	--					
Attitude Toward FWS	200.95	38.84	.273**	.209*	.183	.088	.129	.023	.54				
SN for Using a FWS	30.42	19.71	.289**	.585**	.183	.081	-.020	.055	.301**	.78			
PBC over Using a FWS	13.83	4.10	.134	.030	.329**	.008	-.092	.040	.240*	.320**	.80		
Intention to Use a FWS	23.18	8.49	.176	.043	.150	-.013	-.050	.062	.147	.365**	.558**	.98	
Used a FWS	--	--	.136	.041	.202	.120	.047	.124	.023	.151	.230*	.458**	--

Note. Coefficient alphas are shown in the diagonal. Variables for which coefficient alpha is not appropriate are indicated with --.

SN = Subjective norms; PBC = Perceived behavioral control; FWS = Flexible work schedule

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

- . Cannot be computed because if individuals did not take leave, they would not have a leave length

-- . Cannot be computed because the variable is dummy-coded

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Intercorrelations for Theory of Planned Behavior Variables – Female Participants

Variable	M	SD	ATL	SNL	PBC	INT	TL	LL	ATF	SNF	PBCF	INTF	UFWS
Attitude Toward Leave (ATL)	202.53	43.04	.65										
SN for Taking Leave (SNL)	23.81	15.13	.126	.79									
PBC over Leave (PBCL)	15.16	3.57	.276*	.250	.70								
Intention to Take Leave (INT)	17.88	10.22	.103	.120	.316*	.96							
Took Leave (TL)	--	--	.001	.214	.181	-.054	--						
Leave Length (LL)	10.33	3.92	.423**	-.116	-.149	.211	-	--					
Attitude Toward FWS	201.35	39.78	.225	.229	-.057	.193	.096	.065	.60				
SN for Using a FWS	31.02	20.11	.163	.607**	.133	.054	-.018	.184	.082	.81			
PBC over Using a FWS	14.26	3.97	.134	.144	.290*	-.144	.029	.111	.178	.352*	.79		
Intention to Use a FWS	16.14	9.52	.251	.155	.010	.068	.084	.200	.105	.488**	.519**	.98	
Used a FWS	--	--	.175	.120	.177	.186	-.015	.128	.021	.247	.173	.463**	--

Note. Coefficient alphas are shown in the diagonal. Variables for which coefficient alpha is not appropriate are indicated with --.

SN = Subjective norms; PBC = Perceived behavioral control; FWS = Flexible work schedule

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

- . Cannot be computed because if individuals did not take leave, they would not have a leave length

-- . Cannot be computed because the variable is dummy-coded

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Intercorrelations for Theory of Planned Behavior Variables – Male Participants

Variable	M	SD	ATL	SNL	PBC	INT	TL	LL	ATF	SNF	PBCF	INTF	UFWS
Attitude Toward Leave (ATL)	213.51	33.35	.67										
SN for Taking Leave (SNL)	34.27	11.21	.367*	.71									
PBC over Taking Leave (PBCL)	18.13	2.03	.208	.170	.70								
Intention to Take Leave (INT)	27.64	1.38	.364*	.346*	.533**	.98							
Took Leave (TL)	--	--	.126	.070	.119	.248	--						
Leave Length (LL)	2.35	2.29	-.026	-.032	.330	.192	-	--					
Attitude Toward FWS	200.61	38.43	.336*	.235	.400**	.135	.170	.116	.60				
Subjective Norm for FWS	29.92	19.56	.418**	.679**	.294	.174	-.011	-.068	.529**	.77			
PBC over Using a FWS	13.48	4.21	.169	.003	.557**	.143	-.146	.264	.316*	.278	.82		
Intention to Use a FWS	15.04	9.01	.132	.000	.337*	.018	-.115	-.008	.191	.228	.601**	.99	
Used a FWS	--	--	.092	-.068	.230	.125	.070	.162	.025	.039	.315*	.467**	--

Note. Coefficient alphas are shown in the diagonal. Variables for which coefficient alpha is not appropriate are indicated with --.

SN = Subjective norms; PBC = Perceived behavioral control; FWS = Flexible work schedule

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

- . Cannot be computed because if individuals did not take leave, they would not have a leave length

-- . Cannot be computed because the variable is dummy-coded

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis proposed that a greater number of women would use family-friendly benefits than men. As Table 4 shows, 49 women (94.2%) and 33 men (76.7%) took leave from work following the birth of their child, with women taking an average of 10.33 weeks of leave and men taking an average of 2.35 weeks. In addition, 15 women (28.8%) and 11 men (25.6%) engaged in a flexible work schedule to help meet childcare demands. A chi square analysis was used to determine whether these differences were significant. With a $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = 6.09, p = .014$, the results indicated that a significantly greater number of women took leave following the birth of their child than men. Further, the length of time women and men took leave was also significantly different, ($t(77) = -10.47, p = .000$). However, with a $\chi^2(1, N = 95) = .286, p = .593$, the results indicated that the difference between the number of women and men who reported using a flexible work schedule was not significantly different. Thus, hypothesis 1 was partially supported.

Table 4
Frequencies for Taking Leave and Using a Flexible Work Schedule (FWS)

<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Sex</u>	
	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Took Leave	33	49
Did Not Take Leave	10	3
Utilize FWS	11	15
<u>Did Not Utilize FWS</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>34</u>

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 posited that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control would predict intentions to use maternity/paternity leave. Consistent with previous studies that have examined the applicability of the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Madden, 1986; Beale & Manstead, 1991; Kimiecik, 1992; Prislin & Kovrlija, 1992; Schifter & Ajzen, 1985; Theodorakis, 1994; Van Ryn, Lytle, & Kirscht, 1996), hypothesis 2 was tested using multiple regression analysis. The predictors included attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control and the criterion was an employee's intention to use maternity/paternity leave. Results of the multiple regression analysis indicated that the variables significantly predicted an individual's intention to use leave ($R^2 = .437$, $F(3, 87) = 22.51$, $p = .00$). Approximately 44% of the variance in an individual's intention to take leave from work following the birth of a child could be explained by his or her attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control regarding this behavior. Perceived behavioral control contributed the most to the prediction of intention ($\beta = .510$, $p = .000$) following by subjective norms ($\beta = .217$, $p = .015$) (see Table 5). Hypothesis 2 was thus supported.

Table 5
 Predictions of Intention and Behaviors Related to Taking Leave and Using a Flexible Work Schedule

<u>Prediction of Intentions and Behavior</u>				
Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>
<u>Intention</u>				
PBC (Taking Leave)	1.352	.23	.510	5.87
SN (Taking Leave)	.132	.053	.217	2.48
Attitude (Taking Leave)	.024	.019	.107	1.25
PBC (Using FWS)	1.081	.210	.482	5.15
SN (Using FWS)	.102	.045	.217	2.28
Attitude (Using FWS)	-.010	.022	-.043	-.460
<u>Behavior</u>				
Intention (Using FWS)	.268	.081	.391	3.29
PBC (Taking Leave)	.309	.216	.170	1.43
Intention (Using FWS)	.023	.006	.478	4.22
<u>PBC (Using FWS)</u>	<u>-.004</u>	<u>.013</u>	<u>-.035</u>	<u>-.307</u>

PBC = Perceived behavioral control; SN = subjective norm;
 FWS = flexible work schedule

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 proposed that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control would predict intentions to utilize a flexible work schedule to handle childcare responsibilities.

As with Hypothesis 2, this hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis in which attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control concerning the use of a flexible

work schedule served as predictors and the criterion was the employee's intention to utilize a flexible work schedule (see Table 5). Results of the regression analysis indicated that the variables significantly predicted an individual's intention to engage in this behavior ($R^2 = .329$, $F(3,87) = 14.22$, $p = .00$). Approximately 33% of the variance in an individual's intention to use a flexible work schedule could be explained by his or her attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control concerning this behavior. Perceived behavioral control contributed the most to the prediction of intention ($\beta = .482$, $p = .000$) following by subjective norms ($\beta = .217$, $p = .025$). Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported.

Hypothesis 4

Hypotheses 4, which posited that an individual's use of maternity/paternity leave could be predicted from intentions and perceived behavioral control concerning the behavior, was also tested using multiple regression analysis. Specifically, the employee's behavior (i.e., the length of time he or she took leave) was regressed on intention to perform this behavior and perceived behavioral control. Results of the regression analysis indicated that the variables significantly predicted the length of time an individual took leave ($R^2 = .253$, $F(2,74) = 12.52$, $p = .000$). As Table 5 shows, the analysis also revealed that only an individual's intention to use leave contributed to the prediction of the actual behavior ($\beta = .391$, $p = .002$). Therefore, hypothesis 4 was partially supported.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 proposed that an individual's use of a flexible work schedule could be predicted from his or her intentions and perceived behavioral control over this behavior. This hypothesis was also tested with a multiple regression analysis in which the employee's behavior (i.e., whether he/she engaged in a flexible work schedule to meet childcare demands) was regressed onto intention to perform this behavior and perceived behavioral control. Results of the analysis indicated that the variables significantly predicted an individual's use of a flexible work schedule ($R^2 = .211$, $F(2,89) = 11.90$, $p = .000$). As indicated in Table 5, although an individual's intention to utilize a flexible work schedule contributed to the prediction of the actual behavior ($\beta = .478$, $p = .000$), his or her perceived behavioral control did not. Hypothesis 5 was thus partially supported.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6, which proposed that normative beliefs supporting the use of family-friendly benefits would be greater for women than men, was tested with two independent-samples t-tests; one in which the dependent variable was normative beliefs for taking leave and the other in which the dependent variable was normative beliefs for utilizing a flexible work schedule to handle childcare demands. Results indicated that there was a significant difference in the scores for the two groups concerning normative beliefs for taking leave, ($t(93) = -4.603$, $p = .000$), but there was not a significant difference between scores for using a flexible work schedule ($t(91) = .012$, $p = .990$). Specifically, normative belief scores concerning taking leave were significantly higher for women ($M = 6.33$, $SD = 1.71$) than for men ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 3.12$). However, the normative beliefs scores for utilizing a flexible work schedule were the same for

men ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 3.71$) as they were for women ($M = 5.20$, $SD = 3.53$). Hypothesis 6 was therefore partially supported.

Hypothesis 7

Hypothesis 7 proposed that career identity salience would be negatively related to favorable attitudes toward the use of family-friendly benefits. Results partially supported this hypothesis in that the higher the career identity salience, the less favorable the attitude toward leave ($r = -.209$, $p = .05$). In addition, there was also a negative relationship between career identity salience and taking leave ($r = -.333$, $p = .01$) such that the more career salience an individual held, the less likely he or she was to take leave. This hypothesis was also examined separately for men and women. For women, identity salience was not related to either attitude toward leave or actually taking leave ($r = .030$, $p > .05$ and $r = -.083$, $p > .05$, respectively). For men, however, there was a negative relationship between career identity salience and taking leave ($r = -.447$, $p = .01$) but not between career identity salience and attitude toward leave ($r = .035$, $p > .05$). Finally, identity salience was not related to attitude toward using a flexible work schedule ($r = -.092$, $p < .05$).

Hypothesis 8

Hypothesis 8 posited that work-family conflict would be positively related to favorable attitudes toward the use of family-friendly benefits. Contrary to what was hypothesized, work-family conflict was not related to attitude toward taking leave ($r = -.126$, $p > .05$), but there was a significant relationship between work-family conflict and attitude toward using a flexible work schedule ($r = -.297$, $p = .01$). However, the relationship was in the opposite direction as

hypothesized. Additional analyses were conducted to determine the relationship between these variables when data from men and women were analyzed separately. Results indicated that there was a significant relationship between work-family conflict and attitude toward using a flexible work schedule for women ($r = -.348, p = .05$) but not for men ($r = -.264, p > .05$). Once again the relationship was in the opposite direction as hypothesized. Comparison of the coefficients using Fisher's z' transformation, however, revealed that they were not significantly different from each other ($z' = -.415$). This hypothesis was not supported.

DISCUSSION

Summary and Integration of Findings

This study sought to improve upon previous research that was atheoretical and anecdotal in nature. Its primary purpose was to examine the factors related to an employee's use of family-friendly benefits using Ajzen's theory of planned behavior as a framework. This study also examined the role that identity salience and work-family conflict played in the decision to utilize family-friendly benefits.

Results of this study are encouraging in that they found a large number of individuals took advantage of the family-friendly benefits their employers offered them. Recall that previous research found many employees are hesitant to use family-friendly benefits, including one study that found that 40% of female professors did not take leave from work following the birth of a child. The present study did, however, find gender differences in the number of individuals who used these benefits. For instance, a greater number of women took leave following the birth of their child than men. In addition, men took a much shorter leave than women. These findings support gender role theory and the notion that women are supposed to adopt a caretaker role whereas men are to adopt a breadwinner role. The results also support Gutmann's (1985) notion of the parental imperative and the idea that after the birth of a child, men and women tend to take on traditional gender roles.

Contrary to what was hypothesized, however, there was not a significant difference in the number of women and men who used a flexible work schedule to help meet childcare demands. A major impetus for this study was the fact that research showed men were not using the family-friendly benefits made available to them. Thus, it is somewhat encouraging that more than 25% of the men sampled reported using a flexible work schedule to help meet childcare demands.

This supports previous research (i.e., Gerson, 1993; Haas & Hwang, 1995; Williams, 2000) that has found that men want to spend more time with children, want the option of staying home with their child, and view their family role as more important than their work role.

Alternatively, one could argue that because only one-fourth of the male sample used a flexible work schedule, perhaps traditional gender roles still exist. Another possible explanation as to why more men did not use a flexible work schedule is because it was not necessary because their wives did not return to paid employment outside the home following the birth of their child. Participants were not explicitly asked whether their spouse returned to work, so this potential explanation could not be examined with the current data.

Another important finding was that an individual's intention to take leave or engage in a flexible work schedule could be predicted by his or her attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These results support Ajzen's theory of planned behavior. Whether an individual perceived he or she had control over these behaviors (i.e., perceived behavioral control) was the most significant predictor of whether he or she intended to take leave and utilize a flexible work schedule. Perception of social pressure to perform or not perform these behaviors (i.e., subjective norms) was the second most important predictor.

Attitude toward taking leave or using a flexible work schedule was the least predictive of an individual's intention. As noted earlier, the reliability of the attitude measures was low. Had these measures been more reliable, the relationship between an individual's attitude and his or her intention may have been stronger. Even so, the inability of attitude to predict intention is commensurate with previous research that has found a low correlation between attitude and behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Rokeach, 1980; Wicker, 1969). Thus the findings from this study reinforce the importance of other determinants, such as perceived behavioral control and

subjective norms, in the prediction of intentions. Further, Ajzen (1991) has indicated that the relative importance of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in the prediction of intentions will vary across behaviors, such that in some situations only one factor will have a significant impact on intention and in others situations, all three may be important. The findings from this study suggest that when attempting to predict whether an individual will use family-friendly benefits, the most important predictors are subjective norms and perceived behavioral control.

Also supportive of the theory of planned behavior were the findings that whether an individual took leave from work following the birth of his/her child or used a flexible work schedule to help meet childcare demands could be predicted by his/her intention to engage in these behaviors. For both of these behaviors, perception of control over the behavior did not contribute to its prediction. These findings support the first version of Ajzen's theory of planned behavior, in which the effect of perceived behavioral control on behavior is mediated by intention and does not actually have a direct relationship with behavior.

Yet another important finding was that there was a significant difference in the normative belief scores for men and women concerning taking leave from work. Specifically, scores were higher for women, indicating that women perceived greater approval from others for taking leave from work following the birth of a child. This finding provides additional support for gender role theory and the different expectations that society has for men and women.

Concerning the use of a flexible work schedule, however, normative belief scores did not differ for men and women indicating that both sexes perceived an equal amount of approval from others regarding this behavior. These results suggest that there is a perception that society is becoming more accepting of men engaging in a flexible work schedule to help meet childcare

demands. However, one could also argue that even if a man uses a flexible work schedule, as long as the schedule allows him to maintain a 40 hour workweek he can still perform the role of breadwinner, thus continuing to conform to society's expectation of him.

Another important finding was that the higher an individual's career identity salience (and conversely, the lower his/her family identity salience) the less favorable his or her attitude was toward taking leave and the less likely he or she was to take leave. Both of these results lend support for identity salience theory, which asserts that an individual's identity salience motivates him or her to engage in behaviors that support that identity. Concerning the present study, individuals with high career identity salience chose to engage in a behavior that supported their career identity; namely, working rather than staying home with a newborn child. This finding is important because it suggests that there are other variables, aside from those contained in the theory of planned behavior, that are related to an individual's decision to take leave from work following the birth of a child.

One interesting finding was that the relationship between career identity salience and taking leave from work did not hold for women when data from male and female participants were analyzed separately. One possible explanation is that regardless of their career identity salience, women still felt obligated to take leave from work. This explanation is in line with both gender role theory and the parental imperative.

The most perplexing finding was that the greater an individual's work-family conflict, the less favorable his or her attitude was toward using a flexible work schedule. This is in contrast to research (i.e., Honeycutt and Rosen, 1997; Rau & Hyland, 2002) that found that individuals with high role conflict were more attracted to an organization that offered a flexible work schedule than an organization that did not. Previous researchers have suggested that one

potential downfall of using a flexible work schedule is that an employee's level of stress may increase if he or she cannot separate his or her work and family selves. Perhaps the reason individuals with high work-family conflict have less favorable attitudes toward a flexible work schedule is because they already have a difficult time meeting the competing demands of work and family and view a flexible work schedule as something else to blur the work and family boundaries. However, it should also be noted that in the studies mentioned above, participants were responding to a hypothetical job announcement for a fictitious organization. Thus, although they indicated that they were more attracted to an organization that offered a flexible work arrangement, this is not necessarily the same thing as having a positive attitude toward the use of a flexible work schedule offered by their actual employer. The former refers to a hypothetical workplace policy; whereas the latter refers to an actual workplace policy they have the option of using. Lastly, another potential reason for the negative relationship between work family conflict and attitude towards a flexible work schedule could be the low reliability of the attitude measure.

Practical Implications

As noted earlier, research has found that there are several advantages to organizations when their employees use family-friendly benefits. These advantages include greater job satisfaction, organizational loyalty and commitment, increased productivity, decreased absenteeism, less intention to leave, and reduced turnover. From a practical perspective, these findings are important because they indicate that it would behoove organizations to ensure their employees use family-friendly benefits.

The results of this study suggest several things that organizations can do to encourage their employees to take advantage of these benefits. As noted earlier, organizations often “superimpose” family-friendly benefits onto a traditional work culture. This sends the conflicting message to employees that even though the organization offers such benefits, taking advantage of them is discouraged. As shown in the present study, if employees perceived that the organization disapproved of the use of family-friendly benefits, they were less likely to use them. Thus, this study emphasizes the fact that it is not enough for organizations to offer these benefits; they must also foster a culture in which employees feel they can utilize family-friendly benefits without negative repercussions.

This study found that the greatest predictor of whether an individual intended to use family-friendly benefits was whether the individual perceived he or she had control over the behavior. Thus, organizations should attempt to identify and remove any barriers that enhance employees’ perceptions that they cannot take advantage of family-friendly benefits. For example, employees may feel that they cannot take leave because their work-related responsibilities are so great. To address this, organizations should have a plan in place for someone, such as a temporary employee or contract worker, to take over the individual’s work responsibilities for as long as the individual is on leave and ensure that the employee is aware of this plan so that he or she feels there are no barriers to taking leave from work following the birth of his or her child.

Concerning the use of a flexible work schedule, employees may be hesitant to do so because of the scheduling difficulties associated with working a nontraditional schedule. Organizations could minimize this problem by, for example, only holding meetings at set times of the day, avoiding early morning and late afternoon meetings when employees may be

handling childcare responsibilities. Regardless of the changes organizations make to remove barriers toward the use of family-friendly benefits, they will need to balance their needs with that of their employees when deciding what policies to adopt.

Limitations

As with any study, this one was not without limitations. First, the reliability of the attitude measures (i.e., attitude toward taking leave and attitude toward using a flexible work schedule) was low. As noted earlier, this measure was a function of the individual's perception of the consequences of performing a behavior multiplied by his or her evaluation of those consequences. According to Ilgen, Nebeker, and Pritchard (1981) one potential problem with the use of multiplicative measures is a loss of reliability. The low reliability of the attitude measures may have attenuated the relationships between attitude and other variables and limited this variable's ability to predict behavioral intentions. The identity salience measure also had a low reliability. Although career identity salience was significantly related to taking leave and leave length, these relationships may have been stronger had the measure been more reliable.

A second limitation concerns the sample. Many men in the sample had wives who did not return to paid employment outside the home following the birth of their child. This may have contributed to fewer men needing to use a flexible work schedule to handle childcare demands. Because this study did not explicitly ask men whether their wives returned to paid employment outside the home, this idea could not be tested.

Future Research

This study examined the factors related to married persons decisions' to use family-friendly benefits following the birth of a child. As noted earlier, however, single parents also comprise a large and fast-growing segment of the workforce. Future research should examine whether the factors related to their decisions are the same as those of married individuals. Because single parents are often the sole source of income for their families, relevant others (e.g., supervisor, coworkers) may be more supportive of these individuals engaging in behaviors necessary to balance work and family. Therefore it may be the case that normative beliefs for using a flexible work schedule would be more favorable for these individuals, regardless of whether they are a man or a woman.

Single parents may also face additional barriers to using family-friendly benefits that their married counterparts do not have to worry about. For instance, if his or her organization does not offer paid leave, a single parent may not have the financial ability to take leave from work. For financial reasons, it might also be difficult for a single parent to work a flexible work schedule that entails reducing one's hours. These ideas should be tested in future research.

The present study limited its scope to two family-friendly benefits. Because research has shown that there are advantages (e.g., higher levels of productivity) to using other family-friendly benefits, such as telecommuting, future research should examine whether the results of this study are the same for other benefits. It would also be interesting to examine the relationship between work-family conflict and an individual's decision to telecommute. As mentioned earlier, research has found that working at home may be a stressor to individuals if they cannot separate their work and family lives. Thus future research should examine whether work-family conflict aids in the prediction of an individual's intention to use other family-friendly benefits

above and beyond the theory of planned behavioral variables. Finally, because an individual is still able to work a full workweek when telecommuting, future research should examine whether normative belief scores concerning this behavior would be equally favorable for men and women.

Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion, research has demonstrated that although there are advantages for both employees and organizations when individuals take advantage of family-friendly benefits, many employees are hesitant to do so. The results of this study were somewhat encouraging as they showed that a large number of individuals used the family-friendly benefits offered to them. With regard to taking leave, however, more women engaged in this behavior, as men continued to perceive less support from others for do so. Thus the results suggest that although men are taking on an increasing amount of responsibility with respect to childcare, society still holds on to traditional gender norms.

The primary purpose of this study was to empirically examine the factors that are related to an employee's decision to use family-friendly benefits. The present study accomplished this goal by empirically identifying several factors that are predictive of an individual intention and actual behavior. Although some predictors are beyond the control of an organization (i.e., career identity salience), organizations do have the power to impact other factors, such as perceived behavior control and subjective norms. Knowledge of these factors can provide the impetus for organizations to make changes to ensure that their employees are encouraged to use family-friendly benefits. In doing so, employees, organizations, and society as a whole will benefit.

APPENDIX A
PILOT STUDY CONSENT FORM

Pilot Study Consent Form

Dear research participant:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study being conducted at the University of Central Florida. We are interested in people's opinions regarding the use of family-friendly work benefits such as maternity/paternity leave and flexible work schedules. By participating in the study, you will help us understand employees' decisions regarding the use of family-friendly benefits. In order to participate, you must be at least 18 years of age, work at least 30 hours per week and have at least one child under the age of 6 living in your home.

In this envelope, you will find two questionnaires to complete. When you have finished the questionnaires, please place them back in the envelope, seal it, and return it to the researcher. It should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete the study. All information published will be for the group as a whole, and no individual data will be published. Moreover, all data collected will be anonymous.

By answering the questions on the questionnaires, you are providing your consent to participate in this research. If, at any time during the study, you no longer wish to continue your participation, simply stop answering the questions and do not return your questionnaires to the researcher. There will be no negative consequences associated with failing to complete the study. We greatly appreciate your help in our research efforts. In appreciation for your participation, we would like to offer you a copy of the results when the study is completed. If you are interested in the results or have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Heather Seiser at (407) 328-9618 or hseiser@cfl.rr.com.

Thank You,

Heather Seiser, MS

APPENDIX B

PILOT STUDY DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographics Questionnaire – Pilot Study

Please read each item carefully and indicate your response in the space provided. Please answer each question as accurately as possible.

1. Age: _____
2. Sex (Circle one): Male Female
3. Do you have any children? (Circle one) Yes No
4. If you do have children, how many do you have? _____
5. Please list the age(s) of your child(ren). _____
6. How many hours do you work per week? _____
7. How long have you been at your present job? _____ Years _____ Months
8. What is your occupation? _____
9. Do you consider your occupation a *job* (i.e., something that you participate in mainly out of economic necessity) or a *career* (i.e., something you participate in for personal satisfaction)? (Circle one) Job Career
10. How many hours does your spouse work per week? _____
11. Which of the following benefits does your organization offer? (Check all that apply)
 - a. _____ Unpaid maternity leave
 - b. _____ Paid maternity leave
 - c. _____ Unpaid paternity leave
 - d. _____ Paid paternity leave
 - e. _____ On-site childcare
 - f. _____ The option of working from home part- or full-time
 - g. _____ Flexible work schedules (Please indicate the specific type(s) below by placing a checkmark next to the flexible work schedule(s) offered by your organization.)
 - i. _____ Reduced work week (e.g., 30 hours)

- ii. _____ Flexible hours (e.g., 7:00AM to 3:00PM)
- iii. _____ Compressed work week (e.g., Four 10-hour days)

12. Which benefits are you currently using or have you used in the past at any organization in which you worked? (Check all that apply)

- a. _____ Unpaid maternity leave
- b. _____ Paid maternity leave
- c. _____ Unpaid paternity leave
- d. _____ Paid paternity leave
- e. _____ On-site childcare
- f. _____ Work from home part- or full-time
- g. _____ Flexible work schedules (Please indicate the specific type(s) below by placing a checkmark next to the flexible work schedule(s) you currently use or have used in the past.)
 - i. _____ Reduced work week (e.g., 30 hours)
 - ii. _____ Flexible hours (e.g., 7:00AM to 3:00PM)
 - iii. _____ Compressed work week (e.g., Four 10-hour days)

APPENDIX C
PILOT STUDY SURVEY

Pilot Study Survey

Please read the following definition carefully.

Maternity/Paternity Leave: A period of time in which the employee is still employed at his or her organization but is not working so as to take care of a child that has been born or adopted within the last year. This leave could be either paid or unpaid.

Please respond to the following items using the definition provided above. If you have any questions, please ask the researcher.

1. In the space provided below, please list any *positive* outcomes that you feel are associated with taking maternity/paternity leave? Please be specific.

2. In the space provided below, please list any *negative* outcomes that you feel are associated with taking maternity/paternity leave? Please be specific.

Please turn to the next page and continue.

Please read the following definition carefully.

Flexible Work Schedule: A schedule that involves working a reduced number of hours, such as a 30-hour work week, working non-traditional hours, such as 7:00AM to 3:00PM or working four 10-hour days each week.

Please respond to the following items using the definition provided above. If you have any questions, please ask the researcher.

3. In the space provided below, please list any *positive* outcomes that you feel are associated with engaging in a flexible work schedule in order to handle childcare responsibilities? Please be specific.

4. In the space provided below, please list any *negative* outcomes that you feel are associated with engaging in a flexible work schedule in order to handle childcare responsibilities? Please be specific.

Please turn to the next page and continue.

5. In the space provided below, please list any individuals in your life who you would consider “important others” (e.g., spouse, boss).

6. In the space provided below, please list any individuals in your life who might *approve* of you taking maternity/paternity leave in the event that you/your spouse just had a baby.

7. In the space provided below, please list any individuals in your life who might *disapprove* of you taking maternity/paternity leave in the event that you/your spouse just had a baby.

Please turn to the next page and continue.

8. In the space provided below, please list any individuals in your life who might *approve* of you utilizing a flexible work schedule to handle childcare demands in the event that you/your spouse just had a baby.

9. In the space provided below, please list any individuals in your life who might *disapprove* of you utilizing a flexible work schedule to handle childcare demands in the event that you/your spouse just had a baby.

Please turn to the next page and continue.

10. In the space provided below, please list any factors that would hinder your ability to take maternity/paternity leave (assuming that you just had a baby).

11. In the space provided below, please list any factors that would hinder your ability to utilize a flexible work schedule to meet childcare demands.

Please turn in your study packet to the researcher.

APPENDIX D
MAIN STUDY CONSENT FORM

Main Study Consent Form

Dear research participant:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study being conducted at the University of Central Florida. I am interested in people's opinions regarding the use of family-friendly benefits such as maternity/paternity leave and flexible work schedules. By participating in the study, you will help us understand employees' decisions regarding the use of family-friendly benefits. In order to participate, you must be at least 18 years of age, work outside of the home at least 30 hours per week and be pregnant (if female) or married to a pregnant woman who is currently working at least 30 hours per week (if male).

In this envelope, you will find several questionnaires to complete. When you have finished the questionnaires, please place them back in the envelope, seal it, and return it to the researcher. It should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the study. Please note that a researcher will need to contact you by telephone 3 months after you/your wife's due date to conduct a *brief*, 5-minute telephone interview. All information published will be for the group as a whole, and no individual data will be published.

By signing this form, you are providing your consent to participate in this research. If, at any time during the study, you no longer wish to continue your participation, simply stop answering the questions and do not return your questionnaire to the researcher. There will be no negative consequences associated with failing to complete the study. I greatly appreciate your help in my research efforts. In appreciation for your participation, you will receive a special baby gift upon completion of both parts of the study. I would also like to offer you a copy of the results when the study is completed. If you are interested in the results or have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Heather Seiser at (407) 328-9618 or hseiser@cfl.rr.com.

Thank You,

Heather Seiser, MS

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX E

MAIN STUDY DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographics Questionnaire – Main Study

Please read each item carefully and indicate your response in the space provided. Please answer each question as accurately as possible.

1. Age: _____
2. Sex (Circle one): Male Female
3. If you are female, when is your due date (Month/Day/Year)? _____
4. If you are male, when is your wife’s due date (Month/Day/Year)? _____
5. Do you/does your wife plan to breastfeed? (Circle one) Yes No Not sure
6. Do you have any other children? (Circle one) Yes No
7. If you do have other children, how many do you have? _____
8. Please list the age(s) of your child(ren). _____
9. How many hours do you work per week? _____
10. How long have you been at your present job? _____ Years _____ Months
11. What is your occupation? _____
12. Do you consider your occupation a *job* (i.e., something that you participate in mainly out of economic necessity) or a *career* (i.e., something you participate in for personal satisfaction)? (Circle one) Job Career
13. How many hours does your spouse work per week? _____
14. Who earns a larger income – you or your spouse? (Circle one) Me My spouse
15. How stable is *your* income? (Circle the number below that best represents your answer)

Very Unstable	Unstable	Neutral	Stable	Very Stable
1	2	3	4	5

16. How stable is *your spouse’s* income? (Circle the number below that best represents your answer)

Very Unstable	Unstable	Neutral	Stable	Very Stable
1	2	3	4	5

17. Which of the following benefits does your organization offer? (Check all that apply)

- a. _____ Unpaid maternity leave
- b. _____ Paid maternity leave
- c. _____ Unpaid paternity leave
- d. _____ Paid paternity leave
- e. _____ On-site childcare
- f. _____ The option of working from home part- or full-time
- g. _____ Flexible work schedules (Please indicate the specific type(s) below by placing a checkmark next to the flexible work schedule(s) offered by your organization.)
 - i. _____ Reduced work week (e.g., 30 hours)
 - ii. _____ Flexible hours (e.g., 7:00AM to 3:00PM)
 - iii. _____ Compressed work week (e.g., Four 10-hour days)

18. Which of the following benefits are you currently using or have you used in the past? (Check all that apply)

- a. _____ Unpaid maternity leave
- b. _____ Paid maternity leave
- c. _____ Unpaid paternity leave
- d. _____ Paid paternity leave
- e. _____ On-site childcare
- f. _____ Working from home part- or full-time
- g. _____ Flexible work schedules (Please indicate the specific type(s) below by placing a checkmark next to the flexible work schedule(s) offered by your organization.)
 - i. _____ Reduced work week (e.g., 30 hours)
 - ii. _____ Flexible hours (e.g., 7:00AM to 3:00PM)
 - iii. _____ Compressed work week (e.g., Four 10-hour days)

Important: You must indicate your name and phone number so that you can be contacted for the second part of this study. To ensure your confidentiality, all study materials will be kept in a locked file cabinet accessible only to the researcher. After your data has been entered into the computer, this portion of the questionnaire will be discarded to further ensure your confidentiality. Thank you.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Best time to call (circle one): Day Evening

APPENDIX F
PHASE I SURVEY

The following is a list of other individuals who may be important individuals in your life. Please use the scale presented below to indicate *the extent to which each of these individuals would approve or disapprove* of you taking maternity/paternity leave using the scale presented below.

-2 = Strongly Disapprove

+2 = Strongly Approve

1.	Spouse	-2	-1	0	1	2
2.	Boss/Supervisor	-2	-1	0	1	2
3.	Parents/Siblings	-2	-1	0	1	2
4.	Coworkers	-2	-1	0	1	2
5.	Children	-2	-1	0	1	2

The following is the same list of individuals that was presented in the previous item. Please use the scale presented below to indicate *the extent to which you want to comply with each of these individual's beliefs* regarding whether you should take maternity/paternity leave.

1 = Not at all

7 = Very much so

1.	Spouse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Boss/Supervisor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Parents/Siblings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Coworkers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please turn to the next page and continue.

The following is a list of other individuals who may be important individuals in your life. Please use the scale presented below to indicate *the extent to which each of these individuals would approve or disapprove* of you utilizing a flexible work schedule to help you manage childcare responsibilities.

-2 = Strongly Disapprove

+2 = Strongly Approve

1.	Spouse	-2	-1	0	1	2
2.	Boss	-2	-1	0	1	2
3.	Friends	-2	-1	0	1	2
4.	Coworkers	-2	-1	0	1	2
5.	Parents/Siblings	-2	-1	0	1	2

The following is the same list of individuals that was presented in the previous item. Please use the scale presented below to indicate *the extent to which you want to comply with each of these individual's beliefs* regarding whether you should utilize a flexible work schedule to help you manage childcare responsibilities.

1 = Not at all

7 = Very much so

1.	Spouse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Boss	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Coworkers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Parents/Siblings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please turn to the next page and continue.

Please respond to the following 8 items based on your own thoughts and feelings. Indicate your level of agreement with these statements by circling the number to the right that best corresponds to your opinion. Please use the five-point scale presented below.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	I believe that because of my money/financial situation, I will not be able to take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I believe that because my work responsibilities are so great, I will not be able to take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I believe that because others would look down upon me, I will not take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I believe that because I have no vacation or sick days available, I will not be able to take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I believe that because of my work responsibilities, I will not be able to engage in a flexible work schedule in order to manage childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I believe that because of the decreased income that is associated with working fewer hours, I will not be able to engage in a flexible work schedule in order to manage childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I believe that because of the scheduling difficulties that are associated with working a nontraditional schedule, I will not be able to engage in a flexible work schedule in order to manage childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I believe that because my coworkers would resent me for engaging in a flexible work schedule, I will not engage in a flexible work schedule in order to manage childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5

Please turn to the next page and continue.

Please read each statement carefully and indicate your opinion about the statement by circling a number to the right of it. Please make your responses using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *extremely unlikely* to 7 = *extremely likely*.

1 = **Extremely Unlikely** 7 = **Extremely Likely**

1.	I intend to take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I will try to take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I have decided to take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I am determined to take maternity/paternity leave.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I intend to engage in a flexible work schedule to meet childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I will try to engage in a flexible work schedule to meet childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I have decided to engage in a flexible work schedule to meet childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I am determined to engage in a flexible work schedule to meet childcare demands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please respond to the following items based on your own thoughts and feelings. Indicate your level of agreement with these statements by circling a number to the right. Please use the scale below.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	The major satisfactions in my life come from my family.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The most important things that happen to me involve my family.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The major satisfactions in my life come from my job.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The most important things that happen to me involve my job.	1	2	3	4	5

5.	Select the response that best describes you and your day-to-day priorities by circling the appropriate letter.
	a. I am primarily a family person
	b. I am a family and career person but lean a bit more towards family
	c. I am a career and family person
	d. I am a career and family person but lean a bit more towards career
	e. I am primarily a career person

Please respond to the following 18 items based on your own thoughts and feelings. Indicate your level of agreement with these statements by circling a number to the right. Please use the scale below.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The time I spend on family responsibilities often interferes with my work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The time I spend with my family often causes me not to spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time I must spend on family responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too stressed to do the things I enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Because I am often stressed from family responsibilities, I have a hard time concentrating on my work.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	The problem-solving behaviors I use in my job are not effective in resolving problems at home.	1	2	3	4	5

		SD	D	N	A	SA
14.	Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	The behaviors I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The behaviors that work for me at home do not seem to be effective at work.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at home would be counterproductive at work.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The problem-solving behaviors that work for me at home do not seem as useful at work.	1	2	3	4	5

**Thank you for your participation.
Please turn in your study packet to the researcher.**

APPENDIX G
PHASE II SURVEY

Phase II Survey

“Hello, my name is Heather Seiser. You completed a survey for me a few months ago regarding your options about family-friendly benefits. I have a few follow-up questions for you that will take about 5 minutes. Is this a good time?” [If yes, proceed with the questions below; if no, arrange an alternative time.]

Participant Number: _____
Date child was born: _____

Date Contacted: _____

1.	Did you take maternity/paternity leave?	Yes No
2.	How long was your maternity/paternity leave? (If applicable)	_____ Months _____ Weeks
3.	Was the leave paid or unpaid?	_____ Paid _____ Unpaid
4.	How much of this time was vacation time vs. maternity/paternity leave?	_____ Vacation _____ Leave
5.	Did your spouse take maternity/paternity leave?	Yes No
6.	How long was your spouse’s maternity/paternity leave? (If applicable)	_____ Months _____ Weeks
7.	How much of this time was vacation time vs. maternity/paternity leave?	_____ Vacation _____ Leave
8.	Do you currently utilize a flexible work schedule to help you meet childcare demands?	Yes No
9.	Describe the nature of your flexible work schedule. (If applicable)	
10.	Does your spouse currently utilize a flexible work schedule to help meet childcare demands?	Yes No
11.	Describe the nature of your spouse’s flexible work schedule. (If applicable)	
12.	Please provide a physical mailing address where I can mail a Debriefing Form, which will explain a little more about the study.	Address:

Identity Salience Measure

“For the next part of the survey, I am going to read several statements to you and I’d like to indicate your level of agreement with each statement using a five-point scale in which 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.”

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	The major satisfactions in my life come from my family.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The most important things that happen to me involve my family.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The major satisfactions in my life come from my job.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The most important things that happen to me involve my job.	1	2	3	4	5

“Next, I am going to read five statements to you and I’d like you to tell me which one describes you and your day-to-day priorities the best.”

5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I am primarily a family person b. I am a family and career person but lean a bit more towards family c. I am a career and family person d. I am a career and family person but lean a bit more towards career e. I am primarily a career person
----	--

Role Conflict Measure

“For the last part of the survey, I am going to read several statements to you and I’d like to indicate your level of agreement with each statement using a five-point scale in which 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.”

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The time I spend on family responsibilities often interfere with my work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The time I spend with my family often causes me not to spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time I must spend on family responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too stressed to do the things I enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Because I am often stressed from family responsibilities, I have a hard time concentrating on my work.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	The problem-solving behaviors I use in my job are not effective in resolving problems at home.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home.	1	2	3	4	5

		SD	D	N	A	SA
15.	The behaviors I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The behaviors that work for me at home do not seem to be effective at work.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at home would be counterproductive at work.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The problem-solving behaviors that work for me at home do not seem as useful at work.	1	2	3	4	5

“This concludes the survey. Thank you very much for your time, I really appreciate it.”

APPENDIX H
DEBRIEFING FORM

Study Debriefing

Recently you participated in a study that involved completing two surveys. Thank you very much for your participation. The study was designed to determine what variables might be related to an individual's decision to take maternity/paternity leave and/or utilize a flexible work schedule in order to handle childcare responsibilities. In addition, the study sought to determine whether these variables differ for men and women.

Research has found that there are advantages to using family-friendly benefits but that employees are hesitant to do so. By examining the factors related to an employee's decision to use family-friendly benefits, interventions can target any factor or factors(s) that may decrease an employee's intention to take advantage of them, potentially helping employees overcome their reluctance to use these benefits.

Because this is an ongoing study, it is important that you refrain from discussing it with others.

If you would like information regarding the results of this study, please e-mail the researcher at hseiser@cfl.rr.com or call (407) 328-9618. Be sure to provide an e-mail or home address and you will receive a copy of the results at the conclusion of the study.

Thank you again for your participation and best wishes with your new baby!

APPENDIX I

IRB HUMAN SUBJECTS PERMISSION LETTER



THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

IRB Committee Approval Form

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Heather Seiser

IRB #: 05-2750

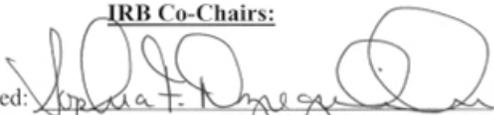
PROJECT TITLE: Examining Employee Use of Family-Friendly Benefits with the Theory of Planned Behavior

- New project submission
- Continuing review of lapsed project # _____
- Study expires 8/12/05
- Initial submission was approved by full board review but continuing review can be expedited
- Suspension of enrollment email sent to PI, entered on spreadsheet, administration notified _____

Chair

Expedited Approval
 Dated: 7/27/2005
 Cite how qualifies for expedited review:
 minimal risk and #7

IRB Co-Chairs:

Signed: 
 Dr. Sophia Dziegielewski

Exempt
 Dated: _____
 Cite how qualifies for exempt status:
 minimal risk and _____

Signed: _____
 Dr. Jacqueline Byers

Complete reverse side of expedited or exempt form

- Expiration
Date: 7/26/06
- Waiver of documentation of consent approved
- Waiver of consent approved
- Waiver of HIPAA Authorization approved

NOTES FROM IRB CHAIR (IF APPLICABLE): _____

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