

# **Family models for earning and caring: implications for child care**

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**Roderic Beaujot and Zenaida R. Ravanera**  
**University of Western Ontario**

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# Topics of Discussion

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- **Introduction: Earning and caring in the human life course**
- **Interpreting change in gender and families:**
  - **Economic and cultural changes**
  - **Paid work by gender and parental status**
  - **Models of earning and caring**
- **The child care situation**
- **Parental preferences for work and child care**
- **Policy reflections**
- **Conclusion**



## Earning and caring in the human life course

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- Earning a living and caring for each other are the core activities that define families as units of material and emotional interdependence
- Three unique interrelated features of the human life course (Kaplan, 1997):
  - a long period of juvenile dependency,
  - long life expectancy,
  - and menopause.
- Period of juvenile dependency has clearly been extended in modern times, but applies to gathering and hunting, and agricultural societies as well.
- The core earning and caring activities of families, at least for families with young children, typically depend on assistance from a broader social group beyond the immediate parents.



## **Change in Gender and Families:**

### **Related to:**

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- Economic questions: earning a living, maintaining a household
- Cultural questions: norms, desires, aspirations, preferences, ideals, considerations of proper and legitimate behaviour



## Interpreting change in gender and families: Economic

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- Main economic changes in the workplace:
  - growth of the service sector,
  - evolution of a 24 hour economy,
  - greater needs for advanced skills,
  - more non-standard jobs
- Changes have increased labour force opportunities for, and participation of women, but there remain considerable differences in the occupational profiles of women and men
  - more flexibility for women, including public sector jobs and non-standard work.
- Economic change within the home:
  - As work within the home has become less than a full-time job, other forms of division of labour have gained advantages
  - Increased productivity has reduced the efficiency of traditional division of labour;

# Interpreting change in gender and families: Cultural (1)

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- Cultural changes:
  - Ideological shift that favours tolerance and egalitarian relationships, between spouses, between parents and children (Nevitte,1996) .
  - New ideals of less rigid gender models, of greater symmetry in the division of work, and of mutuality by sharing in caring activities
- These are reflected in the shift in women's attitudes about work and family.

**Table 1: Percent Responding 'Very Important' and 'Important' to Happiness by 20-Year Birth Cohort, Women, 2001 General Social Survey**

	1961-80	1941-60	1922-40	Total
To have a lasting relationship as a couple	93.9	89.5	88.8	91.2
To be married	70.7	68.9	81.7	72.0
To have at least one child	83.8	83.5	90.1	84.8
To be able to take paying job	85.2	78.8	55.8	77.4



# Interpreting change in gender and families: Cultural (2)

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- While there has been a general shift in attitude, diversity remains.
- Preference theory proposes three alternate orientations of **women** (Hakim, 2003):
  - work-centred 20%
  - family-centred 20%
  - adaptive 60%
- But, preferences are modified by circumstances, particularly by the birth of children
  - Fox (2001), for example, found that being family-centred was common during the first few months of the child's life, and
  - Dominant pattern of intensive mothering.

# Paid work by gender

- Employment/population ratio has converged considerably between women and men

**Table 2: Employment/Population Ratio  
by sex and age group, Canada, 1971-2001**

Age group	Male				Female			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
15-24	55.3	59.5	56.4	55.6	41.8	52.1	54.4	55.0
25-34	87.7	88.9	82.4	83.6	41.5	59.9	69.1	73.2
35-44	88.8	90.8	86.0	85.9	41.4	59.7	72.2	75.8
45-54	86.3	87.9	84.0	83.7	42.1	52.2	65.6	72.8
55-64	75.8	73.1	60.0	59.7	32.6	33.4	35.5	41.4
Total	70.8	72.3	67.7	66.7	36.4	46.8	53.2	55.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Cat. no. 97F0012XBCO1003.





# **Paid work by gender and parental status**

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- Parenthood has the opposite average effects; that is, it leads to divergence of the employment patterns of women and men.
  - Compared to women with no children at home, those with children at home are less likely to work full-time, and the younger the child the less likely they are to be working full-time.
  - In contrast, men are more likely to work full-time if they have children at home.
  - There are similar findings with regard to work interruptions:
    - Women are more likely to experience work interruption when they have children.
    - But, work interruption is less likely for men who have children (Cook and Beaujot, 1996).

# Models of earning and caring

**Table 4: Models of Earning and Caring  
1998 General Social Survey on Time Use**

Compared to husband, wife does	Compared to husband, wife		
	More paid	Same paid	Less paid
<b>More unpaid</b>	5.7	17.2	48.5
<b>Same unpaid</b>	1.9	5.7	5.5
<b>Less unpaid</b>	5.3	4.5	5.5

## Relative Participation Models

Complementary-traditional	48.5
Complementary-gender-reversed	5.3
Women's double burden	22.9
Men's double burden	10.0
Shared	13.1

## Variation by children:

Model more common when:

- Complementary-traditional -- there are younger children or there are more children
- Double burden -- there are no children, or children are older
- Role sharing -- both are working full-time, or there are two children

# The child care situation

**Table 5: Percent using various child care facilities for children aged 0-5  
Canada, 1999**

Type of Care:	Two Parents		One Parent	
	Working	Not Working	Working	Not Working
Care in Someone Else's Home by Non-relative	43.9	25.4	29.4	25.1
Care in Someone Else's Home by Relative	24.9	23.2	25.9	18.5
Care in Own Home by Non-Sibling Relative	16.8	22.1	25.2	10.8
Care in Own Home by Non-relative	17.0	15.0	15.7	12.2
Care in Daycare Centre	16.8	30.0	28.6	45.6
Care in Nursery School/Preschool	7.4	10.5	6.7	9.8
Care in Own Home by Child's Sibling	2.0	6.4	1.9	1.1
Other Child Care Arrangement	3.6	2.9	4.3	0.7

Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) Cycle 3, 1998-1999



## The child care situation, main points

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- Children are in a diversity of care situations.
- They are more likely to be in care
  - when the parent most knowledgeable is working,
  - and when they are with one parent.
- The most common forms of care
  - 18%: someone else's home by non-relative
  - 16% day care (33% in Quebec)
  - 14% someone else's home by relative



## **Determinants of manner of child care**

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- Work status of parents
- Family structure
- Availability
- Parental preferences



# Parental preferences for work

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The 1988 Child Care Survey:  
Among employed 'designated adults' there is a significant interest to work less than they were currently working (Beaujot, 2000: 280).

Parents with children under six years of age

Among respondents working **part-time**:

69.6% preferred to work part-time

11.8% preferred not to work

7.4% preferred to work full-time

11.9% not stated.

Among respondents working **full-time**:

43.6% preferred to work part-time

32.0% preferred full-time

13.4% preferred not to work

11.0% not stated.

# Parental preferences for child care

	Actual	Preferred
Day care	12.2	22.4
Nursery	3.8	5.0
<b>Non-relative</b>		
child's home	9.5	17.7
other's home	26.7	19.0
<b>Relative</b>		
spouse	16.7	15.0
other	20.3	17.3
DA	10.8	8.9

- Results of qualitative survey in London, Ontario showed that respondents:
  - had established patterns in paid and unpaid work which they found satisfactory
  - observed that younger men, have come to do more of the household work, especially in child care
  - had made accommodations between family and work, rather than calling for more accommodations in the workplace or more day care services
  - women had made most of the accommodations, while men were more likely to see family and work as two separate things

# Preferences for services

## Percent of support for various possible government initiatives:

Inexpensive day care open to families with low income:	88%
Inexpensive day care open to all families:	66%
Direct financial support for low income families with children:	75%
Direct financial support for every family with children, regardless of income:	31%
Extending paid parental leave to two years:	49%
Extending paid parental leave but requiring that: parents share the leave	39%
Introduce leaves for caring for ill relatives	82%
Pay parents who stay home to care for their children the same amount as it would cost the government to care for children in day care:	58%

## Personal preference for one child-related benefit for families with young children

More subsidies for parents in the form of family benefits, family allowance or tax deductions	44%
Longer parental leave after the child's birth	27%
More publically supported child care facilities	18%
none of the above.	12%





# Policy reflections

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- Family changes brought about by economic and cultural pushes point to interest in:
  - more equal opportunities at work, and
  - space for family time, including parental time with children.
- Diversity of models depending on
  - One-parent and two-parent families
  - Models of division of labour: complementary vs symmetric
  - Paradigm: “parental responsibility” vs “investing in children”



## Policy reflections

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- Increase **parental leave** benefits to 75% of regular pay for all.
- Enrich the **child tax benefit** and extend it to all parents.
- Make employment benefits for **part-time** work more comparable to those of full time work.
- Extend early childhood education and child care services



# Policy reflections

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- Enhance special provisions for **lone parents**, for example,
  - Double the child tax benefit for the first child of a lone parent family (as in Denmark)
  - Provide advance maintenance payments directly by the state to the lone parent, regardless of the extent to which they can be recaptured from the absent parent.
  - More subsidies for child care



# Policy reflections

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- Marois: Quebec
  - Benefits for children in low income households
  - Full-day kindergarten at age 5
  - Enriching and extending eligibility for parental leave
  - Educational and child care services for young children: parent-controlled and community based



## Concluding Remarks (1)

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- Childbearing needs the support of others besides immediate parents. Help can be received from older family members, but the society is also involved, especially for children's education.
- Extend the period of post-reproductive productivity in order to make better transfers to the young during the longer period of adolescent and youth dependency, and through to parenthood.
- Education and child care services, plus other forms of help that would allow parents to fulfil their desires to look after young children themselves and reduce the need for market income during the early parenthood stage.



## Concluding Remarks (2)

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- Variable needs depending on
  - Age of children
  - Family structure
  - Work of parents
  - Paradigm: family responsibility vs investing in children