CHAPTER

12   Child Outcomes Associated with Parent Work–Family Experiences 🔓

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Abstract

This chapter provides a critical synthesis of the literature on the relationship between parent work family experiences and child outcomes. The chapter begins by introducing a theory-driven conceptual model that organizes previous studies. Then it discusses research on the direct link between parent work family experiences and child outcomes, followed by a review of mediators and moderators of the process. It next notes limitations of the extant literature and concludes with promising directions for future research.

Keywords: parent work family experiences, child outcomes, child development, spillover, crossover, job characteristics, work schedule, parent child interaction

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Given the fundamental role of parents in child development and the centrality of work in adults' lives, the interconnection between parental work and child outcomes has received much scholarly attention. Earlier research focused on the effects of parent employment status, particularly maternal employment status (e.g., Siegel & Haas, 1963), on child outcomes. Expanding on the early research, a growing body of literature has highlighted that parent work-family experiences play a key role in child functioning. The goal of this chapter is to review this stream of research on the association between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes. It is our intention to provide a critical synthesis, rather than an exhaustive review, of the extant literature.

Examining child outcomes associated with their parent's work-family experiences is important for several reasons. First, a child's outcome influences parents' work lives. Considering the large number of employees who are parents (Vespa, Lewis, & Kreider, 2013), a better understanding of the link between parents' work and child outcomes has significant practical implications. Second, by influencing parents' lives, child outcomes affect organizational outcomes. For instance, a higher frequency of absenteeism has been reported among employed parents (Goff, Mount, & Jamison, 1990) and a sick child tends to be a reason for

absenteeism (Major, Cardenas, & Allard, 2004). In addition, parents' concern about their child's development is known to influence their attitudes toward work (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1990). Finally, children are the next generation of workers and citizens of tomorrow. Therefore, ensuring optimal development for children is a critical concern for the larger society as well.

In the sections that follow we synthesize findings from previous empirical studies along with our conceptual model (Figure 12.1). Our review draws on a number of different programs of research including the work–family literature, stress and coping literature, parenting literature, and child development literature. We first describe the theoretical framework that underlies the conceptual model, followed by a review of relevant studies for the link between parent work–family experiences and child outcomes. We then

discuss mechanisms by which parents' ↳

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experiences relate to child outcomes, which consist of parent outcomes and parent's interactions with the child. We also review moderators of the focal relationships that were examined in prior research. After discussing limitations of the extant literature, we conclude with directions for future research.

Figure 12.1.
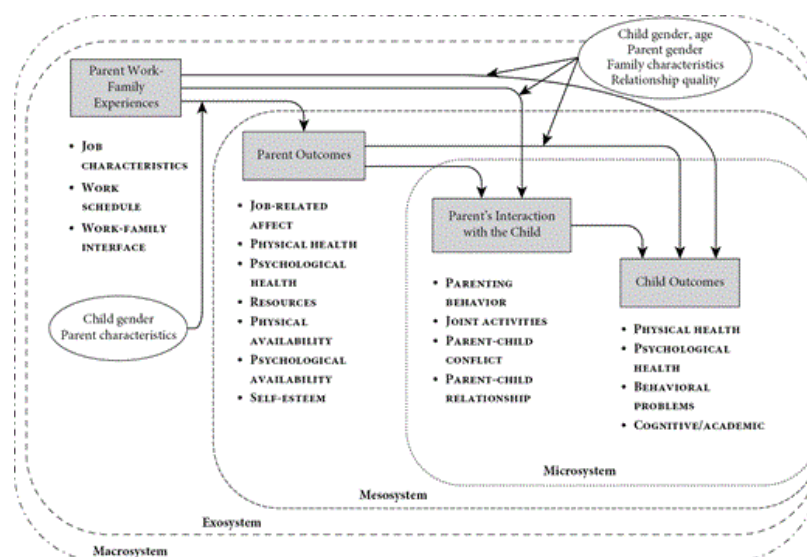
The spillover-crossover process model within the child's ecological system linking parent work-family experiences and child outcomes.

In this chapter, parent work–family experiences refer to parents' work experiences that are transferred to the family domain. We exclude studies about the parent's employment status per se because available comprehensive reviews conclude that employment in and of itself does not fully account for child outcomes (e.g., Goldberg, Prause, Lucas-Thompson, & Himsel, 2008; Lucas-Thompson, Goldberg, & Prause, 2010). Thus, parent work–family experiences encompass various aspects of parents' work experiences (e.g., job characteristics, work schedule) that are carried over to the family domain as well as the interface between work and family (e.g., work–family spillover). Children in this chapter refer to offspring of any age, reflecting the wide age range of children included in prior research (e.g., infants to college students).

Theoretical Framework

Ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) provides a conceptual structure for the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes. This theory posits that child development occurs within an environment that consists of four interconnected, hierarchically structured systems. A system refers to "any two or more parts that are related" (Hanson, 1995). A setting in which a child has immediate contacts is called a microsystem (e.g., family, school). Interrelations among microsystems are called mesosystems (e.g., interactions between family and school). An exosystem refers to the external context in which microsystems and mesosystems are embedded (e.g., characteristics of the community, the nature of parents' work). Finally, the macrosystem refers to the overarching patterns of the culture (e.g., economic situation, societal values). As elements in any given system are related, changes in one element can affect other parts of the system. Thus, the exosystem and macrosystem, settings beyond the immediate surrounding of a developing child, can indirectly affect child functioning by influencing the child's microsystems and mesosystems. In this regard, parental work experiences (i.e., exosystem) that are not part of the child's immediate world can influence child outcomes via shaping parents' behaviors in the family (i.e., microsystem).

The spillover-crossover model (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2012) further delineates the process by which parental work experiences influence child well-being. Spillover involves an intraindividual, cross-domain phenomenon in which an individual's experiences from one domain transfer to another, influencing his or her behavior in the receiving domain (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Crossover is an interindividual process in which one person's experiences (e.g., stress, strain) influence another person's experience through a transmission process (Westman, 2001). The core idea of a spillover-crossover model is that work-related experiences first spillover to the family domain, and then crossover to other individuals through social interaction. As an example, parents who have a demanding job may be in a bad mood at home, exhibiting less acceptance and responsiveness when interacting with their children (i.e., spillover), which makes the children anxious or depressed (i.e., crossover).

Collectively, ecological systems theory and the spillover-crossover model suggest that parental work experiences can spillover to the family domain, crossover to children, and ultimately affect child outcomes. Figure 12.1 describes how child outcomes, parent's interactions with the child, parent outcomes, and parent work-family experiences map onto the ecological system that surrounds a child. The path from parent work experiences to parent's interactions with the child through parent outcomes exemplifies the spillover process, whereas the path from parent outcomes to child outcomes through parent's interactions with the child describes the crossover process. With this theoretical background, we now review previous research on the linkage between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes.

Parent Work-Family Experiences and Child Outcomes

Accumulated evidence suggests that parents' work plays a key role in child development. Studies have utilized indirect measures of spillover (i.e., the relationship between work experiences and family experiences; e.g., Johnson & Allen, 2013) as well as direct measures of spillover (i.e., the perception of the degree to which work-related experiences spillover to the family domain; e.g., Cho & Allen, 2012). We review these studies in the order of job characteristics, work schedule, and the work-family interface.

Job Characteristics

Various job characteristics have been investigated in relation to child outcomes. Regarding ↳ job control, children showed more emotional and behavioral difficulties when their parents' jobs are of poor quality in terms of control, security, flexibility, and provision of paid family leave (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Strazdins, Shipley, Clements, Obrien, & Broom, 2010). In a similar vein, maternal occupation complexity conceptualized as the degree that a job involves complex tasks, more authority, and more autonomy was positively associated with child's math and reading achievements (Yetis-Bayraktar, Budig, & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013). Interestingly, some studies reported that parents' job autonomy was negatively associated with children's school attendance (e.g., Piotrkowski & Katz, 1982). Building on the notion that parents' work values are translated into child-rearing values (Kohn, 1977), it was argued that parents who have more self-direction at work might be more tolerant when their children do not closely follow the formal requirements of authority.

Several studies reported the relationship between work demands and child outcomes. Work pressure had a negative indirect association with adolescents' psychological well-being (general self-worth and depression) via parental role overload and parent-adolescent conflict (Crouter, Bumpus, Maguire, & McHale, 1999). However, Piotrkowski and Katz (1982) found *positive* associations between mother's experience of time pressure, workload, and effort on the job and children's academic behaviors (e.g., math achievement, effort in English class) after controlling for mother's education. This seemingly counterintuitive relationship was explained such that mothers whose jobs require significant on-the-job efforts emphasize the value of effort, which encourages their children to put more effort into schoolwork and to achieve better academic outcomes.

Next, some studies observed relationships of downward change (e.g., demotion) and instability of parents' work status with adolescents' development as reflected in their social competence and the frequency of disruptive behaviors at school (Flanagan & Eccles, 1993). Similarly, several studies by Barling and colleagues conducted with college students and their parents (e.g., Barling, Dupre, & Hepburn, 1998; Barling & Mendelson, 1999; Barling, Zacharatos, & Hepburn, 1999) found adverse relationships between parents' job insecurity and child outcomes such as children's work beliefs, work attitudes, and academic outcomes, although these relationships were indirect in that various mediators were involved, such as children's perception of parental job insecurity, belief in an unjust world, and cognitive difficulties.

Work Schedule

Research on parents' work schedule has placed a particular focus on parental nonstandard work schedules. Nonstandard work schedules are loosely defined as schedules that do not fit in a typical daytime, five-workdays (Monday to Friday) per week scheme, which includes evening and night shifts, rotating shifts, irregular hours, and weekend shifts. The main finding from the extant literature is that parents' nonstandard work schedules adversely relate to a variety of child developmental outcomes, including academic, cognitive, behavioral, and health outcomes, although the effect sizes tend to be small (for a review, see Li et al., 2013). Notably, the strength of the relationship varied depending on a number of factors, such as child gender and age. For instance, boys have been shown to experience more negative outcomes than girls when parents work nonstandard schedules. The adverse links between nonstandard work schedules and child outcomes were stronger for younger children. Family characteristics qualified the relationship as well; the negative relationships between parents' nonstandard work schedules and child outcomes were more salient among low socioeconomic status families. Finally, types of nonstandard schedule mattered such that a full-time nonstandard schedule related to worse child outcomes compared to a part-time nonstandard schedule. Evening and night shifts were particularly detrimental.

Work-Family Interface

Work-family experiences (e.g., spillover, work-family conflict and facilitation) have been linked to child outcomes. Several studies demonstrated significant adverse relationships between work-family experiences and child outcomes. For instance, Watkins, Pittman, and Walsh (2013) investigated whether employed parents' experience of psychological distress (e.g., feeling sad, hopeless) and work and family stressors (e.g., work hassles, bothered as a parent) predicts child behavior problems. Of relevance to the current review, participants provided a "yes" or "no" response to the question of whether they experienced trouble balancing work and family demands in the past month; parents who experienced difficulty balancing work and family reported more child behavior problems compared to those who did not have trouble balancing their work and family demands. Children were more likely to ↳ have behavioral problems when their parents' work interfered with family, although children's general health or school performance was not affected (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). Finally, mothers', but not fathers', work-to-family conflict had positive associations with children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Hart & Kelley, 2006). Studies utilizing data from children depict a consistent picture regarding the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes (Galinsky, 1999). For instance, adolescents who perceived negative spillover from parental work to parent–child relationship were more likely to experience depressive symptoms (Sallinen, Kinnunen, & Ronka, 2004; Sallinen, Ronka, Kinnunen, & Kokko, 2007). Similarly, Polk (2013) reported that adolescents' perception of parental negative spillover had a positive relationship with self-rated anxiety, whereas perception of parental positive spillover did not have a significant relationship with anxiety.

Only a few studies documented relationships between parent work-family experiences and enhanced child outcomes. Strazdins, OBrien, Lucas, and Rodgers (2013) found that work-family facilitation correlated with better child mental health. In a daily diary study of the relationship between employed mothers and their children, mothers' positive work experiences predicted their own moods at home (more positive and less negative moods), which in turn related to youth reports of enhanced moods and health outcomes (Lawson, Davis, McHale, Hammer, & Buxton, 2014). Interestingly, college students who observed their same-gender parents experiencing work-to-family conflict had *more* knowledge of, commitment to, and involvement in planning for future work and family roles (Basuil & Casper, 2012).

So far, we have reviewed previous research on the linkage between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes. Three points are worthy of attention. First, the extant literature supports the notion that parental work experiences spillover to the family domain and have significant relationships with a variety of child outcomes. Interestingly, the pattern of the relationship was counterintuitive at times such that negative work-related experiences spilling over to the family domain benefited children (e.g., Basuil & Casper, 2012; Piotrkowski & Katz, 1982). Second, consistent with other areas in the work-family literature (for a review, see Allen, 2012), more attention has been paid to negative aspects of parental work experiences, rather than positive aspects, in relation to child outcomes. It should be noted, however, that a few exceptions have demonstrated that children do perceive their parents' positive work experiences spilling over to the family domain and that such positive spillover benefits children (Lawson et al., 2014; Polk, 2013; Strazdins et al., 2013). Third, effect sizes for the relationships between parent work experiences and child outcomes tend to be small. This is because parental work experiences are a distal factor that relates to child outcomes via a number of mediating variables (Repetti, 2005). Indeed, a number of researchers have proposed mediation models that involve different intervening variables (e.g., Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Galambos, Sears, Almeida, & Kolaric, 1995; Li et al., 2013). Our next section discusses mediators of the parent work-family experience and child outcome link.

Mediators of the Link between Parent Work-Family Experiences and Child Outcomes

We now turn to studies that examined the underlying processes in the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes. Consistent with the earlier section, we review these studies in the order of job characteristics, work schedule, and work-family interface. As mentioned above, researchers have discussed a number of factors that mediate parent work experiences and child outcomes. We propose that the various factors can be grouped into parent outcomes and parent's interaction with the child. Accordingly, we center our synthesis of the extant literature on how parent work experiences relate to the two key mediating variables in a sequence, which ultimately link to child outcomes.

The first phase in the process from parent work experiences to child outcomes is changing parent outcomes. *Parent outcomes* encompass a wide variety of factors including parents' perception, affect, and behavior, physical and mental well-being, parental resources, and physical and emotional availability. Thus, parent outcomes refer to all sorts of consequences of work-related experiences that set the stage for parent's interaction with the child in the family domain. Once parent work experiences affect parent outcomes by spilling over to the family domain, crossover to children occurs. *Parent's interaction with the child* reflects what happens during the time that parents and children spend together and includes diverse factors, such as parenting behaviors (e.g., interactive behaviors, disciplinary behaviors), parent-child interpersonal
conflict, and ↳ parent-child relationship quality. Our consideration of parent's interaction with the child as a primary way crossover occurs is based on the extant literature that views parenting behaviors as a causal factor between parental work and child development (e.g., Hoffman & Youngblade, 1999).

Job Characteristics

A few studies examining parental job characteristics in relation to child outcomes have provided a test of our conceptual model in its entirety (Crouter et al., 1999; Ransford, Crouter, & McHale, 2008; Vermulst & Dubas, 2001). Although specific variables examined in each study differ, these studies yielded consistent findings. First, poor job characteristics (e.g., high work pressure, low support) led to negative parent outcomes such as feelings of role overload and depression. Subsequently, parent suboptimal outcomes related to more conflicts and less warmth in the parent-child relationship. Finally, the low-quality interaction between parents and children contributed to adverse child outcomes (e.g., lower general self-worth, depression, problem behavior).

In studying parent outcomes as a mediator of the parental job characteristics-parenting practices link, much attention has been given to psychological outcomes. For example, Kinnunen and Pukkinen (2001) reported that high time demands, low control at work, and job insecurity were associated with heightened job-related negative affect and child-rearing stress, which then shaped the way in which parents interact with their children (hindered child-centrality, supervision). Next, working conditions have also been shown to affect parental resources, which was assessed in terms of parent self-esteem, home environment stability, and psychological as well as physical availability (i.e., social capital; Parcel & Menaghan, 1993); these resources appeared to be important determinants of child development (Biringen, 2000; Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). Finally, it has been documented that parental job characteristics influence parents' health behavior, which then affects child outcomes via modeling. Given that children observe and learn from their parents' behavior (Bandura, 1986) and that children's lifestyle (e.g., eating and exercise habits) resembles parents' lifestyle (Perusse, Leblanc, & Bouchard, 1988; Oliveria, Ellison, Moore, & Gillman, 1992), parents' job characteristics are thought to have an important implication for child health insofar as it alters parents' health behaviors. Supporting this notion, maternal poor job characteristics (low job control, high

role ambiguity, long work hours) related to child health via mothers' physical activity and children's physical activity (Johnson & Allen, 2013).

Several investigations have focused on the direct link between parent work experiences and parent's interaction with the child (Mason, Cauce, Gonzales, Hiraga, & Grove, 1994; Stewart & Barling, 1996). Implicit to these studies is that stressful and demanding work produces negative affect that is transferred to the family domain (i.e., mood spillover; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000) and leaves insufficient resources (e.g., physical and cognitive energy) for parents to meet the child's needs (i.e., scarcity hypothesis; Marks, 1977). Additionally, some studies associated this link with the idea of socialization within the family such that skills, attitudes, and values that are rewarded on the job are transferred to the family domain and shape parenting practices (Greenberger, O'Neil, & Nagel, 1994).

Various aspects of parenting have been studied as a consequence of parent work experiences. For instance, stressful and demanding work experiences related to parental withdrawal (e.g., display less affection toward child, speak little), hostility against the child, more use of discipline, and less knowledge about the child (Bumpus, Crouter, & McHale, 1999; Repetti, 1994; Repetti & Wood, 1997). Similarly, poor work characteristics (e.g., low autonomy and flexibility, high pressure, and supervisor criticism) were associated with lower levels of fathers' engagement and sensitive parenting (Goodman, Crouter, Lanza, & Cox, 2008), lower quality interaction with the infant child (Goodman, Crouter, Lanza, Cox, & Vernon-Feagans, 2011), and more harsh and withdrawn mother-child interactions among low-income working mothers (Gassman-Pines, 2011). Studies also showed that the combination of long work hours and high overload reduced the quality of the parent-child relationship (Crouter, Bumpus, Head, & McHale, 2001). Probing this link between parental work characteristics and parent-child relationship quality, Roeters, Van der Lippe, and Kluwer (2010) reported that the quantity (i.e., time spent) and quality (i.e., disturbance experienced) of parent-child activities mediated the focal relationship.

Work Schedule

A number of studies attempted to elucidate the mechanism underlying the relationship between nonstandard work schedule and child outcomes. In line with findings that working a nonstandard schedule negatively affects worker's physical and psychological well-being (Jamal, 2004), parental nonstandard work schedules are shown to first affect parent outcomes then influence children. For example, parental nonstandard work schedules were associated with increased parenting stress and parental depressive symptoms, which in turn related to more emotional and behavioral problems among children (Joshi & Bogen, 2007; Strazdins et al., 2006).

Much research has also reported that parental nonstandard work schedules influence various aspects of parent's interaction with children. Parents who work a nonstandard schedule reported more hostile and ineffective parenting behaviors (Strazdins et al., 2006), provided less cognitive stimulation and emotional support (Heymann & Earle, 2001), had less close relationships with children (Han & Miller, 2009), and had fewer family meals together (Han & Fox, 2011; Han & Miller, 2009). As expected, these unfavorable parent-child interactions were associated with adverse child outcomes (e.g., cognitive development, depression).

It is important to note that previous studies have observed different relationship patterns across various types of nonstandard work schedules. Han and Miller (2009), for example, found that irregular shifts were associated with the *increased* likelihood of maternal knowledge of children's whereabouts, which in turn reduced adolescent depression. In addition, Hsueh and Yoshikawa (2007) reported that working variable shifts (i.e., shifts rotate on a regular basis between different scheduled hours) was associated with *increases* in child's school performance whereas working fixed nonstandard schedules was associated with *decreases* in child's school performance.

Work-Family Interface

Previous research has demonstrated that work-family experience is a distal antecedent of child outcomes. Corroborating the well-established link between work-family conflict and negative outcomes (Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011), work-to-family conflict was positively associated with personal strain, perceived child care load, and parenting stress among employed parents (MacEwen & Barling, 1991; Shreffler, Meadows, & Davis, 2011; Strazdins et al., 2013). Parental strain, in turn, related to parenting behavior (punishing, rejecting, irritable parent-child interaction), which was a proximal predictor of child outcomes (MacEwen & Barling, 1991; Otto, Atkinson, MacEwen, & Barling, 1994; Strazdins et al., 2013).

Considering the central role of parent-child interaction in the linkage between parental work-family experience and child outcomes, it is understandable that much research has looked at how the work-family experience shapes parent interaction with children. Parental negative spillover from work has been associated with increased parent-child conflict (Sallinen et al., 2007), controlling parenting behavior (Sallinen et al., 2004), reduced quality of parenting (Lau, 2010), and decreased engagement in educational and recreational activities (Cho & Allen, 2012). These unfavorable parenting practices connected to more depressive mood, negative academic attitude, and lower self-esteem among children (Lau, 2010; Sallinen et al., 2004, 2007).

Among various joint activities that parents do with their children, the family meal has received particular attention due to its beneficial impact on child development that is well-established in the literature (Eisenberg, Olson, Neumark-Sztainer, Story, & Bearinger, 2004). Further probing the benefit of frequent family meals, studies have noted that family meals provide a setting for socialization and role-modeling of manners and healthful eating habits (Fulkerson, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2006) and opportunities for quality communication between parents and children (Elgar, Craig, & Trites, 2013), thereby enhancing child psychological as well as physical well-being. In regard to the work-family experience and family meals, findings suggest that work-to-family conflict is associated with less frequent family dinners (Allen, Shockley, & Poteat, 2008; Cho & Allen, 2012). Taken together, work-family conflict seems to make it more challenging for parents to have frequent family meals, depriving children of a critical resource for their development.

In sum, findings from previous research describe the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes as a multistage process. Parent work experiences affected parent outcomes, which then were transmitted to the child through parent's interaction with the child. Notably, studies have documented a wide variety of parent outcomes and aspects of parent-child interaction through which parental work experiences alter child outcomes. This suggests that a host of mediating variables should be considered in order to gain a holistic picture of the relationship between parental work experiences and child outcomes. Considering the adverse relationships between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes that have been frequently reported, the mediating model that involves multiple pathways is encouraging in that unfavorable parental work experiences may not necessarily undermine healthy child development.

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Moderators of the Link between Parent Work-Family Experiences and Child Outcomes

The relationships among parent work–family experiences and child outcomes that we have discussed thus far may be qualified by a number of factors. Evidence suggests that any phase of the process by which parent work experiences relate to child outcomes can be moderated by characteristics of families as well as individual family members. In regard to child characteristics, gender has received the most attention. Findings generally demonstrated that the relationships among parent work–family experiences and child outcomes vary by child gender. For example, the strength of the relationship between maternal job complexity and child's academic outcomes (e.g., math skills) was greater for boys (Yetis–Bayraktar et al., 2013). Studies on the relationship between nonstandard work schedule and child behavioral problem reported that the relationship was stronger for girls among preschool–aged children (Joshi & Bogen, 2007), whereas the relationship was stronger for boys among adolescents (Han, Miller, & Waldfogel, 2010). Barling and Van Bart (1984) demonstrated that boys (e.g., externalizing, conduct problem) and girls (e.g., internalizing, immaturity) might experience different forms of behavioral problems when their parents experience work-family conflict. Child gender also moderated the relationship between parental job characteristics and parenting such that parent work experiences led to different parenting behaviors toward sons (e.g., spend less time with son when experiencing high time pressure) than toward daughters (e.g., fathers with high job complexity show more warmth toward daughters and better quality of explanations; Greenberger et al., 1994).

The age of the child was also considered as a moderator given differential needs of a child throughout the developmental lifespan (Thompson, 2006). Previous research provides preliminary support for the idea that the pathways by which parent work-family experiences influence child outcomes differ by the developmental stage of children. Younger children, for example, might be affected to a greater degree by parental physical absence due to work because they are more dependent on the caregiver and need more direct attention from their parents. In support of this notion, a recent review reported that the relationship between parental nonstandard work schedule and child outcomes was stronger for preschool–aged or younger children compared to older children (Li et al., 2013). Regarding adolescents who tend to be more independent and strive to establish their own identity, studies have shown that parental knowledge about children's whereabouts or the relationship quality mediates the link between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes (Bumpus et al., 1999; Crouter et al., 2001).

A number of studies have focused on parent's characteristics as a moderator. Similar to the case of child's characteristics, many studies have demonstrated that parent gender moderates the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes (Vermulst & Dubas, 2001; Wheeler, Updegraff, & Crouter, 2011). A consistent finding is that work experiences result in different parenting practices among mothers and fathers. For example, Galambos et al. (1995) reported that the impact of mothers' work overload on adolescent problem behaviors was mediated by her acceptance of the child whereas fathers' work overload led to more father-child conflicts, which in turn was related to more problem behaviors among adolescents.

Next, a few studies examined other parental characteristics such as personality or psychological functioning. For example, Repetti and Wood (1997) found that the relationship between daily job stressors and unfavorable parenting behavior was stronger among mothers who reported more depressive symptoms, anxiety, and Type A behaviors. A similar finding was observed among fathers such that the relationship between fathers' daily job stress and his interaction with children was moderated by neuroticism (Wang, Repetti, & Campos, 2011). Whereas emotionally stable fathers tended to withdraw from interactions with their children, fathers who are higher in neuroticism were more likely to express negative emotion in interacting with their children. Finally, the negative relationship between work-to-family

conflict and the frequency of family dinner was stronger among parents higher in negative affectivity compared with those lower in negative affectivity (Cho & Allen, 2013).

Several family characteristics have also been investigated as moderators of the link between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes. For instance, studies found that positive effects (Strazdins et al., 2010, 2013) as well as negative effects (Miller & Han, 2008) of parent work-family experiences on child outcomes were greater in low socioeconomic status families. In one investigation, the relationship between maternal job ↳ complexity and child reading scores was stronger among African American families (Yetis-Bayraktar et al., 2013). Finally, regarding family composition, the beneficial impacts of parent work experiences on child outcomes were stronger among married, two-parent families (Yetis-Bayraktar et al., 2013), whereas the harmful effects of parental work were stronger among single-parent households (Dockery, Li, & Kendall, 2009; Joshi & Bogen, 2007).

Other studies have demonstrated the moderating role of various factors that reflect relationship quality. Findings suggest that the relationship between parents' unfavorable work situation and child outcomes can be amplified if children highly identify with their parents (Barling et al., 1998, 1999). The quality of other relationships in the family (e.g., marital relationship) also appeared to moderate the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes. For instance, the negative effect of fathers' work stress on parental monitoring was exacerbated by poor marital quality (Bumpus et al., 1999).

In sum, accumulated findings suggest that characteristics of individual family members shape the relationship between parental work-family experiences and child outcomes because work-family experiences affect each individual to a varying degree and each person responds to the experiences in a different manner. Likewise, families' characteristics diversify the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes because circumstances in which families are situated may strengthen or weaken links among the focal variables in the spillover-crossover process. This suggests that a universal pattern that links parents' work to child outcomes cannot be assumed to exist, and, therefore, a more nuanced approach is warranted to better understand this process.

Limitations of the Current Literature and Directions for Future Research

The review of the extant literature suggests that knowledge of the association between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes has continued to grow. One notable development in the literature is the adoption of the in-depth approach toward parent's work in examining how it relates to child outcomes. That is, more research has delved into specific work conditions (e.g., job control) or experiences (e.g., work-family conflict) that parents have rather than parent employment status. However, much remains to be learned. In this section, we discuss limitations of the current literature and highlight fruitful avenues for future research.

First, our conceptual model highlights the need for further research that examines the intricate *process* by which parent work-family experiences affect child outcomes. To date, only a small number of studies have included variables at all stages of the spillover-crossover process. Without taking a perspective that conceptualizes this relationship as a series of events, however, it seems difficult to accurately understand how a parent's experiences influence children because numerous intermediary variables are involved. Relatedly, future research should study several mediating variables simultaneously in order to understand the relative importance of and the interrelations among various mediators. For example, parents whose work is highly demanding but flexible might be physically, but not psychologically, available for their child.

The current literature has little information to offer to explain how the parent work-family experiences might affect their child.

Second, the dominant topic of research to date has been the negative impact of parent work-family experiences on child outcomes. However, this is only half the story considering that work experiences can have a positive impact on the family (McNall, Nicklin, & Masuda, 2010). Findings from the few exceptions suggest that the positive spillover-crossover process might parallel the negative spillover-crossover process in that positive spillover relates to child outcomes and children notice when their parents have positive experiences at work (Polk, 2013; Lawson et al., 2014; Strazdins et al., 2013). Applying our theoretical model to the positive spillover-crossover process, for example, positive job characteristics and positive work-family interface may enhance parent outcomes, which facilitate healthy parent-child interactions. Such developmentally sound parenting is expected to improve child well-being. In short, future research needs to take a balanced approach that considers both a positive and negative spillover-crossover process to gain a more complete picture of the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes.

Third, past research has rarely included both parents when examining the impact of parent work-family experiences on child outcomes in two-parent families. However, a few exceptions that took into account both parents have demonstrated an intriguing pattern. For example, greater job ↳ demands perceived by mothers were associated with more *positive* father-child interactions (Bass, Butler, Grzywacz, & Linney, 2009). Similarly, whereas unfavorable situations at mothers' work (e.g., longer work hour, evening shift) did not affect mother-child interactions, these work experiences related to desirable parenting behaviors among fathers such that fathers were better informed about children, spent more time with children, received more disclosures from children, and had better parenting skills, compared with fathers whose wife worked in a more favorable environment (Barnett & Gareis, 2007; Crouter, Helms-Erikson, Updegraff, & McHale, 1999). Taken together, these findings emphasize the need to examine mother and father simultaneously in two-parent families.

Fourth, previous research by and large has conceptualized children as passive recipients who are affected by parent work-family experiences. How children perceive parent's experiences, what decisions they make, and how they contribute to the spillover-crossover process have received little attention. However, evidence suggests that children accurately observe and respond sensitively toward the state in which parents come home from work (Pocock & Clarke, 2005). Furthermore, it has been shown that children actively choose different strategies in response to parent work-family experiences, such as initiating conversation, turning to the other parent, or even looking after their parents and doing more housework (Gager, Sanchez, & Demaris, 2009; Galinsky, 1999). These findings correspond to the ecological systems theory that depicts children as active agents who maintain reciprocal relationships with their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Therefore, future research needs to take into account the active role that children play in the spillover-crossover process.

Fifth, prior research on moderators has been limited in scope. At the individual level, research has focused on demographic variables, mostly gender, and on a small number of negative personality traits (e.g., negative affectivity, Type A) as moderators in the relationship between work-family experiences and behaviors in the family. Less research has been conducted on moderators at the family level, the majority of which are about demographic or structural variables (e.g., socioeconomic status, family composition). Thus, further research is necessary to advance our understanding of the boundary conditions of the relationship between parent work-family experiences and child outcomes. Given cumulative evidence for the negative spillover-crossover process, research on the factors that mitigate the impact of negative work-family experiences on child outcomes is particularly needed. Individual characteristics (e.g., resilience, coping style; Beasley, Thompson, & Davidson, 2003) and family characteristics (e.g., family stability, family

cohesion; Benzies & Mychasiuk, 2009) that have been shown to buffer stressful events could be a good starting point.

Finally, much of the previous research relied on cross-sectional data obtained from parental reports. This limits our ability to draw the conclusion that parent work-family experiences cause child outcomes, despite a sound theoretical rationale for the direction of the relationship. More longitudinal studies that address the problem of reverse causation are warranted for a stronger test of causality. Such a longitudinal design would also allow a better understanding of the long-term effects of parent work-family experiences on child outcomes. Next, future research should utilize data from multiple individuals who can provide different perspectives on the spillover-crossover process (e.g., the child, parents, and teachers) and data from objective sources (e.g., O*Net for parent work-family experiences, grade point average [GPA] for child outcomes).

In addition to the ideas that stem from limitations of the current literature, there are several promising areas for future research. First, research that captures the dynamic nature of the spillover-crossover process is needed. A growing body of literature has examined daily experiences of parent and child, providing valuable information as to how the spillover-crossover process unfolds over time (e.g., Bass et al., 2009; Lawson et al., 2014). One topic that merits further investigation using an experience sampling method is children's time use in that how children use their time has implications for developmental outcomes (Pettit, Laird, Bates, & Dodge, 1997). Evidence from a previous cross-sectional study suggests that parents' work-family stress and nonstandard work schedule are associated with elevation of children's housework hours (Gager et al., 2009; Han & Fox, 2011), which could be because children noticed their parents' difficulties in managing multiple role demands and did more housework to help them (Galinsky, 1999). Research with experience sampling methodology could enable researchers to examine how children perceive parent work-family experiences and how such a perception influences their choice of daily behaviors in situ.

Second, emerging topics in the work-family literature reflect the blurred boundary between the work and family (Allen, Cho, & Meier, 2014). For ↳ instance, increasing use of communication technologies has enabled employees to deal with work demands anywhere, which makes it difficult for them to mentally switch-off (Park, Fritz, & Jex, 2011). Failing to psychologically detach from work has detrimental effects on the employee's well-being (Sonnentag, 2012). Moreover, individuals' lack of psychological detachment appears to influence their spouse's well-being by hampering their psychological detachment (Hahn & Dormann, 2013). Expanding this line of research, future research could investigate the impact of psychological detachment, or lack thereof, on child outcomes. It is plausible, for example, that parents who continue to think about their work while interacting with their child might be less sensitive or less responsive, which relates to negative child outcomes.

Finally, there are many ways that future research can extend the current literature using the conceptual model of the spillover-crossover process as a guide. For antecedents, the broader context in which families are embedded might be studied as a distal antecedent. The critical role that organizations, communities, and larger societies play in employees' work-family experiences has been well-documented (Allen, 2012). Bridging this stream of research and the literature on child outcomes associated with parent experiences could inform us as to how obstacles and resources in the exosystems and macrosystems indirectly influence child outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Next, with regard to mediators, investigating parents' behavior outside the family could broaden our understanding of the spillover-crossover process. Although research to date has emphasized parents' direct interaction with a child as a key mechanism, parents' behaviors that facilitate child development do not necessarily involve direct parent-child interaction. For instance, the choice of child care (e.g., paternal care, center-based child care; Han, 2005) as well as parental school involvement is known to predict child academic achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001). Lastly, for outcomes, a wider range of child outcomes should be considered, including physical (e.g., body mass index,

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acute/chronic health problems), cognitive and academic (e.g., language development, academic outcomes, GPA), and psychological and social (e.g., behavioral problems, attachment, self-esteem) aspects of development in order to fully understand child development.

Conclusions

In this chapter we synthesized the extant literature along with a conceptual model grounded in the ecological systems theory and the spillover-crossover model. Three important points emerged. First, parent work-family experiences are distal but critical antecedents of a variety of child outcomes. Second, the mechanism by which parents' work experiences spillover to the family domain and exert influences on children is a multistage process. Finally, diverse individual and family characteristics moderate the linkage between parents' work-family experiences and child outcomes.

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