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Dutch workers and time pressure: household and workplace characteristics

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ABSTRACT

Balancing work with family life has become one of the most important issues for families nowadays. In this article I study the varying degrees of success of governance structures in households and firms in dealing with competing time claims. Using Dutch data from firms, employees and their spouses and performing regression analyses with robust estimation to test the hypotheses, the results show that more modern organizations characterized by heavy deadlines and a large amount of autonomy for individual employees give more feelings of time pressure. With respect to the organization of the household, especially the presence of young children, time spent on domestic and paid work and existing household rules explain feelings of time pressure. Gender also appears to be important. Men are influenced more by workplace characteristics, and women more by household characteristics.

KEY WORDS

families / governance structures / multi-level / organizations / time pressure / work–life balance

Introduction

Balancing work with family life has become one of the most important issues for families nowadays. On the one hand, with both spouses having a paid job, difficulties arise as to who is responsible for the domestic and caring duties at home. On the other hand, organizations seem to demand of employees an increasing willingness to be available permanently. An escalation of time demands has occurred in the family as well as in the workplace (Epstein, 2004).

Many people feel torn between work and family not only because their households increasingly juggle competing responsibilities, but also because job expectations and parenting standards have become more demanding (Daly, 1996; Jacobs and Gerson, 2004; Moen, 2003). Consequences range from feelings of stress, work-home interference, time pressure and fatigue to burnout and other health problems (MacDermid, 2005). One would expect that smart, rational employees would not force themselves into a situation of overworked individuals lacking time for their families at home. However, figures reporting these problems are not to be neglected. In the USA, for example, 60 percent of men and women report at least some conflicts in balancing work, personal life and family life, about 30 percent do not have enough time to fulfil all obligations, and about 25 percent feel burned-out or stressed by work (Jacobs and Gerson, 2004: 85). In Europe, 28 percent of employees report stress and 22 percent general fatigue. These percentages are higher for those working irregular hours or doing shift work (Boisard, 2003). This is a serious problem, and it is necessary to gain more understanding of its causes. In order to have adequate insight into families' problems and successes, it is necessary to treat the two life spheres of work and family together (Berg et al., 2003; Moen, 2003). Relationships with spouses and children have an impact on workers' experiences and relationships at work and vice versa (Fox and Dwyer, 1999; Peters and Van der Lippe, 2007).

Although an abundance of research is available to understand causes and consequences of the disturbed balances between work and care, most focus on the influence of either the workplace or the household (Perlow, 2001). When both sides are included, ideas and findings are often contradictory (Van der Lippe et al., 2006). Studies focusing on the impact of the work environment on family life of employees, for example, yield two contrasting ideas. The widely cited book *The Time Bind* (Hochschild, 1997) states that new organizational forms with more control for employees are very different from the Taylorist systems of work organization in which employees had little input on how the work was done. According to Hochschild, in these new organizational forms workers are forced to spend more time at the workplace than with the family, such that 'work becomes home and home becomes work'. Berg et al. (2003) on the other hand stress that high-performance work organizations, the so-called new organizational forms, facilitate the combination of work and care. High-performance organizations are characterized by high levels of control for employees and by more family-friendly practices, resulting in a balance of work and private life for employees and less conflict with their home situation. Valcour and Batt (2003) too argue, using the Cornell Couples and Careers Study, that organizational family responsiveness involving formal and informal policies and practices supports work-life integration for family employees. Although the family situation is taken into account in these studies, attention is mostly directed at the influence of the functioning of the workplace. The presence of children and marital status are treated as necessary controls. Up to now, family studies and organizational studies have not exchanged insights systematically to understand the phenomenon of time pressure. Moreover, outcome measures of the disturbed

balance between work and care range from work–home interference to burnout (Van der Lippe and Peters, 2007). This lack of an agreed set of measures makes it harder to get a thorough understanding of the influence of the workplace and the household.

In this article I try to do so and my research question is therefore: ‘To what extent can time pressure be explained using insights from both family and organizational studies?’ The integration of organization and family studies is mirrored in the methodological approach: while the main data were collected in a large-scale survey among 30 firms, not only managers and employees were interviewed but also employees’ spouses (when applicable). In this way, true multi-actor data are obtained. Data containing detailed information about the workplace usually do not provide information about household characteristics and vice versa.

Theory and hypotheses

Time is marked by conceptual boundaries. Parts of the day and week are assigned to workplace activity, family engagement, leisure and religious observance. Ideologies about appropriate roles and the time norms attached to them, as well as the meaning of constructs such as the week, workdays and holidays, provide the context and values that order people’s sense of what they as men or women or workers ought to be doing at any given time (Epstein, 2004). Although these designations are generally socially described, I assume that individuals have the ability to make some choices about time management. The way demands are imposed on employees will influence their reported time pressure.

Governance structures of the workplace and the household

Employees adjust their work and family commitments in the context of specific job demands and the larger workplace structures and cultures in which these jobs are embedded (Schor, 1998). It is difficult to untangle the extent to which a choice to put in very long days on the job reflects an individual preference for work over other activities and to what extent it is a response to real or perceived workplace pressures and constraints (Jacobs and Gerson, 2004). In this study I concentrate mainly on these pressures and constraints and do not focus so much on preferences.

Profound changes have occurred in workplace pressures and constraints and thus in the way modern firms direct the efforts of their employees. The basis for this development is the shift towards the more flexible production technologies firms employ as a reaction to less predictable markets, intensified global competition and the microelectronic revolution. The organizational changes come under the various headings of ‘flexible workplace’, ‘sociotechnical revolution’ and ‘post-Fordist firm’, and their consequences for the workforce are just as variously denoted with phrases like ‘employability’,

'empowerment', and 'every worker a knowledge worker' (see for an overview: Smith, 1997; Van Echtelt et al., 2007).

This control of the processes can be described with the term 'governance structure'. The concept stems from transaction-cost economics (Williamson, 1985) but can be applied to denote any device to secure the fulfilment of a contract. Hence with employees of a firm a range of technical, social and bureaucratic arrangements come into play intended to obtain the desired work behaviour from the employees (cf. Baron and Kreps, 1999; Sørensen, 1994). Williamson himself has proposed a four-way classification of internal governance structures consisting of 'internal spot market', 'obligational market', 'primitive team' and 'relational team' (1985: 245–7). This however is just a typology beneath the surface of which more specific control mechanisms exist. According to Valcour and Batt (2003), a distinction has to be made between factors such as work–family programs, employment and pay security, work design, and the culture. For purposes of this study, I neglect the culture as a specific factor but assume that it is indirectly visible in the other forms.

If firms have a governance structure, the household must have one too. This insight is implied in economics' household production models (e.g. Becker, 1981), but has not been developed into a coherent set of organizational principles comparable to those used in researching firms and bureaucracies. In a sense, Hochschild's (1997) concept of the 'Taylorization of the household' bridges the gap between organizational studies and work-and-family research, although her account is still rather impressionistic. According to Orrange et al. (2003), family resource management literature helps to understand how families combine work and private life. Instead of having a passive orientation towards family members, this literature assumes an active and proactive role for household members. This idea in family resource management studies resembles in a way the body of thoughts that is so central to New Home Economics. Just like organizations direct their employees to meet their demands, so do partners regulate each others' activities in order to meet household demands.

Hypotheses for the workplace and the household

We assume that the governance structure constitutes the setting in which workers weigh alternatives and make decisions concerning the time and timing of their efforts for the organization and the household. These governance structures are the primary means by which families respond to the varying demands imposed on them from the spheres of work and care.

It is not easy to define the indicators that describe governance structures in the workplace (Van Echtelt, 2007). Generally, they are said to entail the degree of control, security and responsibility given to employees (Cappelli et al., 1997; Ramsay et al., 2000). In this article four main components of workplace governance structures are distinguished.

- 1) *Employment contracts* that may differ in the amount of job security and thus in the extent to which employees can shift investments and returns over the life course; more job security is found to decrease work–family conflict (Batt and Valcour, 2003);
- 2) *Job design* that varies according to the extent to which the job (a) has to be performed in personal hours and locations, and (b) is regulated by imposed targets and deadlines, inflexible schedules and excessive work hours that consistently produce conflict between work and family (Presser, 2003; Valcour and Batt, 2003);
- 3) *Reward systems* that vary in the extent to which rewards depend on the input of time; and
- 4) *Career systems* that differ in the extent to which (a) they resemble a tournament or offer fresh chances at every round, and (b) positions are contestable or guaranteed once they have been conquered. Especially when careers are structured by the concept of a tournament (Sørensen, 1994), the risks of holding one's pace are severe. Once you have missed the boat, no other may arrive.

The traditional bureaucratic-Taylorist workplace presented a different context for making decisions than the modern post-Fordist firm. Characteristic elements of the latter stressed in the literature (e.g. Cappelli et al., 1997; Sennett, 1998) are: decreased job security and growth of the contingent workforce; shifting responsibility for attaining production goals to the worker; an expansion of performance-related pay systems; predictable career paths giving way to more uncertain and competitive promotion systems. The greediness of this new employment relationship manifests itself in the loss of boundary control between work and private life as a result of employees being held personally responsible for meeting profit or production targets and managing their own workloads. This is expected to increase feelings of time pressure (Sennett, 1998).

Key elements that I believe to be essential for managing the domestic tasks of the family are the following.

- 1) *Life-stage and personal circumstances*. First of all, the life stage appears to be important in the way tasks are managed within the household (Moen and Roehling, 2005). Personal circumstances shape people's need for time and money. Family responsibilities raise the stakes for both, increasing economic obligations as well as time demands at home. Time pressure is most likely to occur among those who are in their late 20s, 30s and early 40s – the years during which people are most likely to marry, become parents and shoulder the responsibilities of caring for young children (Jacobs and Gerson, 2004). Gender also shapes the pressures and dilemmas of private life: although men's domestic participation has increased in recent decades, women continue to bear a greater share of the load. And amid the growing strength of mothers' work commitments, fathers continue to face pressures to provide primary economic support for their families. Despite the growing convergence between

men's and women's work commitments, they continue to face different pressures as parents (Jacobs and Gerson, 2004). Although Cousins and Tang (2004) show that fathers experience more difficulties in combining work with family life than mothers, whether this relates to feelings of time pressure as well remains to be seen.

- 2) *Division of tasks.* The mutual work arrangements of a couple matter as well. Work–family conflict is greatest when husbands and wives have very different levels of job involvement (Greenhaus et al., 1989) and long working hours (Valcour and Batt, 2003). Certainly dual-earner couples, especially those with children, are the most likely to feel squeezed between the demands and rewards of work and the needs of family life (Jacobs and Gerson, 2004). I expect that especially men in such couples feel the burden of their wives working many hours a week. However, time pressure is not always the result for dual-earner couples (Valcour and Batt, 2003).
- 3) *Household resources.* These constitute the whole set of social and financial assistance that can be mobilized by the household to lift its burden. Those with more resources and fewer demands tend to see themselves as successful at work, at family life and at balancing both (Moen et al., 2003). A higher income, for example, will give the possibility to outsource certain domestic duties.
- 4) *Household rules.* This refers to how the household is prepared to cope with unforeseen events (e.g. overtime, a sick child, a day off from school). Of course, the possibility to respond swiftly to unexpected events is not only of strategic importance for firms, but also for households (Wotschack et al., 2007). According to Gill (1998), competing claims from the workplace and household are better dealt with when households are characterized by flexible rules, that is, when there are no rules regarding weekend work or when it is that household chores should get done and by whom.

To summarize, *the hypothesis based on the influence of the workplace* on employees' time pressure is: less job security, more personal control (more autonomy and deadlines), a performance-related pay system and a more uncertain promotion system will increase feelings of time pressure. *The hypothesis based on the influence of the household* on time pressure is: more family responsibilities, more unequal division of paid and domestic work, fewer resources and more rules, will increase feelings of time pressure.

Another way to understand the importance of both spheres of life for time pressure is to add interaction terms. Workplace and household characteristics can interact in the effect they have on the time pressure perceived by employees. I would expect that more demands posed by both the workplace and the household would result in even more time pressure for employees. At this moment it is difficult to know which of the household- and work-related factors will interact, since there are only few studies on these issues. Therefore I will analyse several of these interactions and report on their significance. In general I would expect the effects of high workplace and household demands to enhance each other and lead to more time pressure.

Data

The data are from the *Time Competition* survey held in 2003 among Dutch employees. Data were collected using a multi-stage sample of employees from 30 Dutch firms. This survey was designed to study the causes of and solutions to work-home interference (Van der Lippe and Glebbeek, 1999). Because the data collection was aimed to understand time greediness of workplaces, knowledge-based organizations were oversampled, since we expected these dynamics to occur especially in these firms.

Within the 30 organizations, the percentage of those in the service sector is slightly higher than that in the Dutch economy; the number of industries is representative for the Netherlands, but agriculture is underrepresented. Large organizations are also oversampled. Five organizations have 100 employees or less, two of these have less than 50. In the 30 organizations, employees of 89 function groups are interviewed. The information on the function group was obtained via the responsible managers through a written questionnaire. Home interviews were conducted with 1114 employees and, if applicable, their partners, at a response rate of 29 percent. In the Netherlands, response rates for interviews at home vary from 25 percent to 45 percent in national probability samples (Kalmijn et al., 1999). The uniqueness of the dataset compensates for the response rate of 29 percent, which seems low compared to international standards but reasonable when considering Dutch standards (Kalmijn et al., 1999). The response rate of nearly 30 percent also seems reasonable, certainly if the two-step contact procedure is taken into account. Employees were first called at work via telephone number lists provided by the organizations. They were requested to participate in the survey and, if willing to do so, were asked to give their home address. This approach was necessary because organizations have to protect the privacy of their employees and therefore cannot provide home addresses. Of the 3970 employees contacted, 39 percent agreed to participate. Each employee was subsequently contacted at home to make an appointment for the home interview. Between the two contact moments, employees in couple households had to ask their partner to participate as well. Of all the employees contacted at home, 28 percent were not interviewed in the end, usually because the partner had refused to cooperate. The dataset include information on 828 couples and 286 singles. Analyses show that households not willing to cooperate hardly differ on several background characteristics from those who were willing to join the research. Background characteristics analysed include gender of the employee, educational level, working hours and family status.

For the purposes of this article I focused on couple households. Both partners were interviewed and filled in written questionnaires. Slightly more than 70 percent of all couples in the sample are married (Van der Lippe and Glebbeek, 2003). Since information is not provided by the employer for each function group, I ended up with 84 job categories. Due to missing data at both the organizational level and the employee level, the resulting total was 743 couples for the explanatory analyses.

Table 1 Time pressure of Dutch employees (in percentages)

		Always	Often	Regularly	Sometimes	Never	Significant difference
I cannot get proper sleep	Men	3.0	11.4	21.1	50.8	13.7	No
	Women	2.0	15.0	22.9	48.6	11.6	
I am under time pressure	Men	3.8	18.8	26.4	40.5	10.5	No
	Women	2.5	23.2	26.6	39.5	8.2	
I wish I had more time for myself	Men	5.9	17.7	23.6	43.5	9.3	No
	Women	4.5	23.7	19.5	44.9	7.3	
I feel under time pressure from others	Men	3.8	24.3	23.0	38.0	11.0	No
	Women	2.3	20.3	25.4	40.1	11.9	
I cannot deal with important things properly due to lack of time	Men	0.4	6.5	14.6	53.2	25.3	No
	Women	0.8	6.5	11.0	55.6	26.0	
I cannot recover properly from illness due to lack of time	Men	0.8	3.8	3.0	20.9	71.5	**Yes
	Women	0.0	4.8	7.9	26.1	61.2	
I am under so much time pressure that my health suffers	Men	0.8	1.7	5.3	26.8	65.3	+ Yes
	Women	0.0	2.0	4.2	34.0	59.8	

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; + $p < .10$.

Reliability of the scale is 0.79 ($N = 828$).

Source: Time Competition 2003.

Time pressure

The instrument used to measure time pressure is derived from Garhammer's index of time pressure (Garhammer, 2002) (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.79$). It comprises the following seven items: 'I am under time pressure'; 'I wish I had more time to myself'; 'I feel I am under time pressure from others'; 'I cannot deal with important things properly due to a lack of time'; 'I cannot get proper sleep'; 'I cannot recover properly from illness due to lack of time'; 'I am under so much time pressure that my health suffers'. Compared to the scale used by Dex and Bond (2005) on work-life balance, the items used here centre around the concept of time pressure without referring explicitly to work and caring activities. The descriptives given in Table 1 show that many people experience some kind of time pressure. Especially items such as 'I am under time pressure', and 'I wish I had more time for myself' are often confirmed. There appear to be not so many differences in feelings of time pressure between men and women. Women feel slightly more that they cannot recover properly from illness due to a lack of time. The means of all variables used in the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Work characteristics

To measure work characteristics, I mostly use information provided by the employer. These work characteristics measured at the employer level are valid for all employees in that particular function group, and provided by the employers, whereas work characteristics at the employee level indicate the experience of the employee. At the function group level, output management, time competition career paths, and the existence of deadlines and autonomy were measured. Output management was measured by asking managers whether employees are given a bonus related to their individual, group or organizational performance. On the basis of their answers, a dichotomous variable 'output-related rewards' was constructed (1 = yes, employees are rewarded on an output basis). In more than 20 percent of the job categories, employees received some form of performance-based pay. The time competition career path was asked about using three items on the extent of an open career system for the job level, contestable positions, and a knock-out race in receiving a better position within the organization ($\alpha = .56$). Deadlines were measured by asking employers whether strict targets and deadlines are valid for the job ($\alpha = .76$). Autonomy was measured by four items on a five-point scale. Job autonomy refers to employees' freedom with respect to pace, planning, order and style ($\alpha = .83$). At the individual employee level, job security was measured. Decreased job security is indicated by a temporary job. Having a supervisory position (0 = no and 1 = yes) is included as a control in the analysis.

Family characteristics

Life stage was measured by the age of the youngest child (younger than four, ages four to 12, and as reference no or older children) and the age of the employee. Almost half of the male and female employees had a child at home younger than 12. The division of paid and domestic work was measured by the time the employee and his/her spouse spent on both activities. Both employees and spouses reported their own time use. Paid work is the actual working time and domestic work includes all caring activities. I decided not to use the share of the employee in the total amount of domestic work and paid work, since I am interested in the effect of the hours of both the employee and the partner. Working men spent more time on their job than working women, but did less housework and caring duties. Their spouse spent about 21 hours on the labour market compared to 37 hours of spouses of female employees. Resources were measured using the employee's level of education and the personal income of the employee and the spouse. I decided not to use the household income, since again I am interested in the effect of both incomes. Both employees and spouses reported their own personal income. Education is the highest finished education level (11 categories, varying from 1 = no preliminary education to 11 = doctorate level). Men had a slightly higher educational level, earning more per month than female employees. The difference in income is also due to the fact that female employees gravitate more towards part-time jobs. Rules are measured using four items: 'If you think about the situation of your household, do you have agreements with your partner: 1) ... not to work in the evenings?, 2) ... not to work on weekends?, 3) ... to be in time for dinner?, 4) ... not to be away all evenings?' (Cronbach's alpha = .70).

Methods

Because of the multistage nature of the data (employees i nested within workplaces j), the employees in the sample are clustered in 30 organizations (see Snijders and Bosker, 1999). Common analytic strategies (such as appending workplace characteristics to individual-level records and treating these as independent observations) obscure the fact that employees are nested within a workplace context. I estimated a series of ordinary least squares (OLS) models with robust estimation. Robust estimation adjusts the estimated standard errors so as to take account of sample clustering and heteroskedasticity. First, analyses are performed for the sample together, and then for men and women separately. Second, to test whether it is indeed

Table 2 Means and standard deviations (in brackets) of the variables

	All	Men	Women	Difference between men and women
Time pressure	15.43 (4.30)	15.33 (4.39)	15.56 (4.17)	
<i>Governance structures of the firm</i>				
Performance-related pay system (0–1)	.21 (.41)	.28 (.45)	.13 (.34)	**
Time competition career paths (4–15)	9.42 (2.71)	9.70 (2.72)	9.04 (2.66)	**
Deadlines (2–10)	6.42 (1.95)	6.57 (1.89)	6.22 (2.01)	*
Autonomy (4–18)	13.41 (3.37)	13.39 (3.39)	13.44 (3.36)	
Temporary contract	.07 (.25)	.05 (.22)	.09 (.28)	*
Supervisory position	.45 (.50)	.55 (.50)	.32 (.47)	**
<i>Organization of the household</i>				
<i>Life stage</i>				
Children younger than 4	.23 (.42)	.24 (.43)	.21 (.41)	
Youngest child between ages 4 and 12	.26 (.44)	.28 (.45)	.23 (.35)	
Age	41.55 (8.59)	42.37 (8.34)	40.44 (8.79)	**
<i>Division of labour</i>				
Paid work of employee	37.33 (9.94)	41.82 (7.71)	31.32 (9.41)	**
Domestic work (+ child care)	28.42 (16.26)	23.14 (12.57)	35.50 (17.90)	**
Paid work of spouse	28.28 (16.60)	21.52 (14.69)	37.34 (14.57)	**
Domestic work of spouse	22.64 (12.64)	27.20 (12.59)	16.53 (9.82)	**
<i>Resources</i>				
Educational level of employee	7.98 (2.26)	8.08 (2.35)	7.84 (2.11)	
Income of employee (per month)	2150.59 (1389.01)	2554.17 (1566.49)	1602.79 (836.49)	**
Income of partner (per month)	1599.50 (2137.11)	1166.76 (1725.25)	2178.92 (2474.59)	**
Rules	6.65 (2.23)	6.67 (2.22)	6.62 (2.24)	

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; + $p < .10$.

Source: Time Competition 2003, 30 organizations, 474 men and 354 women.

productive to combine workplace and household characteristics in one explanation, I have performed these analyses separately too.

Overall, the correlations between the independent variables are not very high and range between .01 and .50. The highest correlation is found between the time-use categories, such as time spent on paid work and caring activities, and that is to be expected. The correlation between the independent and dependent variables ranges between .05 and .26. These figures do not cause problems in the analyses.

Results

According to Table 3, both workplace and household characteristics appear to be important in explaining time pressure with respect to the workplace. When comparing the influence of workplace and household characteristics, for the household the effects appear to be strongest for non-flexible characteristics such as the presence of children. Young children limit flexibility. Seen this way, the family effects are rather straightforward to interpret. With respect to the workplace, non-flexible characteristics too, such as deadlines, appear to increase time pressure. Despite representing more flexibility for employees, autonomy also relates positively to time pressure. The effects of workplace characteristics are thus less straightforward, and are in line with previous studies on post-Fordist or high-performance organizations (Van Echelt, 2007).

When studying the results for men and women together with respect to workplace characteristics, especially deadlines and autonomy, as indicators of job design increase feelings of time pressure. The other workplace related factors do not appear to be important in explaining time pressure. Of all household characteristics included, the time spent on paid and domestic work by the employee appears to be important in explaining time pressure. More time spent on paid work or domestic work by employees increases their feelings of time pressure. In addition – and unexpectedly – more time spent on domestic duties by the spouse increases feelings of time pressure for the employee. We do have to remember that time pressure is a subjective measure: these employees may feel guilty and stressed because their spouse performs more domestic duties. With respect to the life stage, it is especially the presence of young children which increases feelings of time pressure; as children grow they demand less physical care and maybe cause less pressure. A higher educational level of the employee also increases feelings of time pressure at a 10 percent level. As a resource to facilitate the burden of combining paid with domestic work, I would expect a high educational level to decrease time pressure. It could be the case that education in this analysis is also an indicator for reporting a hectic life as being common among the higher educated. Since I have controlled the analysis for having a supervisory position, education is not an indicator for the importance of the job. However, high education may also be a proxy for career ambition. The more rules exist within the household, the less flexible and the more pressure the employee feels. Gender appears to be important too. Controlling for all factors, females experience more time pressure than males.

Analyses have been performed separately for men and women. In general, it seems as if men experience more time pressure from their workplace and women more from the organization of the household. For both men and women, deadlines and autonomy increase feelings of time pressure. I assumed that a temporary contract would increase feelings of security and therefore produce more time pressure. However, for men a temporary contract appears to decrease feelings of time pressure.

Table 3 Regression analyses with robust estimation to explain time pressure of men and women, nonstandardized coefficients (standard errors in brackets)

	All	Men	Women
<i>Governance structures of the firm</i>			
Performance-related pay system	-.04(.74)	-.41(.87)	-.15(1.06)
Time competition career paths	-.01(.05)	-.03(.07)	.08(.10)
Deadlines	.26**(.06)	.29**(.10)	.37**(.12)
Autonomy	.14**(.05)	.13*(.06)	.12+(.06)
Temporary contract	-.61(.52)	-2.36**(.88)	.83(.74)
Supervisory position	.01(.43)	-.02(.55)	.12(.46)
<i>Organization of the household</i>			
<i>Life stage</i>			
Children younger than 4	1.43**(.56)	.96+(.56)	2.46**(.87)
Youngest child between ages 4 and 12	.03(.37)	-.74(.44)	1.05*(.43)
Age	-.01(.02)	-.03(.02)	.03(.02)
<i>Division of labour</i>			
Paid work of employee	.11**(.02)	.13**(.04)	.13**(.03)
Domestic work (+ child care)	.04**(.01)	.04*(.02)	.04+(.02)
Paid work of spouse	.00(.01)	-.01(.02)	.01(.02)
Domestic work of spouse	.03*(.01)	.04*(.02)	.01(.02)
<i>Resources</i>			
Educational level of employee	.19+(.09)	.10(.10)	.40**(.13)
Income of employee (per month)	-.00(.00)	-.00(.00)	-.01**(.00)
Income of partner (per month)	.00(.00)	.00(.00)	.00(.00)
<i>Rules</i>			
Female	1.21**(.38)	.10(.09)	.20*(.09)
Intercept	2.14*(1.74)	4.27(2.58)	1.10(2.01)
R-squared	.17	.18	.25
Number of respondents	743	427	316
Number of clusters	30	30	29

** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; + $p < 0.10$.

Source: Time Competition 2003.

With respect to household characteristics, young children increase time pressure for both men and women, but more so for women. With young children the volume of housework is large and that may be in conflict with balancing work and care. More hours spent in the workplace as well as more time spent on domestic work give more feelings of time pressure for both men and women. It is well known that in most families women still carry the responsibility for the domestic and caring duties at home, so the expectation would have been to see stronger effects for women here than for men. Domestic work provided by the wife increases time pressure for the husband. This is a rather unexpected finding.

I would have expected that partners who spend more time at their paid job would have increased feelings of time pressure, especially men. I did not find an effect, perhaps because the share in domestic and paid work was not studied. To this end, I performed an additional analysis that included the employee's share in domestic work and in paid work. The results show that the larger the husband's share in paid work, the more time pressure he experiences. For wives I do not find this effect of share in paid and domestic work. Apparently, for husbands it is important that their partner takes over some of the responsibility of their main task, this being paid work.

With respect to resources, a higher educational level for women increases feelings of time pressure, also when controlling for the supervisory position. Interesting to note is that a higher personal income of the wife decreases her feelings of time pressure. Having a higher income gives her more means to outsource certain domestic tasks. It also implies she is less dependent on the relationship. More household rules increase time pressure for women but not for men. It is often said that men are less vulnerable to the existing household rules; it is assumed that they attach more value to their work situation and organize their functioning in the household according to the workplace rules instead of those of the household.

In a further analysis, I include interactions between the workplace and the household. Although there appear to be interactions, such as those between household rules and work deadlines and between time competition career paths and the presence of young children, there are no clear indications of strong interaction effects. The results do not fit the expectations formulated in the theory section. They weaken instead of strengthening each other: the more deadlines, for example, the less negative the effect of household rules is on time pressure.

Is it indeed productive to combine workplace and household characteristics in explaining time pressure? We have performed the analyses again, but only with either workplace or household characteristics (results not in table). It is indeed generally productive to combine workplace and household characteristics in one explanation of time pressure. This is the case for both men and women. The explained variance is lower when only one sphere of life is included in the analyses. For men, workplace characteristics seem to be somewhat more important in the explanation of time pressure, for women the household characteristics. Interesting to note is that for women the effect of workplace characteristics is overestimated when household characteristics are not controlled for, and for men it is vice versa.

Conclusion

In this article I argued that in our present society, including insights from both family studies and organizational studies is needed to explain the disturbed balance between work and care. Using Dutch data from employees and their

spouses, I analysed the importance of workplace and household characteristics to explain time pressure. The general conclusion is that it is indeed worthwhile to include both the private and the work sphere, as this increases our understanding of employees' feelings of time pressure. We must however note that the nature of the sample with 30 non-randomly selected organizations imposes restrictions on generalized inference.

With respect to workplace characteristics, job design is the important governance structure of the firm that particularly influences employees. A job design that includes many deadlines and a large degree of autonomy increases feelings of time pressure. In general, then, it can be concluded that more modern organizations indeed lead to more time pressure. An exception is that a temporary contract, which is an indicator of a modern firm, does not increase feelings of time pressure for men. Probably a temporary job might also imply more flexibility and poses in this way less demand on men.

I also conclude that the level at which these characteristics are measured is important: at the job level via the employer (as Hochschild does), or in the way employees experience how the organization governs them (as Berg et al. and many others do). This may account for the difference in results found. In the present study I mainly used workplace characteristics measured via the employer. With respect to the organization of the household, especially the presence of young children, time spent on domestic and paid work and the household rules explain feelings of time pressure.

Studying the difference in influence of the workplace and the household revealed some interesting results. We can conclude that household characteristics have a more straightforward effect: less flexible circumstances, such as the presence of young children, will increase time pressure. Workplace characteristics, on the other hand, have mixed effects. Both more and less flexible circumstances, such as autonomy and deadlines, create more time pressure. In a subsequent study it would be interesting to examine these contrary effects of flexible conditions within the workplace more closely. Gender too appears to be important in the process of understanding the influence of workplace and household. Men are more influenced by their workplace characteristics, and women are more influenced by their household characteristics. Interesting to note is that women are not influenced that much by their partner; more research is needed as to why the partner is less important than would be expected.

All in all, the added value of this study is that it takes both the workplace and the household into account. Both household and firm govern employees, and the results show that it is indeed important to combine these two governance structures that one must deal with in life. Leaving workplace characteristics out overestimates the significance of household-related characteristics, and vice versa. Moreover, interactions between workplace- and household-related factors seem to show that the combination makes us understand more about time-pressure feelings. At this moment, it does not appear to be the case that household and workplace demands strengthen each other's effects, but

further research is needed to study the interactions between the two more closely. A larger sample is needed to arrive at a clearer result. Inclusion of the spouse's workplace would make the picture even more complete. Only paid working hours of the spouse and the related income are currently included in the theory and analyses. However, spouses negotiate not only together at the kitchen table but also with their respective workplace managers. More demands from the spouse's workplace can result in more time pressure for the employee. For example, pressing deadlines for the spouse can result in more household demands for the employee, who may then experience time pressure. In this way, the partner's organization may influence behaviour of the employee. In a subsequent study I want to incorporate the spouse's organization in order to gain better understanding into the governance structures for both partners and their effects on work-home interference.

Next to time pressure, it would be worthwhile to relate feelings of time pressure to more behavioural outcomes, such as performance in the organization and the family. Do employees with high feelings of time pressure have less interaction with their family members and less quality time with their children? This might even have consequences for the children's school grades. It would also be interesting to see if results reported here remain stable when studying other indicators such as work-home interference and burnout.

The Dutch situation is rather specific, with many women working part-time in the labour market. It is therefore interesting to do comparative research on this issue, and see whether the same results will be found for other European countries. That will not be an easy job, given the challenges of a multi-stage sample as done in my survey. Would I encourage researchers in other countries to collect data, as with the time-competition dataset? I believe I have convincingly shown the importance of including both workplace and household characteristics. Our study design seems to be preferable, but it is complicated – mainly because of the difficulty in gaining access to many organizations to collect data from employees. The approach followed by Kalleberg et al. (1996) may be a good alternative: start with the households of employees, and ask the employees for the name of the organization. The disadvantage of this design is that there may be information on only one employee per organization. To really study the governance structures of a firm, more employees are needed so that multilevel analyses are possible. Of course, the causal relation might still be a problem. Women have chosen certain organizations where governance structures are such that they do not cause work-home interference. A panel study would be preferable to disentangle such effects.

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