THE PRIMAL SCREAM

Working Moms Are Struggling. Here's What Would Help.

What government, employers and the rest of us can do.

Photo credit: Brenda Ann Kenneally @ NYTimes.

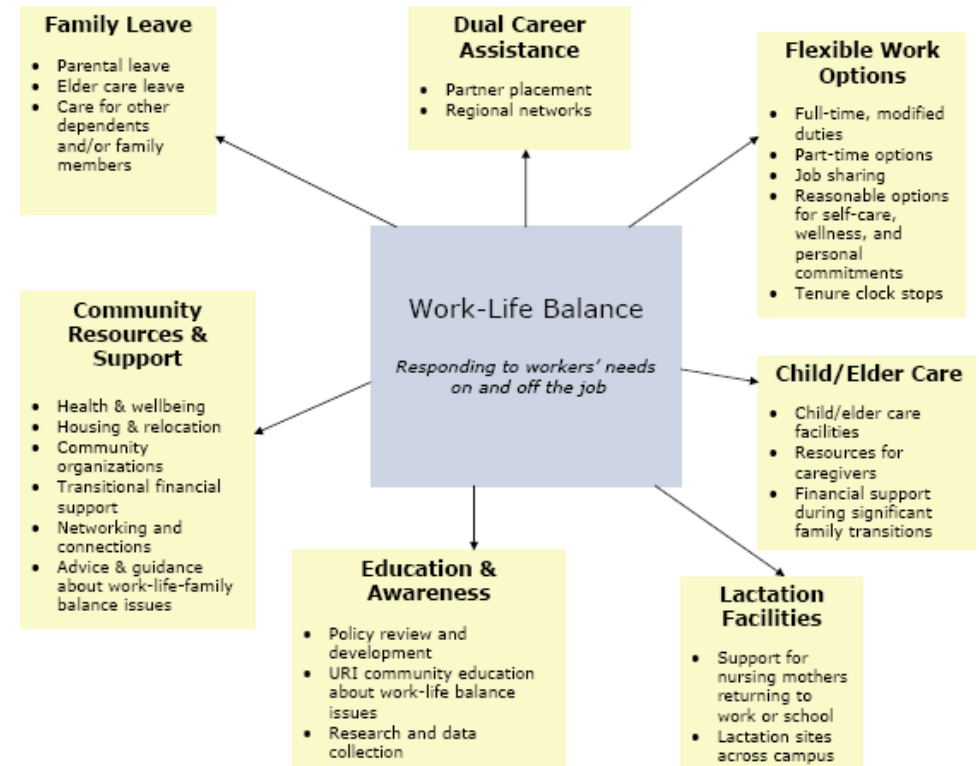# Times have changed our perception of what work-family balance means

- Gender role changes and womens entry in the job market
- Women continue brunt of dual work-caregiving for children, elderly without pay equity
- Assumptions cautioned by limits on research: audience focus, cultural context focus on perceptions of balance, consequences

Work-family Policy recommendations* and actions

- A Family-focused Work-Life Vision

- Global compliance with a basic legal framework for w-f balance

- Assisting role demands = resources
  - Flexible hours
  - Leave (maternal, paternal, parental)
  - Child care supports

- Attention to women's role balance in fulfilling child, family caretaking and part/full time work

- Attention to families of color, marginalized families who are homeless, in jobs that offer less flexibility, benefits.

Family Leave
- Parental leave
- Elder care leave
- Care for other dependents and/or family members

Dual Career Assistance
- Partner placement
- Regional networks

Flexible Work Options
- Full-time, modified duties
- Part-time options
- Job sharing
- Reasonable options for self-care, wellness, and personal commitments
- Tenure clock stops

Community Resources & Support
- Health & wellbeing
- Housing & relocation
- Community organizations
- Transitional financial support
- Networking and connections
- Advice & guidance about work-life-family balance issues

Work-Life Balance

Responding to workers' needs on and off the job

Child/Elder Care
- Child/elder care facilities
- Resources for caregivers
- Financial support during significant family transitions

Education & Awareness
- Policy review and development
- URI community education about work-life balance issues
- Research and data collection

Lactation Facilities
- Support for nursing mothers returning to work or school
- Lactation sites across campus

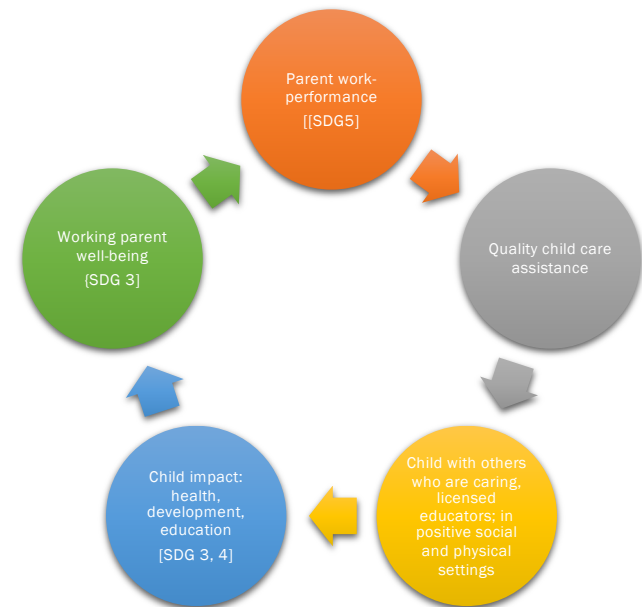Graphic credit: Elizabeth Remick; https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/

*O'Brien, M. (2012). *Work-family Balance Policies: Background Paper*. Division for Social Policy and Development. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Transactional policy benefits

- Children's education
- Health care
- Housing
- Job retraining

Workforce benefits

to some extent structural policies have increased female presence in the global workforce, yet progress is stymied (Perrigno, Dunford & Wilson, 2018)

Parent work-performance [[SDG5]

Quality child care assistance

Child with others who are caring, licensed educators; in positive social and physical settings

Child impact: health, development, education [SDG 3, 4]

Working parent well-being [SDG 3]

Our Digital lives:

- Using ICT in personal, family, work domains and to balance across spheres as the internet, mobile devices and shared applications erodes boundaries of space/place, time

- Shifting economies and employment opportunities

- Shifting expectations from employers and from workers about how and where and when work gets done

I rarely get to see my kids. That's a risk you have to take.

Andrew Kemendo
Creator of Pair
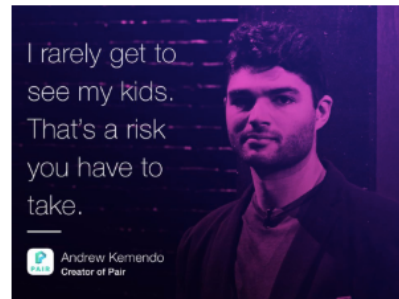
Shifting economies and employment opportunities

HIGH PRECARITY	Gig Worker	Digital Nomad
LOW PRECARITY	Nine to Fiver	Travelling Elite
	LOW MOBILITY	HIGH MOBILITY

Digital Work Typology. Ens, N., Stein, M. K., and Blegind Jensen, T. (2018). *Decent digital work: Technology affordances and constraints.* Paper presented at the Thirty ninth International Conference on Information Systems, San Francisco CA, USA

Early research on technology use and work-family balance

Positive

- Greater <u>flexibility and autonomy</u> by employee to determine when, where and how work gets done

- <u>Fulfillment of role obligations</u> (e.g., caring for a sick child, completing a sale)

- Can yield <u>more/steady income</u> for the family; satisfaction to continue fulfilling roles

Consequences

- <u>Employer demands</u> on access

- <u>Role overwhelm and overload</u> with loss of time/space boundaries

- Intrusions on family life and on childrearing

- Can <u>negatively impact</u> mental health, family satisfaction, couple satisfaction, attrition and job turnover, child development
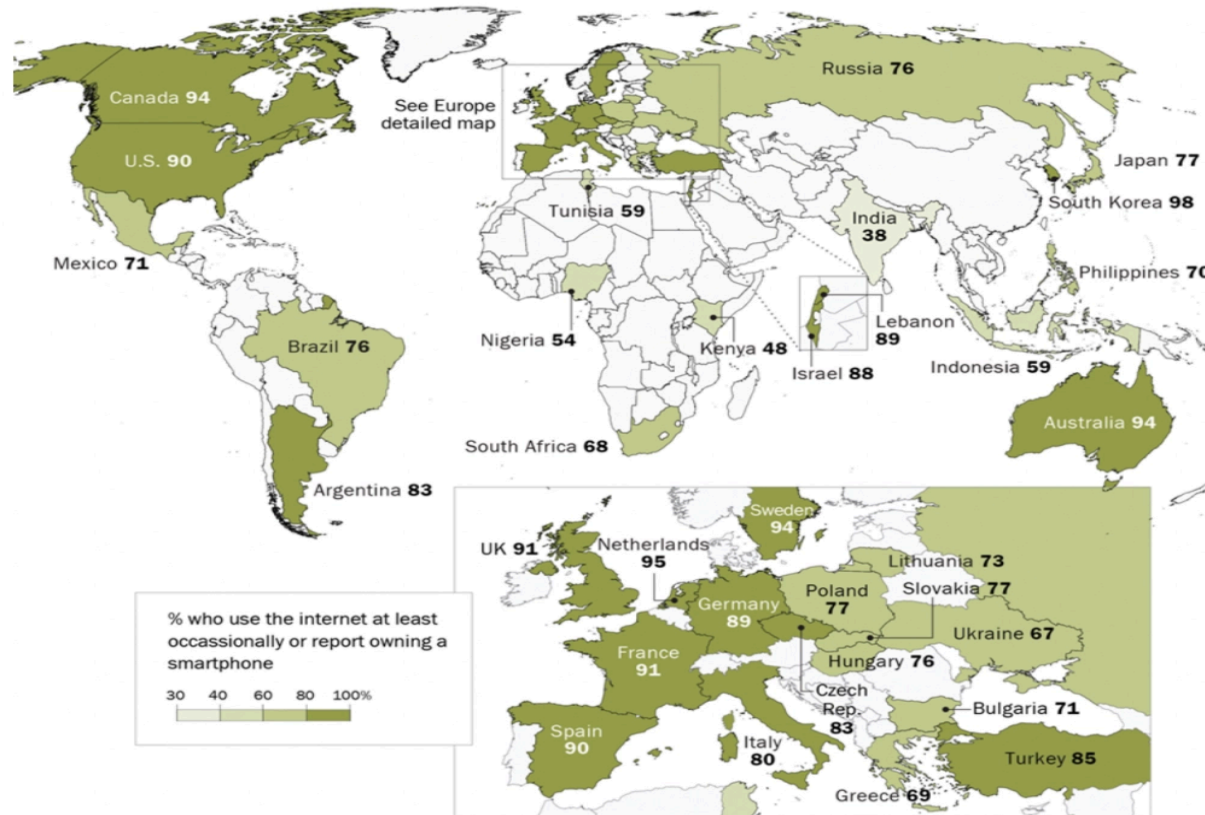
Research challenges in the digital age

- Rapid changes in technology, tech format, tech availability and tech use

- Wide global variation in technology access

- Wide variation in technology use (for families, personal, workplace)
    - Dissimilarities regarding technology access, use, comfort and skill
    - Dissimilarities in how devices and the internet are deployed as individuals, as a family and for work

- Types of employment, employment conditions, use of technology in those jobs, varies widely

Internet use is a prevalent part of many people's lives across the globe

% who use the internet, at least occasionally, or report owning a smartphone

Canada 94
U.S. 90
Mexico 71
Brazil 76
Argentina 83
South Africa 68

See Europe detailed map
Russia 76
Tunisia 59
Nigeria 54
Kenya 48
Israel 88
Lebanon 89
India 38
Japan 77
South Korea 98
Philippines 70
Indonesia 59
Australia 94

% who use the internet at least occassionally or report owning a smartphone
30 40 60 80 100%

UK 91
Netherlands 95
Germany 89
France 91
Spain 90
Sweden 94
Poland 77
Czech Rep. 83
Italy 80
Lithuania 73
Slovakia 77
Ukraine 67
Hungary 76
Bulgaria 71
Turkey 85
Greece 69

Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q51 & Q53. U.S. data is from a Pew Research Center survey conducted Jan. 8-Feb. 7, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Internet access and use varies around the world. Although approximately 77% have internet access, this ranges from developed economies (e.g., US, EU) 98% to less developed economies (e.g., Africa, India), 13%.

Schumacher, S. and Kent, N. (2020, April 2). *8 charts on internet use around the world as countries grapple with COVID-19.* Pew Internet and American Life. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/04/02/8-charts-on-internet-use-around-the-world-as-countries-grapple-with-covid-19/

Digital tech use for work-family balance: "it depends"

From reviews by Ollier-Malaterre, Jacobs & Rothbart (2019); Olson-Buchanan, Boswell & Morgan (2016) and Rice (2017)

ANTECEDANTS

- work:
  - higher job status
  - work demands
  - work norms/expectations
- family:
  - expectations from family and friends
- individual
  - individual differences (e.g., ability to multitask, age, education)
  - perceived usefulness of the technology/ perceived ease of use

MODERATORS

- individual:
  - negative affect
  - time management skills,
  - preference for segmentation,
  - gendered or personal demands,
- external:
  - social stressors,
  - technology support (or lack thereof),
- job-related factors

Are We Ready for "New Ways of Working"*?

- **Shifting conditions:**
  - Flexibility: control over where and when responsibilities are completed
  - Permeability: responsibilities fulfilled in non-traditional places and times

- **Workers establishing where and when work is done**
  - A preference for autonomy in fulfilling work and family demands.
  - Expressed comfort with mobile technology and cloud-based systems, especially by Millennials.

- **Probable Consequences:**
  - Workers trapped in a 24/7 cycle; challenges to attention and focus
  - Exposes the extra demands in role fulfillment when boundaries are eroded: COVID-19 as a natural experiment

  *Demerouti. Derks. Lieke & Bakker (2014)

The paradox of technology and the need to develop 'digital cultural capital' (Ollier-Malaterre, et al, 2019*)

... This porousness [or permeability of boundary] in turn makes the management of connectivity, online self-presentation, and privacy more challenging and calls for more elaborate technology management. (p. 426).

'Digital cultural capital:' the awareness, motivation and skill to perform technology *boundary management*.

*Ollier-Malaterre, A., Jacobs, J. A., and Rothbard, N. P. (2019). Technology, work, and family: Digital cultural capital and boundary management. *Annual Review of Sociology, 425-447*.

Policy recommendations that address SDG targets

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Expand research to represent the wide range of family and work configurations, and technology integration for work-family balance.

- Greater emphasis on culture, employment types, including those jobs that are more permeable due to the 'gig' economy' into consideration (SDG 9)

- Attention to individual and family outcomes from technology-integrated work-life balance must be elevated on par with those directed at workplace well-being. (SDG 5.b)

- Investigate gender roles, women's compensation and other incentives/disincentives that lead women away from work (SDG 5)

- Pursue questions as to the longer-term exposure from COVID-19 to forced teleworking, and limits on employer provided relief, and what this might mean to physiological indicators of stress and need for recovery. (SDG 3.4)

2. Continue existing supports– capitalizing on and adding technology

5 GENDER EQUALITY

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Tech to compare, pay for child care; identify leave policies; facility management
- Continued efforts to enhance technology access globally
- Additional economic, technological and practice supports to female-led jobs
- Create a global database of strategies to address the technology-integrated lives of working families

3. Foster healthy and effective workplace cultures for technology use

- **Adequate and reliable devices, applications, software for mobile, cloud-based access.**
  - During COVID-19, stipends to purchase technology for a home office was one of the most tangible supports to employees teleworking (SDG 9)
  - Includes accessible and competent tech support
- **Training that levels wide variation** in technology use, attitude, experience with using specific technologies, by age and digital skill.
  - Clear technology use expectations and recognition in job performance
  - Expectations modeled by supervisors
- **Technology-related policies** should be clear, articulated, and reinforced regarding use of digital devices, data sharing, privacy and security, managing time, and work performance expectations.

4. Keep families in mind with technology innovation

- Tech companies' responsibility not to be overlooked, or at expense of organizational, personal or family safety. (SDG 3, 9)

- As technological evolutions reflect workplace innovation, consider in turn what this means for the individual worker, and how this furthers blurring or makes easier the negotiation of boundaries and roles. (SDG 9a,b, c)

Technological Ignorance

A Baby Boomers Greatest Vulnerability
and
Cybercriminals Dream

Boomers
1946-1964

Offer Them Free Internet Safety Help

www.ipredator.co

5. Promote healthy and productive individualized work capacity

- **Digital cultural capital** as a new 'life skill' to be taught (SDG 3.4, 9a)
    - foster *personal responsibility* to avoid negative spillover in setting spatial and time boundaries for communication, how to use the smartphone properly, deploy privacy management tools, practice good digital citizenship and online self-presentation.

- *Tailored educational supports* on how to manage ICT to support work and family goals as a new employee benefit (SDG 3.4; 9.5)
    - Employees can be coached on setting boundaries to lower personal stress and enrich family satisfaction and well-being.

- Help employers learn how to create *individualized work arrangements* – might they be like creating individualized learning spaces in education? Consider extraordinary needs during situations like COVID-19 (SDG 3.4)
    - Construct individualized work schedule and work place flexibility that mesh with employee perception of balance and preference.
    - Attention to BIPOC, marginalized families w/ added stressors

8 Ways to Set Boundaries Between Work and Kids

Communication, flexibility and a bit of grace are key to blocking out time for child care while logging in from home.
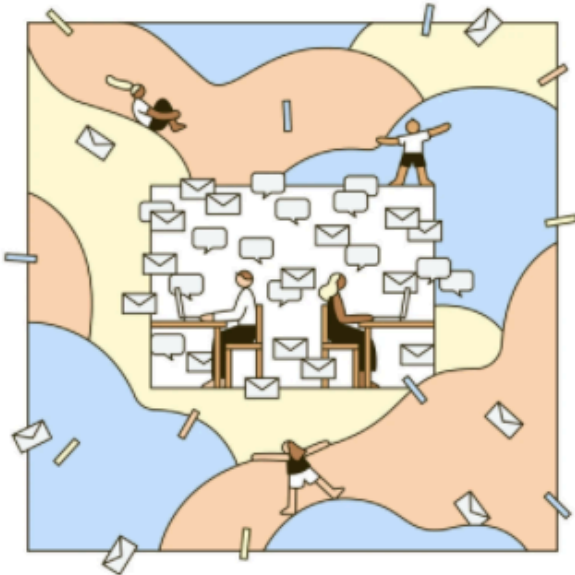
Rose Wong

By Leah Chernikoff

April 9, 2020

1. Expand research to represent the range of family and work configurations, and technology integration for work-family balance.

2. Continue existing WF supports capitalizing on and including technology

3. Foster healthy and effective workplace cultures for technology use

4. Keep family impacts in mind as workplace technology innovates

5. Promote healthy individualized work capacity

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

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