

demands at the expense of time with their family - behaviour which is consistent with the "myth of separate worlds" paradigm presented earlier.

Figure 1: Work Family Conflict: 2001

Work-life conflict has increased over the decade

The data (see Figure Two) show that, despite all of the talk about work-life balance, all the new programs and policies touted in the popular press and organizational media releases, all the empirical evidence linking work-life conflict to the bottom line (i.e. Duxbury et al., 1999) and all the talk about the "new HR" and responding to the needs of the new workforce, the employees who filled out our survey in 2001 have significantly more role overload, interference from work to family (WIF) and interference from family to work (FIW) than their counterparts in 1991 (i.e. less work-life balance). Role overload has gone up the most, increasing from 47% with high role overload in 1991 to 59% with high role overload in the year 2001. Other data in the 2001 survey would suggest that much of this increase in role overload can be linked to office automation and portable technology (i.e. laptops, e-mail, cell phones) and organizational norms that still reward hours at work rather than output.

Figure 2: Comparison of Work-Family Outcomes: 1991 versus 2001

While employees in 2001 are still more likely to meet work demands at the expense of time with family (in both samples interference from WIF is substantially higher than interference from FIW), the extent to which an employees' family responsibilities interfere with their ability to work appears to be on the rise (5% high in 1991 sample versus 10% high in the 2001 sample). High WIF increased by 3 percentage points in the same time period. The number of respondents with medium interference from family to work also rose in the past decade. In 1991, 27% of our respondents reported moderate levels of family to work interference. This increased to 31% with moderate interference in 2001. During this same time period, the amount of time respondents with dependent care spent in family activities (i.e. childcare, homechores) decreased from approximately 16 hours per week to just under 11 hours per week. This would suggest that the increase in role overload observed in the data can be attributed to increased demands at work rather than increased time in family role activities.

Part of the increase in work-life conflict due to fact Canadian employees spending more time in paid employment

The data indicates that work demands have increased between 1991 and 2001. The typical respondent to the 2001 survey puts in 43 hours a week working at the office (versus 40.8 in 1991). Over half of those in the 2001 sample (52%) work at home outside of regular office hours or on their days off (versus 31% in 1991). These employees spent just over 4.0 hours per week on average performing supplemental work at home (SWAH) (versus 3.6 hours in 1991). In other words, the average respondent to the 2001 survey devoted approximately 45 hours per week to paid employment - a substantial increase from the 42 hours spent by those who responded to the 1991 survey. These data are consistent with the data on role overload and work to family interference presented earlier as well as the employment practices (i.e.