

**Factors Associated With Perceived Time Pressure Among  
Canadian Working Parents:**

**Does Gender Make a Difference?**

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Degree of Master of Science  
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**By**

**Terrie Fitzpatrick**

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## ABSTRACT

The perception of not having enough time to do all of the things one needs to get done appears to be on the rise across industrialized nations. In Canada, for example, 16.4% of the population reported high levels of pressure in 1992, compared with 19.7% in 2005. Understanding the factors associated with perceived time pressure is important for public health, particularly given research suggesting that perceptions of time pressure are increasing in Western society and that such perceptions are linked with social and mental well-being. The overall goal of this study was to better understand the patterning of perceived time pressure among working mothers and fathers in Canada according to whether they occupied the additional role of partner and/or caregiver, as well as according to characteristics associated with their paid work and family roles. The Gender, Work, and Family Health Survey, conducted in Saskatoon Canada in 2005 provided the data for this study. The total sample was 1160 (674 women and 486 men). Results of the multiple linear regression analyses showed that both role occupancy and role quality were related to perceived time pressure among employed parents but that the precise nature of these relationships depends on gender. For mothers, the following factors were associated with increased time pressure: occupancy of an unpaid caregiving role, parenting a child with at least one health/behavioral problem, agreement with the statements “*parenting makes me feel drained or exhausted*” or “*parenting makes me feel tense and anxious*”, and low perceived social support. Regarding the paid work environment, women who were categorized as high strain (ie., high demands/low control) or active (high demands/high control) also reported higher levels of time pressure. For fathers, the following variables were associated with greater time pressure: occupancy of the partner role, being a multiple job holder and having a high strain (ie., high demands/low control) or active (high

demands/high control) psychosocial work environment. Limitations of the study are discussed as are the policy implications of the findings.

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## **Chapter 1:**

### **Introduction**

#### *1.1 Background*

There has been increasing interest in Canada over the last several decades, both in the academic literature and in the popular press, of concerns related to Canadians' quality of life, particularly the balance Canadian workers are able (or unable) to achieve between paid work and family/community life (Brooker & Hyman, 2010; Hebert & Grey, 2006). An important component of work-life balance is the amount of time people perceive as having available to meet their role-related obligations – as parents, paid workers, partners and caregivers, among others. Referred to in the literature with a variety of labels – “time pressure”, “time crunch”, “time squeeze” – the perception of not having enough time to do all of the things one needs to get done appears to be on the rise across industrialized nations. In Canada, for example, 16.4% of the population reported high levels of time pressure in 1992, compared with 19.7% in 2005 (Brooker & Hyman, 2010).

What might account for the increase in perceived time pressure? Objective explanations of time pressure point to labour market trends, with both men and women reporting an increasing amount of time spent in both paid and unpaid work over the last 30 years (Jacobs & Gerson, 2005), as well as an increase in time spent in nonstandard work (ie., evening, night, split shift or weekends) (Mattingly & Sayer, 2006). Cultural explanations have focused on the amplification of consumerism in Western society which drives time intensive activities with ‘high octane’ lifestyles.

Whatever the explanation for the increase in subjective time pressure, evidence suggests that the perception of time pressure is patterned by one's location in the social

structure. Research describes women as being more time stressed than men (Jacobs & Gerson, 2005; Mattingly & Sayer, 2006; Marshall, 2006). Although the reason for this gender difference is likely complex, many have pointed to the increased presence of women in the labour force in combination with their continued greater responsibility than men in regard to child rearing, performing household chores, and caring for ageing relatives (Marshall, 2006).

In addition to gender, the experience of time pressure is patterned, to a certain extent, according to occupancy in major social roles. For example, parents, particularly mothers, face greater time strain than women who do not have children (Beaujot & Andersen 2007; Bellavia & Frone 2005; Zukewich 2003), as do full-time employed adults, compared to those not in the labour force or working part-time (Beaujot & Andersen 2007). Among parents, the relationship between time pressure and marital/partner status has produced less consistent findings. In Canada in 2006, single parent families accounted for 16% of all families, up from 11% in 1981 (Statistics Canada, 2007). Single parent families are mostly led by women, comprising about 80% of all such Canadian families in 2006. Although single mother families are still more common than single father families, the rate of the latter is increasing. In fact, the proportion of single father families has been increasing at a faster rate than that of single mother families: between 2001 and 2006, male lone parent families increased by 14.6%, compared to an increase of 6.3% among female lone parent families. Single parents face the same challenge of supporting the family and spending time with their children as partnered parents but often with fewer economic resources and a lack of support in childcare (Milkie, Mattingly, Nomaguchi, Bianchi, & Robinson, 2004). Further, adding to

the potential for time pressure, the vast majority of single parents are also in the paid labour force (Galarneu, 2005). To date, however, research examining the relationship between partner status and time pressure among mothers has produced conflicted findings (Baxter & Alexander, 2008; Milkie et al., 2004; & Roxburgh, 2002). While there is minimal research on time pressure among single mothers the information about single fathers is even more negligible. An important objective of this research was to examine the perception of time pressure among employed, single parent mothers and fathers, a growing family type in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2006).

In addition to the growing number of families headed by a lone parent in Canada, there has been an increase in the proportion of working-age adults who are providing care to someone other than their children. A caregiver is defined as “*someone who provides a broad range of financially uncompensated ongoing care to family members, friends or neighbors in need due to physical, cognitive, or mental health conditions*” (Duxbury, Higgins, & Shroeder, 2009, p. 25). In 2007, among Canadians 45 years of age and older, 19% of men and 22% of women, or 2.7 million Canadians, reported providing assistance to a senior with a chronic health condition (Cranswick & Dosman, 2008). Caregivers may experience higher levels of time pressure than other Canadians given their multiple responsibilities; that is, in 2007, almost three-quarters of 45-64 year old caregivers were partnered and 57% were employed. In addition, approximately 40% of caregivers were younger than 54 years of age – a stage in life which typically means many still have children residing in the home. An additional objective of this study, therefore, was to examine whether caregiving responsibilities, in addition to employment and child rearing responsibilities, increase Canadians’ vulnerability to perceptions of time pressure. This is

an important objective, given two considerations: 1) by 2036, seniors are expected to comprise 22% of the Canadian population; and 2) community and health care resources will likely not be able to meet the demands of this aging population and it is predicted that informal support provided by family and friends will become even more crucial (Cranswick & Dosman, 2008; Duxbury et al., 2009).

In addition to role occupancy, research suggests perceived time pressure may be patterned according to the quality of the roles occupied (Roxburgh, 2002). That is, two people could occupy the same role, but experience very different demands within that role. For example, lower paying jobs tend to be characterized by higher psychological demands combined with lower decision making authority – a particular combination of job characteristics which in turn have been associated with a greater risk of poor health (Stansfeld & Candy, 2006; Karasek et al. 1998). Resources in the work environment have also been recognized as playing an important role in minimizing the potential deleterious effects of a highly demanding job. A sense of control over work activities has been identified as particularly important for enhancing the health of workers (Griffin, Fuhrer, Stansfeld, & Marmot, 2002). However, the majority of research to date has focused on role occupancy in relation to time pressure, with inferences made concerning role quality on the basis of relatively superficial measures of objective role characteristics (e.g. hours of employment, number of children). Thus, an important objective of this study was to examine both objective and subjective characteristics of work and family roles in relation to perceived time pressure.

A final objective of this research was to examine how gender may modify associations between work and family role occupancy, role quality, and subjective time

pressure. Considerable evidence suggests that gender shapes many of the demands and resources associated with work and family role configurations, which may in turn, impact on perceptions of time pressure (Roxburgh, 2002; MacDonald, Phipps, & Lethbridge, 2005). For example, despite women's increasing labour force presence, and men's increasing participation in housework and childrearing activities in the last several decades, employed mothers still retain primary responsibility for the bulk of domestic work in two-parent households (Marshall, 2006). Thus, men and women occupying the same role configuration (e.g. employed parent) may experience that role set in qualitatively different ways with consequences for the subjective experience of time pressure. In addition, some evidence suggests that the factors associated with perceived time pressure may differ by gender, with men more influenced by work characteristics and women by family factors (Nomaguchi et al., 2005).

### *1.2 Study Objective and Research Questions*

The overall objective of this study was to examine the patterning of perceived time pressure according to role occupancy and role characteristics in a sample of employed parents. More specifically, three research questions guided the study:

1. How is role occupancy associated with perceived time pressure? That is, does the additional role of partner and/or caregiver increase the perception of time pressure?
2. How are the characteristics of work and family roles associated with perceived time pressure?

3. Does the relationship between role occupancy, role characteristics and perceived time pressure vary according to gender?

### *1.3 Study Significance*

Understanding the factors associated with perceived time pressure is important for public health, particularly given research suggesting that perceptions of time pressure are increasing in Western society *and* that such perceptions are linked with social and mental well-being (Roxburgh, 2002). That is, compared to individuals who report lower levels of subjective time pressure, those with higher perceived “time crunch” are *more* likely to report distress and depression (Roxburgh, 2004), stress (Hilbrecht, 2009; Zuzanek, 2004), insomnia (Zuzanek, 2004), poor self-rated health (Hebert & Grey, 2006) and are *less* likely to report happiness and satisfaction with life (Nomaguchi, Milkie, & Bianchi, 2005; Dea, Grey and Hébert, 2004). Attention to perceived time pressure is also important for equity considerations: recent Canadian research suggests that between the years 1992 and 2006 there was a significantly greater increase in perceived time stress for low-income families compared to high-income families (Burton & Phipps, 2010).

## **Chapter 2:**

### **Literature Review**

#### *2.1 Conceptual and Measurement Challenges in the Study of Perceived Time Pressure*

Time pressure research in the 1980s and 1990s was concentrated in the occupational sector, particularly within the health care, business and law professions (Roxburgh, 2004). This body of literature focused on the relationship between job performance and individuals' perceptions of time pressure, that is, the '*strain that results from insufficient time to complete job-related tasks*' (Gunthorpe & Lyons, 2004; Techmann, Totterdell & Parker, 1999). During the last decade, however, the scope of time pressure research expanded beyond job performance to include issues related to family, community and society (Szollos, 2009). Consistent with that breadth of scope are the variety of academic disciplines involved in the study of time pressure, including anthropology, epidemiology, sociology, business, among many others (Hebert & Grey, 2006; Szollos, 2009). Although the myriad disciplines involved suggests the study of time pressure is a timely and relevant topic in modern day society, imprecise (or lacking) definitions of time pressure makes the study of it extremely challenging (Szollos, 2009). Adding to the challenge is that, even more than the number of disciplines involved in the study of time pressure, is the number of labels: time pressure, time shortage, time squeeze, time stress, time crunch, time poverty, and so on. Szollos (2009) after a thorough critical review of the time pressure literature concluded that despite the varied terms and the lack of conceptual clarity, much of the research seemed to point to the experience of time pressure as a *chronic* experience (as opposed to short-term or

transient), comprised of two main components: "...both a *cognitive awareness of not having enough time and the emotional experience of hectic pace, harriedness and rushing accompanied by apprehension and frustration.*"(p. 339, emphasis added).

Not surprisingly, the measurement of perceived time pressure is also diverse. Many countries use a time use survey in which time pressure is measured through a series of questions about feeling rushed or pressed for time (Gunthorpe & Lyons, 2004). Much of the Canadian research on time pressure is based on data from various cycles of the General Social Survey (GSS) on Time Use (Statistics Canada, 1992, 1998, 2005; Burton & Phipps, 2010; Beaujot & Anderson, 2007; Zukowich, 2003). The GSS time pressure scale consists of 10 items, requiring participants to answer yes/no to various questions related to time pressure (e.g. Do you consider yourself a workaholic? At the end of the day, do you often feel that you have not accomplished what you set out to do? Do you worry that you don't spend enough time with family and friends?); persons responding "yes" to 7 or more of these questions are considered to be highly time pressured or 'time-crunched' (Tezli & Gauthier, 2009). Though commonly used by Canadian researchers, who often point to a strong Cronbach's alpha value as evidence of its quality, the use of the GSS measure as a valid indicator of the concept of time pressure has been questioned:

The time-crunch scale is frequently used in the literature in Canada, though it became clear from our research that studies employing this variable do not discuss its conceptual adequacy. We could not find in these studies a detailed examination of whether the ten items that they included actually measure the same conceptual construct. Nor were we able to find a discussion of why individuals answering "yes" to at least seven of the ten questions are deemed



time-crunched. Thus, the question that needed to be asked first was whether the time-crunch scale is a theoretically meaningful construct... The factor analysis that we carried out showed that at least four of the ten items did not load on the same factor indicating that they measure a conceptually distinct construct and thus should not be included in the time-crunch scale... These results raise doubts that the time-crunch scale adequately measures time scarcity as it relates to working parents' efforts to consolidate work and family responsibilities (Tezli & Gauthier, 2009, p. 453-454).

Although measures of time pressure from government-sponsored surveys dominate the literature, there are several researcher-specific scales in use (Roxburgh, 2002; Hilbrecht, Zuzanek, & Mannell, 2008; Garhammer, 2002; van der Lippe, 2007). Of this type, one of the more commonly used (and the measure used in the present study) was that developed by Susan Roxburgh (2002, 2004). Strengths of Roxburgh's 9-item time pressure scale are that its development was based on an explicit theory of time pressure (Dakus, 1985), it has undergone advanced statistical analyses (e.g. factor analysis) with changes made to improve alignment between concepts and items included on the scale (Roxburgh, 2002, 2004), and the measure reflects both the cognitive and emotional components of time pressure as suggested by Szollos (2009).

## *2.2 Societal Trends Influencing Perceived Time Pressure*

### *2.2.1 Paid and unpaid work*

Who and how people engage in paid and unpaid work has changed dramatically in North America over the last three decades (Barrette, 2009) which may impact perceived

time pressure. One of the most significant changes has been the increased percentage of women in the workforce in Canada over the last 40 years. In 2009, the percentage of women between the ages of 25 and 54 in the labor force rose to 77%, up from 46% in 1976 (Ferrao, 2010). The most striking part of the increase in women in the workforce has been the rise in the number of employed women with young children: in 2009, 67% of women with children under the age of 6 were participating in the workforce, more than doubling since 1976 (Ferrao, 2010). Though nowhere near the same extent as changes in paid work, changes in unpaid family work (ie., housework, childrearing) have also occurred over time (Marshall, 2006). The most recent data from Statistics Canada shows that 25-54 year-old men increased their participation in housework from 1 hour per day in 1986 to an average of 1.4 hours per day in 2005, while in the same time period, women decreased their daily hours spent in household work, from 2.8 hours to 2.4 hours. During the same time period, Canadian parents, both mothers and fathers, increased the amount of time spent on child rearing. In 2005, fathers spent approximately 1 hour each day on child rearing-related activities (compared with 0.6 hours in 1986), and mothers, 2.0 hours (compared with 1.4 hours in 1986).

The increased participation of women in the labour force has also resulted in an increase in the proportion of families who are dual-earners. In 1976, dual earner families made up 43% of all couples in Canada and by 2008, this figure had risen to 68% of all Canadian couples with dependent children. In 2008, although the combined time spent in paid work by couples equalled 65 hours per week, up from 58 per week in 1976 (Marshall 2009), the combined hours of dual earner couples (77 hours per week) remained approximately the same during this time period. As observed by Jacobs and

Gerson (2001), the main issue among couple families appears to be fewer single earner households meaning that “*a decline in support at home rather than an increase in the working time of individuals underlies the growing sense that families are squeezed for time and that work and family are in conflict*” (p. 42). Also adding to the potential for time pressure over the last 30 years has been the growth in the number of single parent households, the majority of who are employed (Ferrao, 2010). Perceptions of time pressure may be particularly pronounced for lower income families (couple and single) who lack the financial means to “outsource” family work (e.g. childcare, housecleaning, yard work) (Barrette, 2009; Burton & Phipps, 2010). Contributing to the increase in time pressure is that many workplaces, despite the feminization of labour, still operate according to a single earner, male breadwinner model of family life (Barrette, 2009) in which paid work and family responsibilities can be kept in completely separate spheres. Organizations’ implementation of policies or programs specifically aimed at minimizing employee’s conflict between work and family life (e.g. on site elder/child care), are still in short supply in Canada (Lero, 2009).

Changes in the economy from manufacturing-based to service-based have also impacted work conditions (Barrette, 2009). In service-based economies, satisfying the customer becomes the “end all be all” and to meet customer demands, many workplaces have instituted non-standard work hours (e.g. rotating shifts, evening shifts, on-call shifts). The proportion of Canadians aged 20-64 years who worked other than a regular time daytime schedule increased from 22.8% in 1992 to 25.2% in 2009 (Brooker & Hyman, 2010). Technological advances have also impacted the world of work. Employees are now working at a variety of locations including home where the ability to

switch off work during off-work time becomes increasingly difficult. The use of technology may illustrate the ‘paradox of time’ where tools such as the Internet, cellular phones, and smart phones are used to be more efficient and yet the perception of time shortages remain (Garhammer, 2002).

### 2.2.2 *Cultural changes*

Though acknowledging that the perception of being pressured for time has increased in recent years, some writers have challenged the idea that those perceptions are actually caused by the changes to work and family life described above (Hammerish & Lee, 2007; Goodin, Rice, Bittman, & Saunders, 2005). Zuzanek (2004) identifies several factors believed to increase the perception of being time pressured, including a Western societal shift toward “intensive child rearing” whereby parents believe they need to spend more time with their children for optimal growth and development. This type of expectation can increase overall feelings around time pressure for parents. Increasing pressure to acquire or keep a lifestyle through the acquisition of material goods may also contribute to heightened perceptions of time pressure (Southerton, 2003). That is, increased consumerism among the already socioeconomically advantaged leads to working more hours (by choice) to pay for ever increasingly materialistic lifestyles:

Cultural discourses that value action packed lives coupled with high levels of consumption are to blame for upward spiralling perceptions of feeling rushed... Whereas at the turn of the 20th century, the conspicuous consumption of leisure indicated an upper-class social position... today it is conspicuous devotion to time-intensive productive activities that signifies high

social status... Individuals are also enmeshed in a work-to-spend culture, with long work hours fuelling the time and money demanding quest to experience the latest activity or product... (Mattingly, 2006, p. 206)

Hammerish and Lee (2007) examined the relationship between work hours (paid and unpaid), household income, and subjective time pressure using data sets from Australia, the United States, Korea, and Germany. These authors reported that on average, the more hours individuals spent working, particularly paid work, the greater the perception of time stress. However, when hours spent in paid and unpaid work were statistically controlled for, the more money one earned, the greater the perceived time pressure. As concluded by these authors:

The results are qualitatively remarkably consistent across countries: while additional market work does generate more time stress, additional earnings, holding hours of market and home work fixed, also increase time stress... Complaints about insufficient time come disproportionately from higher full income families, partly because their members choose to work more hours, partly too because they have higher incomes to spend during the same amount of nonwork time. Whether one should be concerned about these complaints or simply view them as yuppie kvetching is a matter of values. (p. 382)

These cultural explanations of time pressure are not without criticism, with some pointing to the lack of attention given to gendered patterns of time stress, with the research overwhelmingly reporting women as being more time pressured than men (Jacobs & Gerson, 2005; Roxburgh, 2002; Marshall, 2006). Some research also suggests that the relationship between socioeconomic position and time pressure may depend on

gender. Several studies have found higher educational attainment to be associated with lower perceived time pressure among men (Roxburgh, 2002; Mattingly & Sayer, 2006), but higher time pressure among women (Roxburgh, 2002; Van der Lippe, 2007), suggesting perhaps that among men, “...*the prestige that comes with higher education is a social resource that provides the opportunity to manage time commitments and hence reduce time pressures. Among women, higher education does not afford such opportunities*” (Roxburgh, 2002, p. 139).

Results at variance with the Hammerish and Lee (2007) study were also recently reported in a study examining changes over the last several decades in work hours, income and perceptions of time pressure among Canadian families with children (Burton & Phipps, 2010). These authors reported that while high hours of paid work were more typical of families in the top part of the income distribution during the 1970s, by 2006, the majority of the families providing the longest working hours to the paid labour market were from the lower end of the income ladder. However, these families had not experienced similarly large increases in real income. Conversely, families at the top part of the income ladder experienced large increases in real incomes, but little change in the number of hours spent in paid work. In addition, although perceptions of time pressure increased for all families during the study period, the increase was particularly pronounced for lower-income families. Further, although no income-related differences in the perception of time pressure was observed in 1992, by 1996 however, lower income families reported significantly higher levels of time pressure compared to more economically privileged families.

The relationship between socioeconomic position and time pressure is complex with many conflicting findings reported in the research (Hebert & Grey, 2006; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009; Robinson & Godbey, 1998). Some research suggests that in addition to gender, the relationship between socioeconomic factors and subjective time pressure varies according to other factors, such as family composition (Beaujot & Andersen, 2007), and the specific type of socioeconomic indicator used in the study (e.g. education, income, occupational prestige) (Roxburgh, 2002; Mattingly & Sayer, 2006). Differences between studies in the type of time pressure measure used, the particular confounders controlled for in the analyses, and study participant characteristics (such as country of residence) are additional challenges to the interpretation and synthesis of findings.

### *2.3 Role Theory and Perceived Time Pressure*

Role theory offers a framework to assist in understanding the societal patterning of time pressure according to role occupancy (Roxburgh, 2002). Within this framework, occupancy of work and family roles are seen as providing meaning, definition and structure to how people participate in society (Roxburgh 2002, Robinson & Godbey 1997). In addition, occupancy of a particular social role can be associated with not only benefits (e.g., access to resources) but also demands (e.g. time). Within role theory are key concepts such as role strain, role scarcity, role enhancement, role occupancy and role quality, all of which can contribute to understanding who and why particular individuals and groups may be especially vulnerable to the experience of time pressure.

#### *2.3.1 Role Occupancy and Perceived Time Pressure*

People typically occupy numerous social roles simultaneously. Contradictory

views have emerged concerning the association between multiple role occupancy and well-being, each predicting different outcomes. The role scarcity hypothesis focuses on the premise that human energy is limited, and the more roles a person occupies, the more role strain experienced and the greater the likelihood of negative effects on well-being (Goode, 1960). Role strain can be conceptualized, in part, as the feeling of inadequate amounts of time or feeling time pressured. The demands on finite resources such as time leads to the perception of feeling time pressured. Within role strain theory 'the constraints imposed by time' are seen as fundamental to the hypothesis (Sieber, 1974). Thus, according to the role scarcity perspective, the more roles one occupies, the greater the perception of subjective time pressure. In contrast, the role enhancement model highlights the potential social and psychological benefits (e.g. social support) of occupying parent, partner and paid worker roles and proposes health enrichment as a result of simultaneous participation in these roles (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). However, proponents of the role enhancement perspective do recognize that there are limits to the number of roles an individual can occupy and that multiple roles may result in role overload when the number of roles become too great or when the demands of one role are excessive (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

The results of research examining the relationship between perceptions of time pressure and role occupancy indicates, on average, greater support for the scarcity hypothesis than that of role enhancement. That is, subjective time pressure tends to increase with the number of roles occupied (Hebert & Grey, 2006). For example, the highest rates of time pressure have been reported among people in their 30's and 40's – a stage in life which generally corresponds to a variety of demands related to parental



responsibilities, partner relationships, employment and other social obligations.

Regarding individual roles, parents perceive greater time pressure than individuals who do not have children (Beaujot and Andersen 2007; Bellavia and Frone 2005; Zukewich 2003), as do employed adults, compared to those not in the labour force (Beaujot and Andersen 2007). Research has also found employed caregivers to report greater time pressure than caregivers who are not employed (Fast, 2002; Beaujot and Andersen, 2007).

The relationship between occupancy of the partner role and time pressure, particularly among employed parents, is less consistent. On the one hand, a role scarcity perspective would predict greater time pressure for employed parents who were also partnered, given the extra demands on time that occupying a partner role may entail. On the other hand, the role enhancement perspective would suggest that employed, partnered parents should experience less time pressure than employed single parents. That is, the presence of a resident partner, and the instrumental support that would presumably accompany that role, should be associated with lower perceived time pressure for partnered compared to single parents. Single parents face the same challenge of supporting the family and spending time with their children as partnered parents but often with fewer economic resources and a lack of support in childcare (Mason, 2003; Williams, 2010, Ferrao, 2010). It is thought that because single parents are under resourced the effect would be increased perceptions of time pressure. The time bind appears when the single parent needs to work to support the family and has less discretionary time to spend with their family. Further, adding to the potential for time pressure, the vast majority of single parents are also in the paid labour force (Galarnau,

2005). To date, however, research examining the relationship between partner status and time pressure among employed parents is fairly limited, and the research which has been conducted, has produced conflicted findings (Hebert & Grey, 2006; Baxter & Alexander, 2008; Milkie et al., 2004; Zuzanek, 2000).

### *2.3.2 Role Quality and Perceived Time Pressure*

Associated with the role occupancy perspective are implicit assumptions concerning the various costs (ie., role scarcity) or benefits (ie., role enhancement) of occupying a particular role(s) without an overt testing of those assumptions. In recent years, more research has attempted to assess how the quality of a role(s) occupied may be associated with well-being; that is, how an individual experiences a role(s) in terms of the particular advantages, disadvantages and stressors associated with that role(s) (Hibbard & Pope, 1993). Going beyond role occupancy to the study of role quality requires the consideration of both objective role characteristics (e.g. number of children, number of hours of paid work) as well as subjective role characteristics (e.g. (dis)satisfaction with a role) (Neal & Hammer, 2007), both of which may impact an individual's overall experience of the quality of a role (Hibbard & Pope, 1993). Compared to subjective characteristics, objective role characteristics are more easily measured quantitatively and are less grounded in an individual's perception (Neal & Hammer, 2007). Conversely, although measures vary, measures of subjective role characteristics require an individual to make personal judgments regarding a role, such as the efforts/rewards or costs/benefits with that role. Within the time pressure literature, most research has focused on role occupancy and objective role characteristics.

### *2.3.2.1 Paid work characteristics and perceived time pressure*

The number of hours spent in paid work is strongly associated with perceptions of time pressure, with the highest levels of time pressure reported among those working long hours (ie., more than 50 hours per week) (Beaujot & Andersen 2007; Hebert & Grey, 2006; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009; Gunthrope & Lyons, 2004). The relationship between perceived time pressure and other work characteristics are less strongly associated with time pressure than the number of hours worked. Several Canadian studies have found no association between perceptions of time pressure and working multiple jobs, shift work, and/or irregular hours (Beaujot & Andersen 2007; Hebert & Grey, 2006; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009), though one study reported higher perceived time pressure among individuals with inflexible work schedules (ie., lack of control over work start and end times) (Hebert and Grey, 2006) and another among those working night shifts (Zuzanek, 2000).

Relatively few studies have examined the relationship between perceptions of time pressure and subjective characteristics of the paid work role, though there are some exceptions. Hebert and Grey (2006) found that individuals who enjoyed their work reported a significantly lower level of time pressure than those who disliked their job. In a recent study from Denmark (Deding & Lausten, 2011), women and men who were more career-oriented or reported poor working conditions were significantly more likely to perceived being highly time pressured than those who reported having lower career aspirations or more favorable work conditions; unfortunately, the authors did not provide any detail as to the items which comprised the measures of work conditions or career orientation. Roxburgh (2002) has provided the most thorough investigation to date of the

relationship between the quality of the paid work role and perceptions of time pressure, drawing upon Robert Karasek's theory of job strain (Karasek et al. 1998). Within Karasek's framework, employees' view of their job demands (e.g., pace, effort, volume) interact with their level of decision latitude (e.g. decision authority, opportunity to use skills) to determine the psychosocial quality of their work. The most health-damaging reactions for workers occur when the psychological demands of the job are high and the worker's decision latitude is low. Roxburgh (2002), in her study of full-time employees, found that workers (both men and women) perceiving more favorable job conditions, that is, higher levels of control or lower levels of psychological job demands, reported lower levels of subjective time pressure; the lowest level of time pressure was reported by workers who simultaneously reported having a job low in psychological demands and high in control.

#### *2.3.2.2 Family and unpaid work characteristics and perceived time pressure*

Regarding objective family characteristics, the presence of young (ie., preschool) children in the household has been most consistently associated with higher levels of time pressure in the literature (Hebert & Grey, 2006; Milkie et al. 2004; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009). Less reliably associated with time pressure is the number of children, with several studies reporting increasing time pressure as the number of children increase (Tezli & Gauthier, 2009) and others reporting no association (Burton & Phipps, 2010; Hebert & Grey, 2006). Although both mothers' and fathers' perception of time pressure is influenced by the age of children, the impact on mothers may be more pronounced (Burton & Phipps, 2010; Hebert & Grey, 2006; van der Lippe, 2006).

In addition to the presence of children, time spent in unpaid labour in the home is a frequently utilized variable when looking time pressure. Similar to the observed association between paid work hours and time pressure, more hours spent in unpaid family work is also linked with greater perceived time pressure, though the relationship is not as consistently reported as for paid work hours. Hebert and Grey (2006) found that every additional hour a woman spent in unpaid family work increased the probability of feeling highly time pressured, while Mattingly and Sayer (2005) found no association between time spent in either housework or childcare and perceived time pressure. Quite a consistent finding is that time spent on domestic work is more strongly associated with women's than men's perceptions of time pressure (Deding & Lauston, 2011; Hebert & Grey, 2006; Roxburgh, 2002).

Several studies have looked at the division of labour and time pressure in couple families, with mixed findings. van der Lippe (2006) found that the more hours full-time employed women spent on domestic work, the greater their perceived time pressure. Interestingly, however, there was no statistically significant association between the amount of time husbands contributed to household work and perceived time pressure; that is, the more time husbands' spent on housework did not appear to alleviate their wives' own perception of time pressure. In contrast, Roxburgh found that while men's perception of time pressure was unrelated to their partner's time spent in housework, women's perception of time pressure was reduced as their partners' contribution to family work increased. Tezli and Gauthier (2009) calculated the ratio between participants' and their partner's time spent in childcare, distinguishing between three types of childcare arrangements: 1) equally shared by partners; 2) a partner who spends

less time than the participant, and 3) a partner who spends more time. Results indicated no statistically significant association between the division of family labour and perceived time pressure. Based on couples' relative contribution to paid and unpaid work, Beaujot and Anderson (2006) also categorized couples into one of five groups:

1. *complementary-traditional (he does more paid work and she does more unpaid work),*
2. *complementary-gender-reversed (she does more paid work and he does more unpaid work),*
3. *women's double burden (she does the same amount or more paid work, and more unpaid work),*
4. *men's double burden (he does the same amount or more paid work, and more unpaid work), and*
5. *role-sharing (they do the same amount of unpaid work).* (p. 300)

For both mothers and fathers, the highest reports of time pressure were among those occupying the complementary-traditional family type.

Compared to more objective family characteristics, the relationship between family role subjective characteristics and time pressure has received much less research attention. There are some exceptions. Roxburgh (2002) considered two types of resources which may potentially alleviate time pressures among working parents: the presence of an emotionally supportive partner and satisfaction with their children's daycare arrangements. Although partner social support was not associated with time pressure, satisfaction with daycare arrangements was; that is, for both mothers and fathers,

compared to those who were satisfied, those who reported wanting to change something about their current childcare situation reported higher levels of time pressure.

#### *2.4 Gender, Work and Family Roles, and Perceived Time Pressure*

Likely the most consistent findings in the time pressure literature is that females report higher time pressure than men; that is, the research overwhelmingly describes women as being more time stressed than men (Jacobs & Gerson, 2005, Mattingly & Sayer, 2006, Roxburgh, 2002), mothers being more time stressed than fathers (Hebert & Grey, 2006) and girls being more time stressed than boys (Jacobs & Gerson, 2005).

The focus of this study, however, is not on whether there are gender differences in time pressure per se, but rather, on whether there are gender differences in the predictors of time pressure. The literature reviewed so far suggests that, yes, some of the factors associated with increased time pressure seem to differ for men and women. Although there are exceptions, on average, women's perceptions of time pressure seem to be influenced more strongly than men's by family role occupancies (e.g. being the parent of a young child) and family characteristics, such as time spent performing unpaid family work. Conversely, men's experience of time pressure may be more closely tied to their paid work roles and characteristics.

Although men are more involved than previous generations in their family roles, women still retain primary responsibility for the majority of housework and childcare (Marshall, 2006). Women also remain more involved than men in carrying out family work tasks which require their attention every day and at certain times (e.g. cooking, routine child care). Conversely, men are more likely to engage in types of family work

which involve higher degrees of flexibility and personal discretion in terms of when those tasks are carried out (e.g yard work and car maintenance). In addition, many measures of unpaid work do not include the often invisible time women spend coordinating housework tasks, multitasking, or looking after the emotional well-being of family members (ie., emotional labour).

Varying perspectives have been developed to help explain differences in how men and women engage in work and family roles (Dufur, Howell, Downey, Ainsworth, & Lapray, 2010), which in turn, may assist in understanding the gendered nature of perceptions of time pressure. "Gender" refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. According to an individualistic paradigm, due to strong socialization processes over one's life time, men and women internalize "appropriate" gender role behaviors which by adulthood become stable personality characteristics. Thus, men become more employment-oriented and women become more family-oriented. Therefore, not only are women expected to engage more than men in family-related work, such activities also become more central to their identity. Although mothers' roles have broadened to include paid employment, and fathers' to encompass caring work, each gender remains most "answerable" to their traditional roles.

The structuralist perspective, on the other hand, suggests that an individual's roles are social constructs fashioned by a combination of environment and interaction (Dufur et al. 2010). A structuralist framework purports that individuals experience of their work and family roles are a result of differential opportunities afforded men and women in society, molded by a variety of interacting factors such as socioeconomic circumstances,



availability of social supports, and gendered divisions of paid and unpaid work. The work- and family-related behaviors that men and women engage in are not established by early childhood socialization, but rather, evolve and emerge as people respond to daily interactions in their environments. Rather than being driven by inherent differences, men and women behave differently in their work and family roles because of frequent opportunities to “do” gender, or act out socially constructed gendered scripts (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

## **Chapter 3:**

### **Methodology**

#### *3.1 Participants*

The Gender, Work, and Family Health Survey, conducted in Saskatoon Canada in 2005 provided the data for this study (see Dziak et al. 2010; Tao et al. 2010 for a more detailed methodological description). Telephone interviewers randomly selected phone numbers within the city boundaries and one person per household was chosen to complete a 40 minute survey. Eligible participants were those between the ages of 25 and 50 years, English speaking, employed at least part-time, and the parent of at least one child under the age of 20 residing in the household. Interviews were conducted using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing system. The final sample consisted of 1160 participants (674 women and 486 men). The study was approved by the University's Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Appendix A).

#### *3.2 Measures*

Please refer to Appendix B for the measures used in this study.

The dependent variable was measured using Roxburgh's (2002) time pressure scale. This 9-item measure requires participants to indicate, on a 4 point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4), the extent to which each item reflected their lives in the last year. Sample items include: "You never seem to have enough time to get everything done", "You feel pressed for time", "You feel rushed to do

the things that you have to do” and “There just don’t seem to be enough hours in the day”. Participant scores can range from 9 to 36 with higher scores indicating greater perceived time pressure. A Cronbach alpha of .76 in the present study indicated that the time pressure scale had adequate internal consistency.

Socio-demographic characteristics included participants’ age, sex, educational attainment (university/college graduate; some post-secondary; high school or less), and perceived income adequacy. Perceived income adequacy was assessed with the statement “We have enough money to cover basic needs for food, housing and clothing” with which participants were asked to indicate their agreement on a scale from one (strongly disagree) to four (strongly agree). Participant responses to the income adequacy question were collapsed into two categories: strongly agree/agree and strongly disagree/disagree.

All participants in this study were employed parents. The roles which did vary and were examined in this study were those of partner and caregiver. Partner status, was a dichotomous variable based on current marital status. Partnered individuals were those who indicated that they were married or living with a partner, and the unpartnered were those who were separated, divorced, widowed, or never married. Participants were categorized as being caregivers (or not) based on their response to the question: “Other than your child, is there a friend or family member living with you or not, to whom you provide special care or attention because of a handicap, illness or old age?”

Several questions assessed key characteristics of paid work. Objective work characteristics included the number of hours worked each week (less than 40 hours; 40 hours or greater), work schedule (regular daytime shift or “other”) and whether the participant held more than one job simultaneously (yes/no). Subjective work

characteristics were assessed by the Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ; Karasek et al. 1998). JCQ items combine to assess various components of job quality, with nine items measuring decision latitude (authority to make decisions concerning work, ability to use one's skills in doing work) and ten items measuring psychological job demands (effort, pace and amount of work, conflicting demands). The questionnaire items were coded from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree) according to the degree to which respondents agreed with each statement and scores for each scale were calculated by summing the item scores. A higher score for each scale indicates greater job demands and decision latitude. Cronbach's alpha for decision latitude and job demands was .74 and .64, respectively. To reflect Karasek's model of job strain, scores on the demands and decision latitude scales were categorized based on median splits (Vermeulen & Mustard, 2000) resulting in four psychosocial work quality components: high strain (high job demands/low decision latitude), low strain (low job demands, high decision latitude), active (high job demands, high decision latitude) and passive (low job demands, low decision latitude). Support for the validity and reliability of the JCQ scales can be found in numerous international studies (Karasek et al. 1998).

Family role characteristics included the number of children (one, two, or three or more) and the presence of at least one child age 5 years or younger in the household (yes/no). Participants were also asked to indicate whether any of their children had experienced one or more of the following issues in the previous year: chronic disease or disability, frequent minor illnesses, emotional problems, alcohol or substance abuse problems, problems at school or work, legal problems, or difficulty getting along with people (Voydanoff, 2005). Participants' affirmative responses to this question were

summed and subsequently re-categorized into a dichotomous variable with the following outcomes: no problems or one or more problems. Regarding subjective family role characteristics, based on questions from the Northern Ontario Perinatal and Child Health Survey (2002), participants were asked to indicate their extent of agreement (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) with two statements: “*parenting leaves you feeling drained and exhausted*” and “*being a parent makes you tense and anxious*”. Participant responses to these questions were dichotomized (strongly agree/agree; strongly disagree/disagree) and treated as separate variables. Perceived assistance with housework (Berkman, 2001) was measured with the question “Is there someone available to help you with daily chores?” to which participants were asked to indicate on a five point scale from none of the time to all of the time). Responses were collapsed into two categories: 1) some/a little/none of the time; or 2) most of the time/all of the time. Satisfaction with family-related services was assessed with the question “How satisfied are you with the help you receive from the supports and services available to you and your child?” Possible responses included: very unsatisfied, somewhat unsatisfied, neutral, somewhat satisfied and very satisfied. The response categories were collapsed into two categories: 1) neutral/somewhat satisfied/very satisfied; or 2) somewhat unsatisfied/very unsatisfied. Social support was assessed with Berkman’s (2001) 5-item scale in which respondents were asked to identify the amount of time (1= none of the time to 5= all of the time) that they perceived various types of social support were available to them. Item examples include: “Is there someone available to give you advice about a problem” and “is there someone available to you who shows you love and affection”. Participant

responses were summed and the median was used to divide participants into one of two groups: higher social support or lower social support.

### *3.3 Analysis*

Bivariate and multivariable analyses were used to address the research questions. Initial analyses involved chi-square tests to examine the distribution of each of the study variables by gender. A series of one-way ANOVAs were then conducted to examine how perceived time pressure was patterned according to each of the study variables and by gender.

Multiple linear regression was used to examine which factors were most strongly related to perceived time pressure. To assess whether the relationship between the study variables and perceived time pressure varied by gender, analyses were conducted separately for men and women. Independent variables were entered into the regression equation in four blocks: 1) sociodemographic characteristics (age, educational attainment, perceived income adequacy); 2) role occupancy (partner and caregiving status); 3) family characteristics (number of children, presence of young children in the household, the presence of a child with a health/behavioral problem, perception of parenting as draining/anxiety provoking, assistance with household chores, satisfaction with family-related services, social support); and 4) work characteristics (work hours, work schedule, multiple job holder, job strain).

## Chapter 4:

### Results

#### 4.1 Bivariate Results

Sociodemographic and role occupancy variables by gender are reported in Table 1. A significantly greater proportion of women than men were college/university graduates. No statistically significant gender differences emerged with respect to age, income adequacy, partner status or taking on additional caregiving responsibilities.

The distribution of family and work characteristics according to gender, are in Table 2. A significantly higher proportion of men than women reported having help with daily chores “most or all of the time” and a greater percentage of women than men perceived themselves as having higher social support. No gender differences emerged with respect to number of children, the presence of a young child in the household, having a child with at least one health/behavioral problem, satisfaction with family-related supports and services, or agreement to statements that “*parenting makes me feel drained or exhausted*” or “*parenting makes me feel tense and anxious*”. With regard to paid work, a higher percentage of women than men reported working part time and a greater percentage of men than women were multiple job holders. Men and women did not differ in terms of work schedule, decision latitude, job demands or job strain. Finally, women perceived themselves as being significantly more time pressured than men [F(1,1055)=4.45; p = 0.03] (data not shown).

**Table 1: Sociodemographic and Role Occupancy Variables, by Gender.**

	Women		Men		p
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
<b>SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS</b>					
<b>Age</b>					
25-34yrs	324	48.1	254	52.3	
35-50yrs	350	51.9	232	47.7	0.16
<b>Educational attainment</b>					
High school or less	220	32.6	159	32.7	
Some postsecondary	196	29.1	186	38.3	
College/university	258	38.3	141	29.0	0.01
<b>Income adequacy</b>					
Adequate	503	79.0	372	79.7	
Inadequate	134	21.0	95	20.3	0.80
<b>ROLE OCCUPANCY</b>					
<b>Partner status</b>					
Single	236	35.0	145	29.8	
Partnered	438	65.0	341	70.2	0.13
<b>Additional Care giving</b>					
Yes	42	6.2	31	6.4	
No	632	93.8	455	93.6	.92



**Table 2: Family and Work Characteristics, by Gender.**

	Women		Men		p
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
<b>FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS</b>					
<b>Number of children</b>					
One	243	36.1	169	34.8	
Two	254	37.7	198	40.7	
Three or more	177	26.3	119	24.5	0.60
<b>Child ≤ 5 years of age living in household?</b>					
No	326	48.4	209	43.0	
Yes	348	51.6	277	57.0	0.07
<b>Child with one or more health/behavior problem</b>					
No	576	85.5	401	82.5	
Yes	98	14.5	85	17.5	0.17
<b>Parenting leaves me drained or exhausted</b>					
Disagree	341	52.8	264	56.5	
Agree	305	47.2	203	43.5	0.22
<b>Parenting makes me tense and anxious</b>					
Disagree	483	74.7	329	70.4	
Agree	164	25.3	138	29.6	0.12
<b>Satisfaction with supports and services</b>					
Neutral or satisfied	514	76.3	382	78.6	
Unsatisfied	160	23.7	104	21.4	0.35
<b>Help with daily chores</b>					
Most or all of the time	265	39.3	225	46.3	
Some of time or less	409	60.7	261	53.7	0.02
<b>Social support</b>					
High support	409	60.7	237	48.8	
Low support	265	39.3	249	51.2	0.00
<b>PAID WORK CHARACTERISTICS</b>					
<b>Work hours</b>					
Full-time	306	54.6	118	75.7	
Part-time	368	45.4	368	24.3	0.00
<b>Multiple job holder?</b>					
Yes	135	20.0	130	26.7	
No	539	80.0	356	73.3	0.01
<b>Work schedule</b>					
Regular daytime shift	563	83.5	396	81.6	
Other	111	16.5	89	18.4	0.40
<b>Job decision latitude</b>					
High	364	55.0	240	49.8	
Low	298	45.0	242	50.2	0.08
<b>Job demands</b>					
Low	316	47.1	231	50.0	
High	355	52.9	231	50.0	0.34
<b>Job Strain</b>					
High (high demands, low control)	139	21.1	91	19.9	

	<b>Women</b>		<b>Men</b>		<b>p</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
Active (high demands, high control)	210	31.9	139	30.3	
Passive (low demands, low control)	156	23.7	127	27.7	
Low (low demands, high control)	154	23.4	101	22.1	0.50

Bivariate associations of time pressure according to sociodemographic and role occupancy variables (analyzed separately for men and women) are presented in Table 3. For women, the only variable associated with time pressure was perceived income adequacy: women who perceived their household income to be inadequate were significantly more time pressured than those who perceived an adequate household income. For men, none of the sociodemographic or role occupancy variables were statistically significantly associated with time pressure.

**Table 3: Perceived Time Pressure According to Sociodemographic Characteristics and Role Occupancy, by Gender.**

	Women		<u>p</u>	Men		<u>P</u>
	Number	Mean (SD)		Number	Mean (SD)	
<b>SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS</b>						
<b>Age</b>						
25-34yrs	281	25.34 (5.77)	0.53	213	24.44 (5.40)	0.20
35-50yrs	340	25.64 (5.92)		223	25.08 (4.94)	
<b>Educational attainment</b>						
High school or less	194	25.14 (5.57)	0.44	135	24.73 (5.46)	0.89
Some postsecondary	180	25.91 (6.04)		162	24.65 (5.43)	
College/university	247	25.49 (5.93)		139	24.94 (4.58)	
<b>Income adequacy</b>						
Adequate	485	25.31(5.89)	0.03	350	24.79 (5.22)	0.89
Inadequate	112	26.63 (5.83)		73	24.70 (5.13)	
<b>ROLE OCCUPANCY</b>						
<b>Marital status</b>						
Single	217	25.57 (5.21)	0.60	113	24.04 (3.98)	0.08
Partnered	404	25.47 (6.17)		323	25.02 (5.52)	
<b>Additional care giving?</b>						
Yes	36	27.14 (4.95)	0.08	27	25.33 (5.33)	0.56
No	585	25.40 (5.89)		409	24.73 (5.17)	

Bivariate relationships between time pressure and family/work characteristics are shown in Table 4. Women who reported a child with at least one health/behavioral problem had significantly higher levels of time pressure than those mothers who did not, as did mothers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements “*parenting makes me feel drained or exhausted*” or “*parenting makes me feel tense and anxious*”. Women who reported high social support (compared to low) and those who were neutral/satisfied with family related services (compared to those who were dissatisfied) reported lower levels of time pressure. Among men, the following family characteristics were associated with greater perceived time pressure: low social support (compared to high) and agreement with the statement “*parenting makes me feel drained or exhausted*”. Regarding paid work, the following variables were associated with greater perceived time pressure for women: full-time work, being a multiple job holder, high job demands, and having a high strain job (ie., high demands/low control). For men, being a multiple job holder, low job decision latitude, high job demands, and having a high strain job were all associated with higher perceived time pressure.

**Table 4: Perceived Time Pressure by Work and Family Characteristics, by Gender.**

	Women			Men		
	Number	Mean (SD)	<u>p</u>	Number	Mean (SD)	<u>P</u>
<b>FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS</b>						
<b>Number of children</b>						
One	217	25.25 (6.54)		152	24.40 (5.28)	
Two	239	25.84 (5.19)		182	24.59 (5.10)	
Three or more	165	25.35 (5.80)	0.52	102	25.63 (5.11)	0.16
<b>Child ≤ 5 years of age living in household?</b>						
No	320	25.33 (6.04)		200	24.88 (5.10)	
Yes	301	25.68 (5.64)	0.46	236	24.67 (5.24)	0.68
<b>Child with one or more health/behavior problem</b>						
No	531	25.32 (5.99)		368	24.76 (5.27)	
Yes	90	26.60 (4.79)	0.05	68	24.82 (4.67)	0.92
<b>Satisfaction with supports and services</b>						
Neutral or satisfied	493	25.22 (5.92)		348	24.65 (5.43)	
Unsatisfied	128	26.61 (5.43)	0.02	88	25.23 (4.02)	0.35
<b>Help with daily chores</b>						
Most or all of the time	248	25.33 (5.46)		217	24.39 (5.06)	
Some of time or less	373	25.62 (6.10)	0.56	219	25.15 (5.27)	0.13
<b>Parenting leaves me drained or exhausted</b>						
Disagree	320	24.09 (5.94)		251	24.08 (5.39)	
Agree	282	27.01 (5.41)	0.00	167	25.35 (4.75)	0.01
<b>Parenting makes me tense and anxious</b>						
Disagree	459	24.82 (5.89)		303	24.32 (5.20)	
Agree	144	27.57 (5.67)	0.00	115	25.30 (5.06)	0.09
<b>Social support</b>						
High support	398	24.93 (5.98)		225	24.14 (5.28)	
Low support	223	26.52 (5.48)	0.01	211	25.44 (4.99)	0.01
<b>PAID WORK CHARACTERISTICS</b>						
<b>Work hours</b>						
Full-time	336	26.09 (5.54)		337	24.65 (5.81)	
Part-time	285	24.81 (6.13)	0.01	99	24.80 (4.98)	0.80
<b>Multiple job holder?</b>						
Yes	130	26.42 (6.28)		129	25.69 (3.98)	
No	491	25.26 (5.71)	0.04	307	24.38 (5.56)	0.02
<b>Work schedule</b>						
Regular daytime shift	511	25.40 (5.87)		346	24.74 (5.39)	

	Women			Men		
	Number	Mean (SD)	<u>p</u>	Number	Mean (SD)	<u>P</u>
Other	110	26.00 (5.74)	0.33	89	24.83 (4.31)	0.89
<b>Job decision latitude</b>						
High	334	25.24 (5.96)		225	24.24 (4.89)	
Low	283	25.81 (5.75)	0.23	211	25.33 (5.42)	0.03
<b>Job demands</b>						
Low	299	24.22 (5.90)		211	23.51 (5.21)	
High	320	26.68 (5.56)	0.00	204	25.74 (4.95)	0.00
<b>Job Strain</b>						
High (high demands, low control)	132	27.29 (5.55)		78	26.11 (5.70)	
Active (high demands, high control)	187	26.25 (5.56)		126	25.50 (4.44)	
Passive (low demands, low control)	149	24.46 (5.64)		112	24.28 (5.30)	
Low (low demands, high control)	147	23.96 (6.22)	0.00	99	22.65 (4.98)	0.00

#### 4.2 Multivariable Results

Results of the linear regression analysis predicting time pressure, reported separately for women and men, are displayed in Tables 5 and 6, respectively. For women, the introduction of the sociodemographic characteristics as a block in Step 1, did not make a significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable, nor did any of the characteristics individually. Addition of the role occupancy variables in Step 2 made a statistically significant contribution to explaining the outcome. More specifically, women who were involved in additional caregiving were more time pressured than women who were not, as were women with an inadequate income (compared to adequate). The introduction of family characteristics in Step 3 also significantly contributed to explaining time pressure. Although income adequacy was no longer associated with time pressure, a statistically significant relationship between additional caregiving responsibilities and greater perceived time pressure remained. In addition, women who reported a child with at least one health/behavioral problem had significantly higher levels of time pressure than those mothers who did not, as did mothers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements “*parenting makes me feel drained or exhausted*” or “*parenting makes me feel tense and anxious*”. As well, women who reported low social support (compared to high) reported higher levels of time pressure. When work characteristics were entered in the final model, all of the variables associated with time pressure in the previous step remained statistically significant. In addition, women who were categorized as high strain (ie., high demands/low control) or active (high demands/high control) reported higher levels of time pressure compared to women categorized as low strain (ie., low demands,



low control). In the final model, the independent variables accounted for 14% of the variance in the dependent variable.

For men (Table 6), none of the sociodemographic variables were associated with time pressure in Model 1. When role occupancy variables were entered into the regression in Step 2, only partner status was associated with the dependent variable, with single fathers reporting significantly lower levels of time pressure compared to partnered fathers. In Step 3, with the introduction of family-related characteristics, partner status remained statistically significant. In addition, men who agreed with the statement “*parenting makes me feel drained or exhausted*” were significantly more time pressured than those who disagreed. When paid work characteristics were entered in Step 4, agreement with the statement “*parenting makes me feel drained or exhausted*” was no longer statistically significant. In the final model, the following variables were associated with greater time pressure for men: occupancy of the partner/marital role, being a multiple job holder and having a high strain (ie., high demands/low control) or active (high demands/high control) work environment compared to low strain (ie., low demands, low control). In the final model, the independent variables accounted for 12% of the variance in the dependent variable.

**Table 5: Standardized (Beta) Coefficients for OLS Regression of Perceived Time Pressure on Sociodemographic Characteristics, Role Occupancy, Family Role Characteristics and Work Role Characteristics, Women.**

Step	Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>1</b>	<b>Sociodemographic Characteristics</b>				
	Age	-0.02	-0.04	-0.03	-0.04
	Educational attainment <sup>a</sup>				
	Some post-secondary	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.03
	High school or less	-0.00	0.01	-0.02	-0.01
	Inadequate income <sup>b</sup>	0.08	*0.09	0.03	0.04
<b>2</b>	<b>Role Occupancy</b>				
	Single parent <sup>c</sup>		-0.03	-0.07	-0.08
	Additional care giving		**0.13	**0.15	**0.17
<b>3</b>	<b>Family Characteristics</b>				
	Number of children <sup>d</sup>				
	Two			0.07	0.06
	Three			0.03	0.05
	Child ≤ 5 years of age living in household			0.04	0.07
	Child has health or behavioral problem			**0.10	**0.11
	Parenting is draining			**0.18	**0.15
	Parenting is anxiety provoking			**0.14	**0.12
	Help with chores			-0.00	-0.01
	Satisfied with family-related supports and services			0.05	0.03
	Social support			*-0.09	*-.09
<b>4</b>	<b>Work Characteristics</b>				
	Weekly work hours				-0.07
	Non-regular work schedule				0.01
	Multiple job holder				0.07
	Job strain <sup>e</sup>				
	High strain				**0.20
	Active				**0.16
	Passive				0.00
	<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.00	0.02	0.11	0.14
	<b>F (df) for change in R<sup>2</sup></b>	1.22(4,567)	*2.54(6,564)	**5.60(15,555)	**5.67(21,549)

<sup>a</sup>compared to university/college graduates; <sup>b</sup>compared to adequate income; <sup>c</sup>compared to partnered parent; <sup>d</sup>compared to one child; <sup>e</sup>compared to low strain

\*p ≤ 0.05 \*\*p ≤ 0.01

**Table 6: Standardized (Beta) Coefficients for OLS Regression of Time Pressure on Sociodemographic Characteristics, Role Occupancy, Family Role Characteristics and Work Role Characteristics, Men.**

Step	Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>1</b>	<b>Sociodemographic Characteristics</b>				
	Age	0.06	0.05	0.01	-0.03
	Educational attainment <sup>a</sup>				
	Some post-secondary	-0.06	-0.05	-0.07	-0.12
	High school or less	-0.02	-0.03	-0.02	-0.05
	Inadequate income <sup>b</sup>	-0.04	-0.02	-0.03	-0.01
<b>2</b>	<b>Role Occupancy</b>				
	Single parent <sup>c</sup>		*-0.08	**-.017	**-.017
	Additional care giving		-0.04	-0.07	-0.07
<b>3</b>	<b>Family Characteristics</b>				
	Number of children <sup>d</sup>				
	Two			0.03	0.05
	Three			0.12	0.12
	Child ≤ 5 years of age living in household			-0.03	-0.05
	Child has health or behavioral problem			-0.00	-0.01
	Parenting is draining			*0.12	0.10
	Parenting is anxiety provoking			0.08	0.08
	Help with chores			0.06	0.06
	Satisfied with family-related supports and services			0.05	0.06
	Social support			-0.10	-0.08
<b>4</b>	<b>Work Characteristics</b>				
	Weekly work hours				0.09
	Non-regular work schedule				-0.01
	Multiple job holder				**0.18
	Job strain <sup>e</sup>				
	High strain				**0.23
	Active				**0.21
	Passive				0.05
	<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	-0.00	0.00	0.04	0.12
	<b>F (df) for change in R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.85(4,385)	1.10(6,382)	**2.16(15,373)	**3.49(21,367)

<sup>a</sup>compared to university/college graduates; <sup>b</sup> compared to adequate income; <sup>c</sup>compared to partnered parent; <sup>d</sup> compared to one child; <sup>e</sup>compared to low strain

\*p ≤ 0.05 \*\*p ≤ 0.01

#### *4.3 Summary of Main Findings: Who are the Time Pressured?*

Based on the multivariable results of this study, a time-pressured employed mother is likely one who has the additional role of providing care to a friend or family member who requires special care because of a handicap, illness or old age. She may also be the parent of a child who requires more time and attention because of health and/or behavioural issues. The time-pressured mother in this study often experiences the role of parent as draining and anxiety provoking and perceives a lack of emotional social support needed to cope with the demands of daily life. Her paid work also poses challenges, as she likely has a job characterized by high psychological demands (ie., high effort, fast pace, and conflicting demands) and may or may not be afforded enough control (ie., decision authority and skill discretion) within her work environment to effectively meet those demands.

A time-pressured employed father in this study is likely to be partnered and holding down more than one job simultaneously. Similar to employed mothers, he likely works in a job characterized by high psychological demands combined with either low or high levels of job control.

## **Chapter 5:**

### **Discussion**

The study of perceived time pressure is important given research suggesting that perceptions of time pressure are increasing in Western society and that such perceptions are linked with social and mental well-being. The overall goal of this study was to better understand the patterning of perceived time pressure among working mothers and fathers in Canada according to whether they occupied the additional role of partner and/or caregiver, as well as according to characteristics associated with their paid work and family roles. The main finding of this study is that both role occupancy and role quality is related to perceived time pressure among employed parents and that the precise nature of these relationships depends on gender.

#### *5.1 Gender, Role Occupancy and Perceived Time Pressure*

The first objective of this study was to examine whether the additional roles of caregiver and/or partner were associated with increased perceived time pressure among employed parents. Consistent with the results of previous, albeit limited, research (Beaujot & Anderson, 2007; Hebert & Grey, 2006), this study found the added responsibility of caregiver to be associated with higher levels of perceived time pressure among mothers. Interestingly, although similar proportions of mothers and fathers reported caregiving responsibilities in this study, about 6%, the addition of the caregiving role was *not* associated with time pressure among fathers. Based on data from Statistics Canada's GSS on time use, Fast et al. (2002) reported a similar gender difference in their

study of employed informal caregivers. These researchers found that a significantly higher percentage of women (65.4%) than men (49.7%) reported difficulty balancing their multiple roles. In addition, almost one-half of the women in the study, compared to about one-third of the men, reported that their caregiving activities resulted in a lack of time for themselves.

What might account for this gender difference in the relationship between caregiving and perceived time pressure? The answer may lie in the gendered nature of unpaid caregiving work in Canada. Using Statistics Canada's 2007 General Social Survey on Family, Social Support and Retirement, Cranswick and Dosman (2008) reported that compared to male caregivers, female caregivers were more likely to perform: personal care activities (e.g. bathing, dressing), regularly scheduled housework tasks (e.g. meal preparation, laundry), tasks related to medical care, and overall coordination activities. Male caregivers were more likely than their female counterparts to perform tasks related to household maintenance and yard work. As Cranswick and Dosman (2008) observe:

Not only are some of the tasks that women perform more personal, they also have to be performed according to a regular schedule, for example the administering of medicines and the preparation of meals. Other tasks such as care management must be done during the day when offices are open, competing with work time in the case of working caregivers. The time-specific nature of certain tasks is likely to add burden and stress to caregivers. In contrast, tasks outside the house such as house maintenance or outdoor work can usually wait until the care provider has the time to perform them (p. 50).

As the Canadian population continues to age, informal caregiving demands will only increase, making the need for appropriate social and economic policies to assist informal caregivers with balancing their work and life responsibilities even more critical (Barrette, 2009; Cranwick & Dosman, 2008; Duxbury et al. 2009).

In addition to the role of caregiver, this study also examined the relationship between perceived time pressure and occupancy of the marital/partner role among employed parents. Single-parent households, a growing family form in Canada, currently comprise about 17% of all families in Canada, with the vast majority of those households, approximately 80%, headed by women (Statistics Canada, 2008). Although most single parent households are led by women, the rate of single father headed households is growing in Canada more rapidly than single mother households. A prevalent assumption in the time pressure literature is that single mothers likely experience higher rates of time pressure than their partnered counterparts due to the absence of a live-in partner to share household and child rearing responsibilities (Barrette, 2009; Brooker & Hyman, 2010). Single parents also have fewer financial resources than partnered parents (Williams, 2010), perhaps affording them less of an opportunity to “outsource” household work such as housework and yard work as a way of minimizing time pressure. In addition to financial constraints, employed single parents are more likely than employed partnered parents to work in low-wage occupations which in turn are associated with more limited access to family-friendly policies which may facilitate balancing their work and family roles (Lambert, 1999; Mason, 2003).

Surprisingly, the results of this study indicated no statistically significant association between perceived time pressure and lone motherhood; that is, employed

single mothers reported a level of time pressure similar to that of partnered mothers. This finding is consistent with the results of some previous research (Baxter & Alexander, 2008; Hebert & Grey, 2006) but inconsistent with one other study that reported higher perceived time pressure among single compared to partnered mothers (Gunthorpe & Lyons, 2004).

What might explain the lack of association between time pressure and single motherhood in this study? It is important to note that this study included only *employed* mothers and it is possible that single mothers who experience high levels of time pressure are unable to maintain employment and would therefore not have met the inclusion criteria for participation in this study. As concluded by Mason (2003), in her qualitative study of 95 employed and non-employed lone mothers in several Canadian cities:

There were two major influences on a lone mother's ability to remain attached to the workforce: the presence of mothers, sisters or others able and willing to provide emergency childcare, and family-friendly work environments. Those without one or the other of these critical supports struggled and frequently withdrew from the paid labor force. Less critical, but still significant were factors associated with employment benefits, affordable housing, transportation, and recreation (p. 49).

In other words, the sample in our study may be a very selective one whereby only those single mothers who have the necessary supports in place to be able to successfully balance the time demands of family and paid were included as study participants.

Other research, though not specifically examining time pressure, provides an alternative view to understanding the lack of association between single motherhood and



time pressure observed in this study. Some writers have been critical of what they consider a one-sided portrayal of single mothers in both the academic and popular press, that is, an “...*almost exclusive focus on the dysfunctions and distress of single-parent families which does injustice to those solo parents who are relatively successful with regard to self-support and quality of life*” (McManus, Korabik, Rosin, & Kelloway, 2002; p. 1319). Indeed, some research does report that single mothers do not experience more difficulty than partnered mothers in balancing home and work life (McManus et al. 2002; Hertz & Ferguson, 1998). The work, family, and community experiences of single mothers are likely diverse and unfortunately many studies do not have detailed enough measures in place to reflect that diversity. The experience of time pressure is complex, and simply the occupancy or lack of occupancy of the partner role, fails to reflect that complexity. Unfortunately, with a few exceptions, quantitative research on time pressure has focused primarily on couple families (e.g. Deding & Lausten, 2011; van der Lippe, 2007; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009) and those that do consider marital status, often do not do so in combination with parent status (e.g. Roxburgh, 2002), or fail to distinguish between single mothers and single fathers (e.g. Gunthrope & Lyons, 2004).

In contrast to mothers, partner status did make a difference for employed fathers, with single fathers in this study reporting significantly lower levels of perceived time pressure than partnered fathers. Similar to mothers, however, is that this finding was somewhat unexpected. Although compared to single mothers, single fathers are more economically well-off (Williams, 2010), compared to partnered fathers, they are not (Galarneau, 2005). That is, Canadian data indicates that relative to couple fathers, single fathers have lower educational attainment, are less likely to be employed full-time, and

are much more likely to be living in a low-income household (Williams, 2020, Galarneau, 2005). Thus, like single mothers, one might expect single fathers to be more pressed for time than fathers in couple households due in part to more limited access to the social and financial resources that could be used to minimize time pressures. On the other hand, the greater time pressure among partnered than single fathers in this study is consistent with the role scarcity perspective (Goode, 1960) which argues that occupying additional roles (in this case the partner role) should be associated with greater time pressure; that is, while a partner can be an important resource for balancing work and family obligations, fulfilling one's partner role responsibilities also requires time and effort. Single fathers' lower perceived time pressure may also be due to the fact that they are more likely than couple fathers to work part-time (Galarneau, 2005); however, this explanation does not likely apply to the results of this study since the difference in time pressure between single and partnered fathers remained even after statistical adjustment for paid work hours. Finally, some research suggests that single fathers may be less likely than other types of parents to spend time caring for their pre-school age children – a period in a child's life which typically requires daily, time-intensive parenting (Hook & Chalasani, 2008). In addition, compared to partnered households, single fathers may spend more money on eating out rather than preparing food at home, perhaps resulting in less time pressure (Ziol-Guest, 2009).

Unfortunately, the measurement limitations in this study prevent a more in depth understanding of the reasons for the findings. Single parents in this study were those who indicated: being divorced/separated/widowed/never married, not living with a partner, and having a child living in their household at least "part of the time". Access to

potentially important information, such as custody arrangements and the duration of single parenthood, were not available in the present study. Among single fathers there is obviously much variability in terms of their own and the other parent's level of involvement in their children's lives which would likely impact on fathers' experience of single parenting and the perception of being pressured for time. Also not addressed in the present study was the presence of other supportive people, such as grandparents, who may be available to assist employed single fathers in the daily demands of raising a family as a single parent.

## *5.2 Gender, Role Characteristics and Perceived Time Pressure*

The second objective of this study was to examine how family and work characteristics may be related to time pressure and if these relationships varied by gender. The results are discussed below, first for family and then for paid work.

### *5.2.1 Gender, family, and perceived time pressure*

The strongest gender differences in this study were found concerning the relationship between family characteristics and perceived time pressure. Regarding objective family role characteristics, although neither the number of children nor the presence of a young child were associated with time pressure for these parents, perceptions of time pressure did increase for mothers who were the parent of a child with a health and/or behavioral problem. Parenting a child with health or behavioural issues was not associated with time pressure for fathers. Although similar proportions of mothers and fathers in this study reported this family circumstance (see Table 2), no information was collected regarding the amount of time actually spent on parenting a child with such challenges. Given that gender influences both the extent and nature of

care giving provided in families (Dufur, 2009), it is possible that mothers in this study may take on a larger share of the responsibilities or 'case management' for these children than fathers. Mothers may report feeling time pressured because of the additional cognitive planning that would be needed to deal with illness or behavioural issues, not to mention perhaps time spent communicating with schools and/or the health care sector.

Gender differences also emerged in regard to subjective family characteristics. Again, although similar proportions of mothers and fathers agreed with various statements that parenting was emotionally draining or anxiety-provoking (Table 2), such perceptions were related to mothers' but not fathers' experience of time pressure. Why might the perception of parenting as draining or anxiety provoking be associated with greater perceived time pressure among employed mothers than fathers? This question is difficult to answer. These single item measures of parental role quality used in this study pose challenges to their meaningful interpretation. The cross-sectional nature of the study also adds to the challenge: does feeling time pressured lead to the perception of parenting as exhausting or visa versa? Compared to mothers who disagree with such statements, it is plausible that mothers' who agree, for a variety of reasons, spend more of their time in parenting-related activities, leading to perceptions of time pressure. Perhaps mothers who perceive parenting as exhausting and/or anxiety provoking have fewer economic and social resources at their disposal, making it more difficult to fulfill their parenting responsibilities in a time-efficient manner. It is important to note, however, that mothers' perceptions of parenting quality in this study remained statistically significantly associated with time pressure, even after adjusting for other characteristics which may differ between women in this study and be related to time pressure, such as the

availability of social support and various employment characteristics. Additional research is needed to understand this finding.

Mothers' experience of time pressure in this study was also related to their perceptions of social support. Compared to mothers who reported low social support, those who perceived themselves as high in social support, that is, as having people in their life to whom they could talk to about problems, ask for advice, and count on for emotional support, reported significantly lower levels of time pressure. It is important to remember that the time pressure measure used in this study is a subjective one. Thus, although the consistent presence of an emotionally supportive person in one's life may not actually reduce the time spent on particular role activities, such a person(s) may enhance the support recipient's sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy in coping with multiple demands, which in turn, may alleviate feelings of being pressured for time. Social support has been consistently identified in the epidemiological literature as an important protective resource for women's physical and mental health (Berkman & Kawachi, 2000); however only one other study could be located attempting to link emotional social support specifically to perceptions of time pressure. The study by Roxburgh (2002), however, focused only on support provided by one's partner and did not find it to be statistically associated with women's perceptions of time pressure.

Interestingly, more tangible types of support, such as satisfaction with family-related supports and services in the community and help with household chores, were not associated with mothers' experience of time pressure. Regarding the latter finding, although previous research has reported actual time in unpaid family work as quite consistently associated with perceived time pressure among women (Deding & Lauston,

2011; Hebert & Grey, 2006), research using measures assessing relative contribution to paid and domestic work (ie., the division of labour) have produced more ambiguous results (Beujot & Anderson, 2006; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009). The lack of association in our study between tangible social supports and time pressure may be due, in part, to our use of relatively crude, single item measures of both unpaid family work demands and availability of family services.

### *5.2.2 Gender, paid work, and perceived time pressure*

In contrast to family characteristics, very few gender differences emerged in the relationship between paid work characteristics and mothers' and fathers' perceptions of time pressure.

Objective job characteristics in this study, with the exception of holding down multiple jobs among men, were unrelated to perceptions of time pressure. The relationship between multiple job occupancy and time pressure seems a reasonable one, due to the time splitting required between at least two places of employment, along with the additional role of being a parent. Working long hours (50+ a week) has been consistently associated with increased time pressure in the research literature (Beaujot & Anderson, 2007; Hebert & Grey, 2006; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009; Gunthrope & Lyons, 2004). The absence of a relationship in this study was likely due to the insensitivity of the measure used (ie., a dichotomous measure simply grouping workers as part-time or full-time) in being able to distinguish between parents who work *very* long hours and everyone else. On the other hand, the lack of association in this study between non-standard work and perceived time pressure is consistent with previous research (Beaujot & Anderson, 2007; Hebert & Grey, 2006; Tezli & Gauthier, 2009). Employee access to

flexible work schedules, though not measured in this study, however has been associated with alleviating perceptions of time pressure and work-family conflict (Hebert & Grey, 2006).

For both mothers and fathers in this study, *high strain* jobs (ie., high demands, low control) were associated with greater time pressure. Workers in high strain jobs would have greater perceptions of things being hectic, having to work fast, and being frequently interrupted when trying to complete their work tasks (Karasek et al. 1998). Such workers would also have less access to resources that might assist them in coping with a psychologically demanding job, such as the freedom to make work-related decisions on their own and a say about what happens on their job. Thus, the statistically significant association observed in this study and in Roxburgh's (2002) between high demands/low control and increased perceptions of time pressure, seems quite logical. Some research suggests that a highly strained paid work environment increases workers' perceptions of work-family conflict (Neil & Hammer, 2007), which in turn, may increase perceptions of time pressure.

### *5.3 Study Limitations*

There are a number of limitations to this study both in design and measurement. This study is cross-sectional, and therefore, there was not enough evidence to establish the temporal relationship between perceptions of time pressure on the one hand and work and family role occupancies/characteristics on the other. Although the perception of time pressure was positioned as the dependent variable in this study, based on previous published literature in the area, time pressure could plausibly act as an independent

variable in some of the relationships examined here (e.g. perceptions of parenting quality). In addition, individuals' work and family role occupancies and their associated characteristics are not static, but rather, change over time; the inability of this study to capture the dynamic nature of work and family roles in relation to perceptions of time pressure also limit the ability to draw any causal conclusions. In addition, this study took place in a mid-size city in Western Canada potentially limiting the generalizability of the results to larger urban centers and rural/remote communities. More research with diverse samples of participants, in terms of geography, life stage, family composition, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and socioeconomic position, is required to advance the field.

Limitations in the measurement of key study variables were also important. As described in an earlier chapter of this thesis, imprecise (or lacking) definitions of time pressure in the literature, combined with the use of measures with unknown psychometric properties, make the study of time pressure (and factors associated with it) extremely challenging. Although I believe that the measure of time pressure (Roxburgh, 2002) used in this study represents an advance over some earlier research, the very general nature of the measure makes the interpretation of associations challenging. Recent research in the area has incorporated multi-item time pressure measures which distinguish between time pressure experienced in the parenting role ("*You have enough time to enjoy your children*") and in the partner role ("*You have enough time for your spouse or partner*") (Roxburgh, 2006; Nomaguichi, 2005).

The quality of family and paid work roles in the study were considered to be a function of a combination of subjective and objective role characteristics (Neal & Hammer, 2007). Although the measurement of several of the objective paid work



characteristics was relatively crude (e.g. work hours, non-standard work), the use of Karasek's job strain measure in this study, given its strong theoretical and research base, was a definite strength. On the other hand, the quality of measures of family characteristics was weaker. Several single item measures were used in this study as indicators of family role quality, such as the extent to which participants endorsed several statements regarding their parenting role. The interpretation of the results of this study could have definitely been strengthened with the use of theoretically-based, psychometrically sounder measures of family role quality, including those assessing unpaid household work. To advance the field, conceptual models need to be developed and used to inform the development of measures that more fully capture the complexity of family work, going beyond simply time spent to including role-quality related concepts such as perceived fairness in the division of domestic work. Although not yet studied in relation to perceived time pressure, research is accumulating suggesting that how parents perceive the household division of work may be even more important to their well-being than the number of hours spent doing family work (Goldberg & Perry-Jenkins, 2004; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999).

Finally, it is important to note that although statistically significant associations were reported in the study between work and family role occupancies/characteristics and perceived time pressure, the predictor variables only explained approximately 13% of the total variability in our dependent variable. Obviously, there are other factors associated with perceived time pressure that were not included in this study and need to be addressed in future research, such as the number of daily activities, general health, and the occupancy of other roles such as volunteer. The inclusion of more valid and reliable

measures of the family and paid work role characteristics would also enhance the explanatory power of our multivariable models of time pressure.

#### *5.4 Policy Implications*

To enhance the psychosocial paid work environment of parents, a number of policies and programs within the workplace could be designed and implemented. For instance, occupational stress interventions could be implemented to address the psychosocial work environment (Lowe, 2007). For individual employees, these interventions may include training to develop effective and healthy stress management techniques. At the level of the organization, job redesign practices could be introduced with the goal of reducing workplace stress, such as introducing policies which allow employees to be more active in work-related decision making processes.

Additional support by governments could reduce caregiver burden by programs that provide respite and assistance in arranging seniors move into care facilities. Access to further services in the home was identified as a gap for 51 percent of parents caring for children with mental health issues (Health Canada, 2004). Caregivers have identified themselves as needing to be relieved periodically from their caregiver duties. Those that are not getting the respite needed report higher rates of stress and more disruptions to their employment (Health Canada, 2004). Employment policies should include family friendly strategies such as parental leaves and increasing family days for child and elder care in times of stress. Women with flexible work hours also report lower levels of time pressure (Hilbrecht, 2009) and increased levels of satisfaction with work-family balance, job satisfaction, life satisfaction and with their use of time (Estes, 2005; Williams, 2008;

Hilbrecht, 2009). Additional assistance modest and middle income earners could come in the form of income transfers to families with children.

The findings from our study show that women's perception of time pressure was particularly impacted by the quality of their parenting role. To assist mothers in the early years of raising children, adequate access to affordable child-care is critical (Brooker & Hyman, 2010). As the number of mothers in the labour force increase, so do the number of children accessing day care services. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has ranked Canada last among developed countries in terms of access to early learning and child care spaces and public investment. The report found that there were regulated spaces for less than 20% of children under the age of 6. The availability of high quality and affordable early childhood education and care can have a major impact on parents (and children's) quality of life, by reducing family caregiving demands and altering how young children spend their time (Brooker & Hyman, 2010).

Our results also showed that women who have strong social support report lower rates of time pressure. Social support is usually provided through family, friends, neighbours and members of local organizations. Decision-makers could help foster social networks by supporting a range of opportunities including volunteerism, lifelong learning, employment, recreation and civic participation. Policies and programs need to address the multiplicity of barriers that limit social engagement among employed mothers.

### *5.5 Conclusion*

The overall goal of this study was to better understand the patterning of perceived time pressure among working mothers and fathers in Canada according to whether they

occupied the additional role of partner and/or caregiver, as well as according to characteristics associated with their paid work and family roles. Although study limitations temper firm conclusions, the main finding of this study is that both role occupancy and role quality is related to perceived time pressure among employed parents but that the precise nature of these relationships depends on gender. However, more longitudinal research, combined with the greater use of psychometrically sound and theoretically-informed measures of time pressure and family role quality, is needed to advance the field.

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## **Appendix A: Ethic's Exemption**



Research Ethics Office

Box 5000 RPO University  
1607 – 110 Gymnasium Place  
NRC/PBI Building  
Saskatoon SK S7N 4J8 Canada  
Telephone: (306) 966-2975  
Facsimile: (306) 966-2069

**To:** Terrie Fitzpatrick, Student Counselling Services, University of Saskatchewan  
Bonnie Janzen, Community Health and Epidemiology, University of Saskatchewan

**Date:** August 18, 2010

**Re:** Gender, time pressure and psychological distress (Beh 10-213)

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Thank you for submitting the description of your project entitled, "Gender, time pressure and psychological distress". This project is exempt from the Research Ethics Board review process. This decision is based on the information provided to the Research Ethics Office on August 18, 2010.

Article 3.3 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (1998) specifies that REB review and approval is not required to conduct a secondary analysis of data that cannot be linked to individuals, and for which there is no possibility that individuals can be identified in any published reports.

It should be noted that though your project is exempt of ethics review, your project should be conducted in an ethical manner (i.e. in accordance with the information that you submitted). It should also be noted that any deviation from the original methodology and/or research question should be brought to the attention of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board for further review.

Sincerely,

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## Appendix B: Study Instruments

### Time Pressure

I would like you to consider how pressured you have felt for time during the last 12 months. Please tell me whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree with the following statements.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

You never seem to have enough time to get everything done.	1	2	3	4
You feel pressured for time.	1	2	3	4
You are often in a hurry.	1	2	3	4
You feel rushed to do the things that you have to do.	1	2	3	4
You have enough time for yourself.	1	2	3	4
You feel that too much is expected of you.	1	2	3	4
You worry about how you are using your time.	1	2	3	4
You are always running out of time.	1	2	3	4
There just don't seem to be enough hours in the day.	1	2	3	4

### Sociodemographic Characteristics:

#### Age, Education and Income:

##### Age

How old are you? \_\_\_\_

##### Educational Attainment

- Less than high school
- Graduated from high school, but didn't go to a postsecondary institution
- Some postsecondary training, but didn't graduate
- Graduated from a college
- Graduated from a university



**Income Adequacy**

We have enough money to cover basic needs for food, housing and clothing.	1	2	3	4
	Strongly Disagree		Strongly Agree	

**Role Occupancy:**

**Marital status**

- Married
- Living with a partner
- Widowed
- Separated
- Divorced
- Single

**Care giving:**

**Other than your child, is there a friend or family member living with you or not, to whom you provide special care or attention because of a handicap, illness or old age?**

- Yes
- No

**Student status:**

**Are you currently enrolled as a student on a part-time/full-time basis?**

- Yes
- No

**Family Characteristics and Quality**

**Number and age of children:**

**Child with a health or behavioral concern:**

**Have any of your children experienced any of the following problems in the past 12 months? Please respond with yes or no to each problem.**

- Chronic disease or disability
- Frequent minor illnesses
- Emotional problems
- Alcohol or substance problems
- Problems at school or at work
- Legal problems
- Difficulty getting along with people

**Parental Feelings:**

**I would now like to ask you about what it feels like for you to be a parent. Please let me know if you agree or disagree with each statement.**

**Parenting leaves you feeling drained and exhausted. Would you say that you...**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**Being a parent makes you tense and anxious. Would you say that you...**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**Chores:**

**Is there someone available to help you with daily chores?**

- None of the time
- A little of the time
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

**Family-Related Supports and Services:**

**How satisfied are you with the help that you receive from the supports and services available to you and your child? Would you say that you are...**

- Very unsatisfied
- Somewhat unsatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

**Social Support:**

**Is there someone available to you whom you can count on to listen to you when you need to talk? Would you say that someone is available...**

- None of the time
- A little of the time
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

**Is there someone available to give you good advice about a problem?**

- None of the time
- A little of the time
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

**Is there someone available to you who shows you love and affection?**

- None of the time
- A little of the time
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

**Can you count on anyone to provide you with emotional support (talking over problems or helping you make a difficult decision)?**

- None of the time
- A little of the time
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

**How often do you have as much contact as you would like with someone you feel close to, someone in whom you can trust and confide?**

- None of the time
- A little of the time
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

**Work Characteristics and Quality**

**Work hours, non-regular and Multiple Jobs:**

**Approximately how many hours a week do you usually work at this job? If you usually work extra hours (paid or unpaid), please include these hours.**

**Which of the following best describes the hours you usually work?**

- Regular daytime shift
- Rotating shift (change from days to nights)
- Irregular schedule
- Other

**Multiple job holder**

Do you currently work (for pay) at more than job (yes/no)

**Job strain:**

Please indicate, on a scale of 1 to 4, which 1 being strongly disagree and 4 being strongly agree, your agreement with the following statements concerning your job.

**Strongly Disagree** 1-----2-----3-----4 **Strongly Agree**

<b>Psychological demands</b>				
My job requires working very fast.	1	2	3	4
My job requires working very hard.	1	2	3	4
I am not asked to do too much work.	1	2	3	4
I have enough time to get the job done.	1	2	3	4
The demands that other people make of me often conflict.	1	2	3	4
My job requires long periods of intense concentration on the task.	1	2	3	4
My tasks are often interrupted before I can finish them so that I have to go back to them later.	1	2	3	4
My job is very hectic.	1	2	3	4
Waiting on work from other people or departments often slows me down on my job.	1	2	3	4
People I work with are competent in doing their jobs.	1	2	3	4
<b>Decision latitude</b>				
My job requires that I learn new things.	1	2	3	4
My job involves a lot of repetitive work.	1	2	3	4
My job requires me to be creative.	1	2	3	4
My job requires a high level of skill.	1	2	3	4
I get to do a variety of different things on my job.	1	2	3	4
I have an opportunity to develop my own special abilities.	1	2	3	4
My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own.	1	2	3	4
On my job, I have very little freedom to decide how I do my work.	1	2	3	4