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7

Organizational Change, Globalization, and Work-Family Programs: Case Studies from India and the United States

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Organizational change has been an overlooked dimension of international work-family research. Although this field has carefully examined origins and patterns of work-family policy across different national contexts, the frame is often limited to single moments in time. In response, this paper emphasizes the importance of change to the dynamics of work-family policies. First, rather than treating organizations (and households) as static phenomena, I argue they are better conceptualized in terms of ongoing transformations resulting from broader structural changes, both global and local. Second, although many studies investigate the sources of work-family programs in organizations, I ask about their long-term implications and specifically the extent to which they can be sustained in the face of global changes (Glass and Estes, 1997). Finally, I examine the role that global inequality plays in these processes. I will show how firms have varying abilities to develop and maintain work-family policies as a consequence of the global hierarchies in which they are embedded.

This analysis is based on case studies of three high-tech firms from India and the United States. Their work-family policies range from alternative work arrangements, such as flextime and flexplace, to material benefits of paid parental leave and on-site childcare. I recount how, during the period of 1989 to 1995, these firms experienced four types of organizational changes: employment insecurity, occupational restructuring, organizational restructuring, and corporate re-ownership. Because of varying positions in the global hierarchy, they respond in different ways and have different outcomes for their work-family policies. One model is *endurance*, as a U.S. firm (AmCo) survives through crises with minimal disturbance to policies. The second model is *disruption*, as an Indian firm (IndCo) undergoes major restructuring and a dismantling of its policies. The third model is *flexibility*, as a U.S. transplant firm in India (TransCo) expands the range of policies but reduces accessibility to lower level employees.

I use this range of outcomes to argue that: (a) Southern firms face greater pressure from globalization, and moreover, are less equipped to manage similar types of organizational changes than those in the North; and (b) the transnational corporation experiences flexibility both horizontally and vertically, which allows it to absorb and magnify strains relative to its parent company in the North.¹ The implications for future study of work-family policies include more longitudinal studies of organizational change, more studies of Southern organizations and transnational corporations, and more studies of the potential benefits of organizational change.

LITERATURE ON WORK-FAMILY POLICY

Traditional Accounts: Snapshots in Time

Thanks to a blossoming interdisciplinary field of work-family research, increasing attention has focused on international variations in work-family policy. Two factors in particular are typically emphasized as sources of this variation: state structures and cultural ideologies. For instance, national governments play a role in the design and implementation of supportive work-family arrangements (Balyun, 1993; Ferber and O'Farrell, 1991; Haas et al., 2000; Kalleberg and

7. WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMS

Rosenfeld, 1995; Kammerman, 1979; Lewis and Lewis, 1996). Northern European states such as Sweden and Denmark offer a wide range of benefits including subsidized, guaranteed childcare and parental leave, and options for part-time work, whereas governments such as the United States, the U.K., and Australia provide fewer benefits such as short and/or unpaid parental leave and little support for childcare (O'Connor et al., 1999). These patterns are often theoretically linked to different types of welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The first example above, for instance, represents a social democratic welfare state, which takes broad responsibility for the funding and regulation of work-family programs, whereas the latter example reflects a liberal welfare state, which takes limited responsibility and instead passes it off to the corporate sector (see den Dulk, Chapter 8, this volume).

Cultural arguments focus on the way ideologies of family, work, and gender shape organizational policies. One popular approach is that of "individualism" versus "collectivism" (Hofstede, 1991; Triandis, 1995). Several chapters in this volume also touch on cultural themes, although not explicitly in relation to organizational policies (Gelfand and Knight, Chapter 14; Westman, Chapter 9; Yang, Chapter 11). Societies with "collectivist" cultural norms are more likely to prioritize social responsibility for the group (and family) and therefore offer more work-family programs, whereas those with "individualist" cultures are more likely to emphasize personal responsibility for managing work-family relations and therefore offer weaker benefits. In some cases, these cultural notions are linked to particular national ideologies; in China and Taiwan, for instance, collectivism is said to be rooted in Confucianism and its values of avoiding conflict and respecting hierarchies (Ling and Powell, 2001; Wharton and Blatt-Loy, 2002). In other accounts, cultural notions are linked to gender (Gornick et al., 1998; Kalleberg and Rosenfeld, 1995; Kammerman, 1979). Countries with more ideological support for gender equality are associated with stronger work-family policies, in that they promote women's right to equal or continuous employment and men's responsibility for housework and childrearing (Chow and Berheide, 1994). Although there are many additional arguments explaining international variation in work policies (such as labor markets, GDP, and the social activism of leftist and religious groups, etc.; Ferber and O'Farrell, 1991; Misra, 2003), those regarding state structures and cultural ideologies seem to have the most frequent and vocal presence in the literature.

Such research has been crucial in directing scholarly attention to international dynamics of work-family policies and in developing

¹I use the terms "Northern" versus "Southern" nations to draw attention to economic inequalities between countries that are roughly drawn on geo-political lines. Like many academic terms though, these concepts are flawed. I urge readers to consider the complexities, such as the presence of marginalized nations in the Northern hemisphere, and powerful nations in the South.

theoretical models for their origins and development. This is especially important given the lack of an international focus in the work-family field. With regard to India and the United States in particular, these factors of state and culture also account for much of the variation in their work-family policies (Komarraju, 1997; Poster and Prasad, 2005; Sekaran, 1992), as I will describe more below. However, this literature is hampered by an assumption of atemporality, which in turn, characterizes work-family policies as timeless or stable.

There are some practical reasons for this. One is methodological, given that most international studies (both the quantitative and qualitative) tend to be cross-sectional or time-specific, in which change can be hard to see unless you are looking for it (Gornick et al., 1998). It also may be related to geographic scope, given that most of the studies focus on Europe (especially the West), or else more recently industrialized Asia, where change has been less radical than other regions of the world.

In addition, some of the assumed stability of work policies is theoretically embedded in this research. This is especially true with the examples above of "culture" and "state." This is more explicit in some cases, such as with Hofstede (1991) who argues that cultural diversity is permanent (or at least "will remain with us," p. 238); whereas in other cases, this is implied because the variables themselves have a presumed timeless quality, because they are so historic (as with ideologies like Confucianism) or because of their size or institutional embeddedness (such as the state). Another theoretical limitation is the level of analysis. Even though these studies are "international," their explanatory variables are still "national" and because of this, they often overlook relations between countries as a source of work-family policy.

Identifying Forms of Organizational Change

As an alternative, I would like to propose the value of focusing on change in international work-family policy. "Change" in the U.S. work-family literature has been conceptualized largely in terms of organizational transformations. Here are some examples.

One form of change is *employment insecurity*. This refers to periods of economic strain and crisis such as recession. During these times, jobs become more fragile, and organizations are pressured to reduce work-family programs (Cubbins, 1998). A second form of change is *occupational restructuring*. This refers to transformations in the conception and structure of jobs—from notions of full-time,

permanent employment, to those of "contingent work" which is part-time, temporary, or outsourced (Gonyea and Googins, 1996). The notable feature of these jobs is that they often carry little or no work-family benefits (Wallace, 1998).

A third type of organizational change is that of *corporate ownership*. This refers to increasing mergers, alliances, and partnerships among organizations in the past few decades (Aguilera et al., 2004; Fligstein, 1990). Although careful managerial strategies can overcome the challenges of integrating two sets of employee programs (Schweiger et al., 1992), mergers can also create a high level of anxiety and insecurity for employees when they lead to obligatory relocation to new sites, layoffs, or attrition as employees find that their old ways of doing things are rejected by the new management.

Finally, a fourth important type of change is *organizational restructuring*. This reflects the transformation from postwar ("Ford-ist") organizational forms emphasizing hierarchy, standardization, and routinization, to those of newer ("Toyota-ist") organizational forms, involving looser decision-making structures and physical dispersals of work sites across locations (Smith, 1997). Some workers find new decentralized arrangements favorable, as they free women workers from a "male model" of continuous employment "for life" and provide greater flexibility in managing work and family (Brannen et al., 2001). However, such changes can also subvert previous social contracts between workers and employers, by shifting from an emphasis on "service, solidarity, and continuity," and toward "an erosion of employment rights," reduced work-family benefits, and heightened insecurity and layoffs.

These accounts illustrate how organizations have regular cycles of change and how these cycles have important consequences for work-family policy. To elaborate on these accounts, I illustrate how global dynamics intervene with these dynamics of change. I focus on India and the United States as countries that represent two sides of this globalization experience. Thus, I show that although all the firms in my study undergo many of the same organizational changes described above, the Indian-based firms experience them with much more strain and with more radical consequences than the U.S. firm. Next, I describe how and why globalization reshapes these dynamics for workers in the South.

The Impact of Globalization

Several important global transformations have magnified inequality across Northern and Southern nations since the 1990s. At the

core was a major restructuring of political and economic authority across Northern nations—what is called the “globalization project”—and its consolidation of power in transnational banks and corporations (McMichael, 2000). Here are some of the key features of the globalization project, with special attention to India and the United States.

First, there has been a shift in the holders of global economic power, particularly regarding international finance. The late 1980s to early 1990s marked a period when development planning was transferred from previous Cold War superpowers to new global finance managers and institutions. This is when the seven most wealthy nations consolidated their efforts into a single entity to form the “Group of 7” (G-7, now the G-8), which manages global markets and institutes their plans through new governance bodies: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. At the same time, the Indian state was in financial trouble. British colonialism had destabilized the local economy, for instance through its East India Company which undermined a formerly thriving industry in cotton manufacturing. This is why the Indian government turned to the Soviet Union for aid after its independence in 1947, and subsequently turned to the IMF for debt relief in 1991 when the Soviet state fell.

The consequence of this action—and the second factor of the globalization project for India—is a restructuring of state governments. A requirement for IMF loans is a “structural adjustment program,” which includes set of measures to ensure economic growth and debt repayment. To do this, states must radically transform their functions and operations, which includes liberalizing and globalizing their economies. In India, for example (Kapur and Cossman, 1996): “These new economic policies, which have taken the form of liberalization of trade, deregulation of investment, privatization of industry, and devaluation of the currency have begun to fundamentally transform the Indian economy, with a view to increasing export production, and decreasing state spending” (p. 148). This reflects the mandate of the globalization project, which says that the path to development is not in state governments, but in the markets of the private sector, especially at the global level.

The impact of structural adjustment policies on workers in the formal labor market and benefits such as work-family programs is manifold (Deshpande and Deshpande, 1992; Ghosh, 1994; Ranadive, 1994). For instance, although the Indian state has relatively strong parental leave benefits, proposals have been submitted to restrict the guarantee of three months paid leave to the first two children (Kapur and Cossman, 1996). There has also been a dismantling of the former social contract of job security and protection. Under debate in

parliament at present is a plan to curtail job security benefits by limiting its application to organizations with fewer workers. In addition, there has also been a disempowerment of unions, as managers have responded to labor disputes since liberalization with lockouts and closures (Sundaramurthy, 1994). Thus, in a variety of ways, global pressure has reduced the strength of Southern firms, which in turn is transferred to their employees and work-family policies.

The third feature of the globalization project that has impacted India and the companies of the study is a consolidation of market power by transnational corporations (TNCs) (McMichael, 2000): “TNCs account for two thirds of world trade. From 1970 to 1998, the number of TNCs rose from 7,000 to 60,000, with more than 500,000 foreign affiliates. The combined sales of the largest 350 TNCs in the world exceed the GNPs of all Third World countries” (quotation reduced for brevity, pp. 95–96). The growth of these firms in the last decade is partly related to changes in the technology of production (Hoogvelt, 1997):

First, the start-up costs of... automation technologies... are enormous, and in fact represent a shift from labour to capital intensity of awesome dimension. Second, these generic technologies are subject to rapid technological obsolescence; this has led to very short product life cycles placing an ever greater premium on access to financial resources, multinational production and extensive marketing networks (pp. 109–110).

Because these technologies have become so expensive and short-lived, there is a growing need to enter multiple national markets at once to cover costs.

A particularly important feature of these TNCs is their flexibility. Rather than previous systems of mass production, which tended to be “rigid” (i.e., one product is made in one way and in one place), TNCs increasingly use a “flexible” system of production in which their geography is dispersed, their functions are diversified, their pace is unstable and fast and their plans are short-term and changeable. Furthermore, although the meaning of flexibility is partly structural, describing changes from a unified to a diverse organizational form, it is also relational, referring to global political maneuverability and the ability to exploit Southern sites, markets, and populations in new ways. Two types of flexibility describe the dynamics of TNCs in my case study.

Horizontal flexibility describes the increasing global interconnectedness of TNCs with other local firms. Indeed, rather than unitary, monolithic organizations, TNCs take the form of a “global web”: “The

transnational enterprise has evolved from company organization to a loosely confederated network structure (global web) in which many discrete fabrication activities and services are brought in for the short term" (Hoogvelt, p. 127). One of the implications of this horizontal flexibility is an increasing number of mergers across borders: "Few companies [even transnational corporations] are large enough to go it alone" (Hoogvelt, p. 110). Indeed, between 1992 and 2000, the number of acquisitions between the United States and foreign companies rose from 500+ to 2,500+ (Aguilera, Dencker, & Escandell, 2004). At the same time, such partnerships are more difficult to sustain than domestic ones. Especially across Northern and Southern contexts, these mergers are often aggravated by tensions between organizational cultures. In the process, work-family policy can be one of the major conflicts.

Vertical flexibility describes the intra-organizational changes within global firms, specifically regarding the treatment of labor. It refers to the way TNCs attenuate their connection and/or responsibility to employees through a variety of strategies. For professionals, it means weaker attachment to the firm, but magnified international demand and competition for their services (Hoogvelt, 1997): "Many high-value added activities that are contributed by 'disembodied knowledge workers', are not only 'externalized', they are also extremely mobile. Marketing experts, computer consultants, legal affairs specialists, financial accountants and top managers can go to wherever they can obtain the highest price for their services" (Hoogvelt, pp. 145-146). At the bottom end of job hierarchy, unskilled labor is made flexible in another way. Although these workers remain tied to the production site to a greater degree than high-skilled workers, their job conditions (security, rewards, etc.) are decreased. Indeed, TNCs increasingly employ Southern workforces in a variety of tenuous capacities: "[global] decentralization of operational activity fundamentally changes the capital-labor relation—through part-time employment, if-and-when contracts, and through self-employment and piecemeal work and so on" (Hoogvelt, p. 145).

This process of labor flexibilization is facilitated even further by the actions of local governments. In the face of the severe economic tensions brought on by the dynamics described above (global finance, state reconstruction, etc.), Southern states often turn to TNCs as a source of jobs and capital. One strategy is to set up "export processing zones" (EPZs), which offer a number of infrastructure, tax, and financial incentives. The Indian state, in an act that symbolizes this process, was the first nation in the world to do so (Kumar, 1989). What is especially noteworthy about EPZs for our purpose is how

they exempt TNCs from local labor laws. In this way, Southern states collude with international capital to undermine organizations' responsibility for work-family policies.

My Argument

I will show how organizational change is fundamental to the firms in my study, in that each displays at least one of the four types described earlier. However, dynamics of the globalization project aggravate the impact of those changes at the Indian firms, relative to the U.S. firm. First, I show how *IndCo* displays the same changes of "organizational restructuring" and "employment insecurity" as *AmCo*. However, because of global pressures of economic marginalization and state reconstruction, *IndCo* has weaker resources to respond to them and weaker ability to preserve its work-family policies. Second, I show how *TransCo* displays changes of "corporate ownership" and "occupational restructuring" similarly to *AmCo*. However, the dynamics of transnational corporations exacerbate the effects at two levels. Horizontal flexibility makes *TransCo* more vulnerable to transnational clashes of corporate culture, especially regarding work-family policies. Vertical flexibility leads to privileges for globally mobile, elite workers, and marginalization for the low-skilled workers, which ultimately stratifies work-family policies.

AMCO, TRANSCO, AND INDCO: THE RESEARCH SITES AND METHODOLOGY

This analysis is based on case studies of three computer companies with similar industry and market characteristics, but different locations and positions in the global economy. The first is *AmCo*,² an American company located in Silicon Valley, California. It is a founding company for the high-tech industry and has subsidiaries all around the world. The second company, *TransCo*, is one of these subsidiaries situated in New Delhi, with its factory in Bangalore. Thus, it has American ownership, management, and policies, but it is entirely staffed by Indians (with few American expatriates). The third company, *IndCo*, is the Indian counterpart to *AmCo*. It is owned by Indians and located in New Delhi. Like *AmCo*, it has been a leading high-tech company in its country (at the time of the study at least) and has subsidiaries worldwide, including California. All three companies have software

²Company names in this study have been changed to preserve employee anonymity. This also includes names of companies with which these firms have had partnerships or mergers.

development and hardware production operations and all have similar gender ratios in their workforces, roughly 25-30% female.

Data collection occurred in 1995 and 1996. Therefore, the analysis considers recent changes in the companies for the previous five years or so, through retrospective accounts of managers and workers. TransCo was selected and approached first, given that it was one of the leading computer firms in both India and the United States. Contacts made during fieldwork at this site enabled access to both of the other firms: to AmCo, by a visit from the vice president of the U.S. head office; and to IndCo, by suggestion from the TransCo president of a comparable firm. Given that all three firms were the first approached and agreeable to participate, I perceived a lack of a bias because of organizational attrition from the sample.

Qualitative methodology was selected for this project in order to collect rich, detailed descriptions of the organizational settings, which cannot be garnered through surveys alone. Therefore, fieldwork was conducted at each location and involved three activities. Work relations were observed for informal types of relations, such as hierarchical versus participatory interactions, and so forth. Company documents such as organizational charts and corporate philosophies were examined for support of work-family issues. At each site, ethnographic analysis was conducted at two units: the corporate office and a factory. In the corporate offices, jobs typically involve management, marketing, engineering, accounting, administration, and so on. In the factories, jobs involve circuit board manufacturing and computer assembly.

Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both workers and managers. Formal (closed-ended) questions were used to assess demographic and educational backgrounds, work histories, and household characteristics, and so forth. Informal (open-ended) questions were used to elicit unconstrained responses regarding experiences of work-family interface and organizational change. The sample selection was based on employee lists provided by the human resource department. Respondents were chosen randomly, although the samples were balanced according to gender and occupational level. The total number of interviews at AmCo was 34, at TransCo 60, and at IndCo 51. Interviewees were told that this was a study about employment in transnational firms, rather than work-family issues in particular, so as to not bias the responses. Interviews were conducted onsite, either in English or in Hindi with the assistance of an interpreter, and lasted about an hour. Features of the samples are presented in Table 7.1.

The work-family policies in these firms are listed in Table 7.2. The range of what is included as a "work-family policy" is broader

TABLE 7.1
Background Characteristics of Employees

	AmCo			TransCo			IndCo		
	Total n = 34	Women n = 17	Men n = 17	Total n = 60	Women n = 29	Men n = 31	Total n = 51	Women n = 26	Men n = 25
Average Age (Years)	40	42	38	32	31	34	34	33	35
Education									
Highest Degree (%):									
High School/ Technical Certificate	35	35	35	28	24	32	41	42	40
Graduate	50	53	49	50	66	36	37	38	36
Post-Graduate	15	12	18	22	10	32	22	20	24
Family									
Currently Married (%)	58	50	65	67	62	71	80	73	88
Spouse Works (%)	82	100	67	74	100	59	63	100	32
Average # of Children	2	2	2	1	1	1	1.5	1	2
Household Structure (%):									
Single Family	66	56	81	58	59	58	49	50	48
Joint Family	34	44	19	42	41	42	51	50	52

than in many conventional accounts. The idea for this conceptualization is to capture policies offered by organizations that may be informal or nontraditional (at least from an academic perspective), but nonetheless beneficial to workers and their families. In Table 7.2, we see that AmCo is strong on "alternative work arrangements," or in other words, programs that modify schedules or places work to accommodate family demands. These include flex-time, telecommuting, job sharing, and part-time work. However, AmCo is much weaker on material benefits, especially compared to IndCo. This firm offers extensive and well-subsidized parental leave, along with a full package of home care benefits: coverage for rent, clothing, books, furniture, personal drivers for corporate staff; and transportation shuttles, cafeterias meals, onsite day-care centers, and doctors for production staff. TransCo combines elements of both programs, in a manner that is uncommon for other firms. This is described in detail in another paper (Poster, 2000), but will be addressed here in the upcoming section on TransCo.

RESULTS: THREE MODELS OF GLOBAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

These cases represent three models of organizational change in the global economy. Table 7.3 summarizes the features of these models, in terms of each firm's: (1) position in the global economy; (2) experience of organizational change; and (3) outcome for employment relations. Implications for work-family policies in particular are discussed in the following section.

Endurance

AmCo illustrates a model of endurance. As a Northern firm—and moreover, the parent of a multinational corporation—it represents a privileged position in the global hierarchy. Among the three firms, it is best able to insulate itself from external pressures. Therefore, it survives through this period of change with the least impact on employees.

Organizational Changes. Ironically, AmCo experienced the greatest range of organizational changes at this time relative to both IndCo or TransCo. First, there was a merger with a local telecommunications company. This generated a number of structural changes for employees of the target company, but not for long. A male technician

TABLE 7.2
Work-Family Policies

	IndCo	AmCo	TransCo
Job Restructuring Programs	Flex-time (2.5 hr range)	Flex-time (1.5 hr range)	None
Material Family Benefits	Unpaid Parental Leave, for Both Biological and Adopted Children (2 Months) Unpaid Personal Leave (6 Months-1 Year)	Paid Maternity Leave (3 Months, Up to Two Times), Plus Miscarriage or Abortion Leave (6 Weeks Paid)	Paid Maternity Leave (Flex-time) (for Biological Children: 3 Months, Plus Birthing Costs) (for Adopted Children: 6 Weeks, Plus 6 Weeks Unpaid, Plus Legal and Medical Expenses) Tuition Subsidies for Primary and Secondary Level Schooling, for up to 2 Children (For Executive Employees Only) For Executives: Driver, Servants, Soft Furnishings (Linens, Crockery, and Cutlery), Periodicals, Athletic Club Membership, and 70 Other Benefits
Childcare Benefits	Tax Exemptions for Childcare Costs (Dependent Care Assistance Plans)	On-site Childcare Center at the Factory	For Production Staff: Transportation Shuttles, Subsidized Lunches, On-Site Doctor
Homecare Benefits	Data Not Available	For Executives: Home Rental, Lunch, Books and Periodicals, Clothing, Hard Furnishings (Furniture), Soft Furnishings (Linens), Driver	For Clerical Staff: Rent

TABLE 7.3
Models of Global Positioning and Organizational Change

	Endurance	Disruption	Flexibility
Position in Global System	Southern Organization (AmCo)	Northern Organization (IndCo)	Transnational Organization (TransCo)
Type of Organizational Change	Employment Insecurity (Job Shuffling) Organizational Restructuring (Authority Decentralization) Occupational Restructuring (Contingent Work) Corporate Ownership (Mergers)	Employment Insecurity (Layoffs) Organizational Restructuring (Spatial Decentralization)	Occupational Restructuring (Contingent Work) Corporate Ownership (Mergers)
Global Forces		State Reconstruction Economic Marginalization	Flexible Global Production
Impact on Employment: Job Structures	Jobs Maintained but Moved	Layoffs, Speedup, and Disempowerment of Workers	Upgrading of Corporate Jobs, Downgrading of Factory Jobs
Work-Family Policy	Suspension of Policies (Flextime)	Termination of Policies (Onsite Daycare Centers, Doctors)	Intensified Stratification in Access to Policies

7. WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMS

187

explains: "I started with a company called OtherCo³ that AmCo acquired five years ago. So I have been working with AmCo for the last five years. [A lot] has changed with operators, technicians, and managers since AmCo bought the company. But right now, it's like one big company. You wouldn't even know it was OtherCo." There are many reasons why this merger was so smooth, including the fact that the acquiring firm was much larger than the target firm. In addition, a contributing factor was the fit between employee expectations from the old firm and the policies of the new firm. In other words, OtherCo workers appreciated AmCo's work-family policies in a way that we will not see later in the cross-border mergers by TransCo.

AmCo was also undergoing a transformation of the organizational structure—specifically, a decentralization of work relations and a shift away from hierarchy toward teams. A female supervisor on the production floor explains: "We're moving from directly supervising people, to just coaching the team, so that the operators work within their team to try and solve things and come up with solutions. [The view is that] a large population of people should make all those decisions." However, there are two reasons why this policy has not significantly altered jobs at AmCo. One is that the teams have not been fully implemented here, especially compared to other firms in the region. The supervisor continues: "It's actually going on in this whole valley, and there are not too many supervisors anymore. Everybody we've talked to is basically doing this—but they are a lot further ahead than we are." The second reason is that the team model has been less successfully implemented in the corporate areas relative to the factory:

I understand that some people have actually tried it in the office areas. It seems like it could work because many times you need the support of another person if you're going to be gone, on leave, or if you are not available. Also, you could go help somebody else if you run out of work. But it has been difficult in the offices because people usually are in a cubicle all to their own, and they're focused on what they're doing. So, it probably could work, or maybe it just needs more fine-tuning. Whereas in production, it's a little easier.

Thus, decentralization has been slow to catch on here.

The third change at AmCo is occupational restructuring, through an increasing reliance on contingent workers. A female operator

³See note 2.

explains, "We've had new people coming into our area, and they are hiring a lot of temps. It's kind of hard. When you've been working with someone for years and years, it's a little bit different having people come in fairly new." The most extensive uses of temporary workers seem to be in other departments however, or else in previous periods of speedup. A male technician describes: "In the past when we were going 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, we had a lot of temporary workers: out of a work group of 60, we had about 45 temporary workers." Indeed, at the time of these interviews, there were few temporary workers in the factory and none in the sample.

Impact on Employees. Relative to these three types of organizational change, the only one that had a very significant impact on workers at AmCo is employment insecurity. Given the recessions of the early 1990s, the firm experienced pressures to reduce staff. One corporate office employee in facilities explains: "We're in a 'redeployment mode' in our department. *Redeployment mode?* [Laugh] These new words. [It means] a downsizing. As we go through the downsizing stuff, there are jobs that will be outsourced." Thus, some workers were laid off as the company cut back on staff and outsourced some of the tasks. However, for the majority of employees, the more common procedure was shuffling workers around various departments of the company. A female operator in the factory explains what the experience meant: "I was doing one job for a while and then they 'accessed' everybody. *What does that mean* - 'access'? They are cutting down on people, and then we get to look around for another job in the company."

These experiences of job insecurity generate many strains for AmCo workers. One is increased tension among employees, as they now have to compete with their colleagues for scarce "core" positions. The facilities executive above recounts: "The job I have now is a core position, and so it has security. Management identified three more core positions, and there are six people in our group out of fourteen who will be eligible for those positions. So when the opportunity arises, we will be competitive for those three positions." Second, the repeated "redeployment" of employees means that many workers submit to a career of intra-office movement, as this female engineer in the corporate office describes: "I've actually got friends who are on their fifth access, which means that five times they have been rolled over. It comes to the point where their only job is to find a job." Still others describe an insecurity of being in a constant state of unknowing about

7. WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMS

the fate of their jobs, as a corporate employee in applications support explains:

It's almost as though with all the changes in management, all of the changes in—not policy, but it's the change in structure that's ongoing—you just have to be more careful of what you are saying, because people are nervous. They're nervous because all of a sudden, their new managers are in Atlanta, their department is being shifted, and it is all going to be housed in Boise, and they think: "What's going to happen to me?" Everybody is very cautious, and you have to be more careful.

Thus, clearly, these changes in jobs created a degree of hardship and anxiety for AmCo employees.

Yet, the unique feature of AmCo (especially compared to IndCo) is its general ability to maintain a "no fire" policy through this crisis. Many employees in the corporate office praise the firm for this commitment to job security, such as this male engineer: "It's not like other companies. I haven't seen anybody get laid off from this company in seven years. You might have seen companies hiring like crazy, and at the same time firing people. But we have job security, and if you are accessed in a group, they give you lots of options." Furthermore, even with the downsizing, some departments in the firm were expanding. A female supervisor in the factory confirmed: "We've interviewed quite a few people in the last year and a half, because we've had such a big hiring." Thus, in many ways, employment security is better here than at other firms.

Disruption

IndCo illustrates the model of disruption. As a Southern-based company, it faces more severe external pressures than AmCo—in particular, global pressures of state reconstruction and economic marginalization. Given that IndCo has fewer resources with which to manage these strains, it requires more drastic organizational strategies. Thus, although IndCo experiences fewer of the "organizational changes" in Table 7.3, it experiences more substantial consequences on employment and work-family policy, including layoffs, labor speedup, and a termination of many material benefits.

Global Pressures. Prior to 1991, IndCo was a relatively successful company in India. It was top ten in its market and invented a crucial piece of hardware for PCs that spread worldwide in the 1980s. Plus, as the

demand for computers rose, IndCo increased production by 300%. However, several shifts in global production derailed their upward progress by the 1990s. The first was a change in the high-tech industry, reflecting the rapid obsolescence of technology, as discussed earlier. The factory manager explains:

A reason for the changing scene is that the computer industry has a very short life span for any product. The time it takes to come from United States, Japan, or any other country to India is about 6 months. The demand for those items starts here, and in a year or so, it goes down. So any product which comes here, within 6 months or 1 year, it has become obsolete. There is a change.

At the same time, there was an escalating need for volume of production: "The expectations of the division, of the management have increased. The reason is that we had very little volumes. If we don't have volume, we cannot stand in the market. The poor volumes of U.S. companies may be a very high target for us. And if you are talking big volumes, you have to have automation." Thus, global economic marginalization—especially relative to the United States—puts these firms at a disadvantage. Another pressure was change in the technology of the production process. Along with speed and volume, IndCo needed to improve automation:

When we set up this factory, we had a big plan on having a lot of automation here. We thought that we will have automatic packing machines, lifting machines, trolleys here and there. We don't have much except that we have glow soldering machines and some electrical screwdrivers. It's because we are not in that good of a financial position to do the investment.

A pivotal turning point for IndCo was when the state liberalized its economy and changed regulations on trade. By opening local markets to imports, it greatly intensified competition for computer parts. This had a profound effect on IndCo's strategy for production:

Because of the government policies, we had to take a decision not to invest too much money here—it was not viable to have the big production plan. Earlier we used to do the assembly of cables and cards ourselves. We used to get components like resistors, capacitors, and circuit boards separately, then assemble, do the testing, and make the machines. But then the import duty on assembled machines was reduced, and the profit for manufacturing was too small. So we decided to do basically machine integration.

7. WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMS

Thus, this combination of factors ultimately influenced IndCo's leaders to change the core process of the factory from manufacturing to assembly. Moreover, the new state laws had the counter-productive effect of *discouraging* investment in the factory.

Organizational Changes. As a response to these strains, IndCo managers felt that organizational restructuring was necessary. One form of this was decentralization. More radical than the decentralization at AmCo (which involved decision-making structures and teams), the decentralization at IndCo involved its physical space. IndCo undertook a "trifurcation" of its factory, in which a large production facility in New Delhi was divided into three smaller facilities. This trifurcation was largely motivated by the new state policies. To promote the high-tech business in particular, the state set up industrial parks called "Electronics Cities," which provided infrastructural support and tax incentives. The factory manager continues: "We were getting a sales tax advantage here, so we decided to open this new factory. Initially, we had plans to have our R&D and purchase department and some other functions, so that is why you see big land here." This new factory was now located many miles away from the head office in New Delhi, in a city called Gurgaon. Although these state initiatives were designed to promote and expand private industries in India, they had the opposite effect in this case—redistributing and downsizing the scale of production at IndCo.

Simultaneous to this, IndCo underwent a second major change involving employment insecurity—layoffs. The IndCo president explains what this meant for the occupational structure and size of the labor force: "We reduced or eliminated layers. From nine or—in some cases—eleven layers, we came down to three or five layers. We had 928 persons, and we came down to 460. [And later] closed one full factory." Even for those who remained, there was a fresh feeling of anxiety. For many of these workers, the possibility of being fired was a new concept, as previous socialist labor policies had protected workers in many organizations. The female factory supervisor recounts:

In government organizations, job security is there. But in a private organization, they can always chuck you out if they are not satisfied. That is in the appointment letter, there is a clause. If you are not satisfying their job requirements, they can ask you to leave. So, I do feel that a private organization is comparatively harder.

Thus, with state liberalization, these workers experience the precarity of the capitalist employment contract more immediately.

New Tensions for Employees. There were many reverberations from these changes for workers. The first is a speedup of the work process. At the corporate office, executives felt this speedup in terms of long hours, and informal pressure to work harder and perform more. This female quality manager explains: "There is a different organization culture right now. People are staying back [late], coming on Sundays, coming on holidays, and all that. A culture is drumming up. It has become an 'in' thing. And people who are doing that are being benefitted. What the organization requires right now, maybe we are unable to deliver that." Production workers experience this speedup of work in a more concrete and visible way. The factory manager explains this by contrasting work pressure at the older factory in New Delhi: "Though we are producing many more machines than Delhi, we have less employees. In Delhi, we were dealing with around 70, 80, or maybe 100 machines in a month. Today we are producing about 500 machines in a month—with just 1/10th of the staff." A shopfloor employee describes the change from her view: "When the [old] factory was there, the manpower was high so the work expected from one person was less compared to what it is now. So people never used to feel that loaded." Likewise, another says: "This is a change. Over there, the staff was good quantity-wise. So, one person was not responsible for so much. There was sufficient responsibility. But nowadays, everybody is loaded with work."

A second newfound tension was commuting, for the factory workers in particular. The President explains, "Most of the workers are from Delhi, and previously more than 50% of the workers were staying next to the [old] factory. So normally, they would have taken about 5, 10, 15 minutes to reach the factory. Now they have to spend about 2 hours more—one hour for coming, one hour for going." A female factory worker describes the tension it creates for their households: "Two hours is basically needed for commuting. Even if we leave at 7 or 7:30 a.m., we reach home by 6:30 or 7 p.m. So there is hardly any time for your family."

An especially significant consequence of the shift was a demobilization of the union. IndCo was the only one of three companies to ever have a union. However, through the decentralization of the factory, the union lost its base and its momentum. A woman on the factory shopfloor explains: "Here the union is not as effective as it was in Delhi. It is not effective. First, the number of people is less, and second, everyone is loaded with work." Some of the workers believe that demobilizing the union was a motivating factor for the trifurcation in the first place. Whatever the source, the loss of the power of the union

was significant because it had been the driving force behind a number of family benefits for the workers, as described below.

There were a few positive outcomes for workers that accompanied the strains from this transition. For instance, during the layoffs, most workers who left the firm received a cash compensation. The factory manager claims that about 95% of the workers took a "golden handshake," which ranged from about \$5,000 for managers to \$2,500 for operators (equal to about 6 months salary for the former, and 2 years for the latter). Another positive outcome was a new provision for transportation. The factory manager says: "When the shift took place, then we came with an agreement because of the distance problem. We decided we will compensate some part in the form of money, and we will also provide transport. Because probably that was the best we could have done for them." These vans are a big help because public transportation is very difficult in New Delhi. Even with the added convenience of company vans, however, these workers still have to take buses after the vans drop them off downtown rather than at their homes.

Flexibility

TransCo illustrates a third model of flexibilization. With its global resources as a transnational corporation, it evades many of the tensions that IndCo experiences, such as employment insecurity and organizational restructuring. Instead, it experiences other types of change—corporate ownership (i.e., mergers) and occupational restructuring (i.e., contingent work). Many of these processes are similar to those at AmCo, but more extensive and/or conflictual at TransCo given the intervening factor of globalizaton. First, the mergers are complicated by clashing corporate policies (including work-family) given that the firms come from different national institutional contexts. Second, contingent work is exacerbated by the firm's use of global space to privilege upper level employees and marginalize lower level workers. These dynamics reflect the dynamic of global flexibility at TransCo.

Organizational Changes. Because of TransCo's horizontal flexibility, mergers are more integral to the ongoing dynamics of the firm than at AmCo. Local partnerships and alliances were necessary from the very beginning as a means of gaining an edge on regional markets and incorporating functions into the firm (i.e., suppliers, vendors, labor, etc.). In fact, the original establishment of TransCo in India was dependent upon a joint venture with a local distributor. This was a

pre-1991 requirement by the state. However, "with the liberalization and government policy etc.," as the Vice President explains, "now the joint venture arrangement had come to an end and AmCo had the feasibility to go in for a 100% subsidiary operation."

Such mergers were also fraught with tension. One alliance with MergerCo⁴ illustrates how the clash of corporate cultures and policies from multiple international sources can aggravate a merger. On one hand, the target firm had elements of the "local" Indian system: "Employee management in local companies is completely different—whether you go to the MergerCo's, or the Birla's, the Tata's, the Modi's, [each of these being Indian firms] or whoever. Very, very different. They basically tow the line of the boss. And if it happens to be a family-owned company, it's even worse. They have an approach of: 'If it's not broken, why fix it?'" Added to this, the target company also had holdover elements of the former British imperial administration: "If you walked into their office, they still have this British system of standing up, and saying 'Yes sir,' and 'Good morning, sir,' and all that nonsense. We don't have it. It's all first-name basis—that's part of the AmCo corporate philosophy." Ultimately, the flatter hierarchy of AmCo clashed with the vertical style of Indian and British firms. Because these corporate cultures are trinational—U.S., British, and Indian—the merger is further complicated.

A second type of organizational change that TransCo experiences more acutely than AmCo is occupational restructuring. This reflects the vertical flexibility of TransCo as a TNC, in the form of a greater share of contingent workers relative to both other firms. TransCo had recently increased its temporary workforce to a proportion far exceeding that of AmCo. About two thirds of the factory staff at TransCo was temporary—80 workers, split in two shifts.

It is not a coincidence that TransCo has such a large share of contingent work relative to AmCo. Indeed, this trend represents another type of flexibility among TNCs—the ability to transfer organizational strain between parent and subsidiary. The TransCo factory manager explains how the growing flexibilization of offshore labor is part of AmCo strategy: "In Singapore, the AmCo unit has a large flex force. And in Spain, we have a strength of 150 factory workers, out of which 145 of them are flex." Even workers at AmCo see this trend. One factory worker (who described being moved to different jobs around the firm) explains the fate of her department: "There were quite a few people that were accessed—hundreds. They [AmCo managers] were doing away with the division—moving it. That one went overseas to

⁴See note 2.

7. WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMS

Singapore." As we know from the factory manager, the jobs in Singapore (like those at TransCo in India) are far inferior to those at AmCo. In this sense, AmCo is shielding its own workers from occupational downgrading by transferring the marginal jobs abroad. (This is perhaps one of the ways that AmCo survived the downsizing pressures common in Silicon Valley at that time.) Thus, global flexibility means greater marginalization of Southern workers through the TNC.

Impact on Employees. The conditions of temporary work at TransCo are precarious in a number of ways. The least severe perhaps is alienation from routine organizational activities and practices. Temporary workers are left out of many daily events that otherwise reflect a fairly inclusive and dominant corporate culture. For instance, these workers do not receive evaluations or feedback on their work. A female production supervisor at TransCo explains:

We have a performance evaluation for every employee on a regular basis, six months to yearly. When they are permanent, I meet them at least once in a year, and really discuss what their strengths and weaknesses are, what they could do to improve, and how to convert their weaknesses into strength. But with the flex, we don't have this for them. That is something which is missing at the moment.

Unlike permanent workers, therefore, these temps are unable to improve their skills, perhaps one of the only potentially transferable human capital benefits of the job. Similarly, these workers are excluded from access to certain kinds of information. Another production manager explains:

They are not part of a lot of things. We include them in communication events, like every month where everyone comes together to celebrate birthdays. But some of the company information is not given out to them, specifically not any company related information—things like earnings statements or organizational changes. Because it's valuable information for the company. And given that workers go off to another industry, the competitors can use it against you.

Regardless of how useful such information would be for individual workers, the exclusion indicates how TransCo treats temporary workers with suspicion.

There are other more tangible effects of temporary work. Short duration is the obvious one—production workers are there merely

6 months. According to a factory manager, this is partially due to local laws about contingent work: "The temporary people—they are here for a short time. The government requires certain rules—that they are not here for more than 6 months. So you have to keep shifting them out. The turnover is quite high." At the time of my study, this type of employment was unusual for the industrial park in Bangalore where TransCo is located. Comparing his firm to another nearby high-tech TNC, the factory supervisor estimated that his wages are "... probably less. Just a little less. But remember that they [i.e., the other TNC's workers] are permanent, and these are flex. The job is not secure." Thus, although TransCo's wages are slightly higher than similar permanent jobs, they come at the high cost of short duration.

Furthermore, another downside of temporary work relative to other local production jobs is exclusion from unionizing. A factory supervisor comments: "I don't know if it is possible to have a union for a flex force. The fact is that we don't have any union." It is unclear whether or not this is a formal global policy for AmCo, but it is certainly a pattern in many of AmCo's other factories around the world. The factory manager confirmed that AmCo subsidiaries in Spain and Singapore are also without unions.

DISCUSSION: DIVERGENT OUTCOMES FOR WORK-FAMILY POLICY

These models of organizational change have significant implications for the success or failure of work-family policy. Here, I link each model to varying outcomes of suspension, termination, or stratification of work-family programs (summarized in Table 7.3).

AmCo and the Endurance Scenario

AmCo emerged from its experience of change with the least disturbance to its work-family policies. As listed in Table 7.2, AmCo has a large range of programs, and they were maintained throughout this period, even for the low-skilled workers. This also applies to the "redeployed" workers, as the female engineer quoted earlier continues: "Even the accessed workers are continuing to be paid, and they continue to get their benefits. Nobody said 'goodbye.' We have a very unique, different company."

The most serious consequence of these organizational changes on work-family programs was a temporary suspension of its flex-time program. There were varying accounts of how widespread this

7. WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMS

suspension was throughout the firm. Some employees described it as departmentally specific. "I know that AmCo has flexible time," a male production assistant says, "but this flexible time does not apply to all departments. It depends upon the department." Other employees described it as temporally sporadic. A female production worker echoes, "We have flexible timings. We could come in at 2:30-3:00pm. But not right now. It depends on the work, how it is set up. It is up to the manager, and the management level." Still other employees predicted that the suspension would be wide-scale and permanent, such as this female production technician: "They want to change it. There will not be any flexibility anymore. They have changed the time: everybody comes in 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. And when the second shift takes over, we just leave." Whatever the future scenario for flextime, the majority of the other policies (including parental leave) remain intact through the transition. In this sense, AmCo illustrates an "endurance" of its policies through dynamics of organizational change.

IndCo and the Disruption Scenario

IndCo's more dramatic experience of factory decentralization and layoffs lead to a *termination* of several work-family programs. One of these was cash bonuses. The factory manager explains: "We used to give cash awards or some amount two or three times a year. We would find out two or three people, and give them awards every 2-3 months or something like that. That scheme initially went up very well, but those types of practices have been stopped—it collapsed."

Another casualty of the transition was an onsite daycare center. A female personnel administrator explained how this originated at the old factory in New Delhi, where she used to be a shopfloor manager: "We made this creche for the women in the factory. I started it from scratch. It started in 1986 and wound off in 1992, so it was functional for six years. But now that factory is closed." She explained that there is no plan to reinstate childcare centers at any of the sites, even though it is at the top of women's policy needs. A female software engineer explains:

Now we have a lot of women who have got small kids and they are facing problems in terms of managing their babies. Earlier there were not so many women in the company, so they had never thought about having a day care. But now definitely, we have been pushing it, but managers are not so positive about it. It is not being considered a very important issue.

Furthermore, a number of other material benefits from the old factory disappeared—including an onsite doctor, adequate food in the cafeteria, and higher wages. A male personnel administrator recounts:

When I joined here some labor trouble was going on. All the female workers were fighting against the management. They were fighting for their demands—wage increases and better facilities. Like for married females, we were having a creche for their children. They were also asking for better food and milk, and that a full-time doctor should be provided. I said this is all reasonable. There is no question of discussion. They were asking for a 1500 Rupee raise in their salary. That is unreasonable, so 500 Rupees was the raise.

The crucial factor in this scenario is the presence of the union. Previous work-family benefits were achieved through the union's collective action and would be hard to recover without its continued support.

In these ways, IndCo represents the most "disruption" in the organizational change process in comparison to the two other firms in this study. First, it experienced the greatest loss in terms of the content of work-family policies. IndCo's policies had been material in form, which are more beneficial to workers in some ways than alternative work arrangements such as flextime and flexplace (Poster, 2000; Poster and Prasad, 2005). Second, it experienced the greatest extent of loss. IndCo is the only firm of three in which work-family policies were terminated, rather than suspended or reduced in access. Finally, whereas TransCo's experience of change accompanied an expansion of policies for workers at the top of the firm, this was not the case at IndCo.

TransCo and the Flexible Scenario

TransCo's global flexibility means that work-family policy outcomes are more complicated and multifaceted. Here I outline the outcomes for external versus internal employee programs.

Horizontal flexibility resulted in transnational conflicts among the work-family policies of the partnering firms. Consider the contrasts between policies at MergerCo and TransCo. MergerCo offered generous material compensation, but at the cost of high job insecurity and fear. As the TransCo President describes it:

MergerCo corporation has a specific type of culture which I don't agree with. It's because the way they treat their people: "I can give you a little higher salary, and a few stock options, and you won't go and work anywhere else. And if you don't perform, I'll fire you. Instantly. Without

second thought. Without a word of training, coaching, or whatever." It's by fear that they make things work. You don't have to motivate.

In contrast, TransCo offered weaker material benefits, but greater job autonomy and alternative work options: "We are in an environment where we are very flexible. We have flex-time. For the first time in this country, we introduced it. We are now looking at unpleen ways of work-life balance, which is unheard of in other companies so far."

Eventually, there was a clash in these orientations toward work-family policy, with one emphasizing material benefits and the other alternative work arrangements. Such tensions were difficult to resolve, as the President continues:

Culture has a lot to do with alliances, joint ventures, strategic relationships, partnerships, and companies that you buy—and a lot to do with business results. When there's a misfit—a *cultural misfit*—you really screw up the organization. Today five years later, we're still trying to work on what's best in both the cases. Integrating a culture that's completely different—to get a mix of both. We're still struggling with it.

A few years after my fieldwork, the merger failed. Thus, this case shows how *work-family policies* are significant enough to get in the way of mergers. It also explains why TransCo experiences greater difficulty in its mergers than does AmCo. TransCo's mergers are more complicated because of the multiple national origins of the policies that have to be reconciled, and especially because of their global scale across Northern and Southern nations. So, whereas TransCo's horizontal flexibility means that it engages in more external alliances than does AmCo, it also means that these alliances are more difficult to complete.

Vertical flexibility in work-family programs results from different global pressures at different levels of the firm's job structure. At the top, TransCo faces a crisis of retention for its "high-value" employees (i.e., the engineers and technical experts, but also the sales, marketing, and finance personnel). With the increasing global mobility of this professional and technical staff, TransCo experienced an immediate threat of losing them to other firms—not only in India, but also in the United States and other countries. The TransCo President explains:

There's a 35% turnover in the computer companies—because of intense competition from outside. In the past, employees were in a situation where they were lucky if they got jobs in India. Today, it's the other way around. There's a demand on people all of a sudden. Competitors are

coming from around the world so they can steal your people. And more than half of [our employee departures] are leaving to go outside the country for jobs.

Although IndCo certainly faces this labor market pressure as well, TransCo is uniquely positioned to respond to it. As a TNC, it has access to global resources in the form of both capital and policy design from its parent company. In turn, TransCo uses work-family benefits as a means to retain their professional staff. They offer a vast array of programs that are, moreover, unusually innovative (Poster, 2000): they combine IndCo's style of material benefits (such as paid maternity leave) with AmCo's style of alternative work arrangements (such as flextime). Some of these policies—such as children's school subsidies and the "alternative work options" program—are not even offered at AmCo's global units in other countries.

However, TransCo's temporary employees are eligible for neither the employee benefits nor work-family programs. This reflects their global strategy of labor flexibilization, in which the parent company utilizes temporary workers in Southern nations precisely for the purpose of avoiding corporate responsibilities such as employee benefits. It also reflects localized complicity, in that the Indian state provides exemptions from a wide array of labor regulations for transnational corporations in export processing zones. An example is one of the hallmarks of the state's labor policy—the Maternity Benefit Act—which is not mandatory for TNCs hiring temporary workers (Gothoskar, 1992). Ultimately then, this dual strategy of flexible employment—select treatment of high-skilled workers and marginalization of low-skilled workers—results in bifurcated access to work-family policy at TransCo.

In the end, this stratification of work-family policy far exceeds that of IndCo or AmCo. We can see this in their structures of wages (Table 7.4). For instance, TransCo managers earn 12 times more than the monthly salaries of their operators, whereas IndCo managers earn 8 times more, and AmCo managers earn only 2 times more. So, although AmCo wages are generally higher than those of the other firms, TransCo displays the most egregious vertical differentiation in rewards.

This said, there are also some benefits of organizational change at TransCo. For the permanent workers at TransCo (mostly at higher occupational levels), work-family benefits exceed those of many local firms. For the temporary workers, TransCo has also provided some advantages in terms of job opportunities in a context where unemployment rates are very high. Finally, regardless of occupational level,

TABLE 7.4
Average Monthly Salary by Job Level and Gender

Job level	AmCo			TransCo ^a			IndCo ^a		
	Total n = 31	Women n = 15	Men n = 16	Total n = 56	Women n = 29	Men n = 27	Total n = 48	Women n = 24	Men n = 24
All Levels	\$3,766	\$3,500	\$4,017	\$ 547	\$372	\$ 729	\$352	\$258	\$455
Management	\$4,720	\$3,867	\$6,000	\$1,076	\$625	\$1,230	\$731	\$557	\$811
Executive, Sales, Engineer	\$5,449	\$5,338	\$5,523	\$ 513	\$431	\$ 612	\$316	\$333	\$296
Administrator, Secretary ^b	\$4,583	\$4,583	—	\$ 349	\$349	—	\$164	\$199	\$136
Operator, Technician	\$2,273	\$2,137	\$2,391	\$ 90	\$ 60	\$ 107	\$ 90	\$ 90	\$ 91

^aWages at IndCo and TransCo have been converted from rupees, at a rate 34.5 rupees per dollar (applicable to the year of the interview).
^bBlank entries indicate a lack of respondents in the sample for this category.

working in a transnational corporation has status in India, as it provides potential access to international contacts. Still, what is unique about TransCo, relative to IndCo and AmCo, is its flexibility. On one hand, it uses its flexibility of global capital and positioning to avoid many of the tensions faced by IndCo in organizational change; on the other hand, it uses its flexibility to absorb and magnify the global tensions faced by AmCo, particularly by implementing cost-cutting labor strategies abroad.

CONCLUSION

This analysis has illustrated how three similar high-tech companies operating in the same period of the early 1990s experienced three different outcomes in their work-family programs. AmCo, representing a model of "endurance," was able to retain most of its programs, aside from a suspension of flextime; whereas IndCo, representing "disruption," was forced to terminate many of its programs including onsite day-care centers, medical staff, and cash bonuses. TransCo, as the model of "flexibility," fashioned an inverted pyramid out of its policies by expanding those at the top of the occupational hierarchy and narrowing those at the bottom.

My argument is that these outcomes are related to the positions of these firms in the global economy. AmCo, as a Northern firm, is better able to insulate its work-family policies from cyclical patterns of global economic strain. In contrast, IndCo, as a Southern firm, is forced to sacrifice many of its work-family policies because of formidable pressures of global economic marginalization and state reconstruction. Finally, TransCo represents the global privileges and tensions of a transnational corporation, which has the horizontal flexibility to absorb organizational strains from its parent company, and the vertical flexibility to marginalize its low-skilled workforce and ultimately stratify its policies.

Given that this is a case study analysis, it is important to note the specificity of these particular firms and the ways they may differ from others in their contexts. AmCo, for instance, is especially committed to work-family issues (often listed in publications of the "best places to work"). Although AmCo is definitely representative of other large Fortune 500 firms, it may not be representative of other U.S. firms. Some argue these larger firms have more resources to offer work-family benefits, and are furthermore not "typical" workplaces because most people work for small firms. AmCo may also be somewhat unique in its "endurance" relative to other U.S. firms.

During the time period of this study, many other Silicon Valley firms folded. Moreover, shortly after the study was conducted—in the early 2000s—the high-tech industry went through an historic recession. Tens of thousands of jobs were lost in Silicon Valley, along with 41% of the computer jobs in New York, making it the worst hiring slump in 20 years (Mahler, 2003). Thus, not all firms survive as well as AmCo.

IndCo is also somewhat unique in its context. Again, it represents a high-end workplace, as only a small percentage of the total population works in the formal labor market. Still, among middle class employers, IndCo represents a relatively average firm. On one hand, it offers a wider package of work-family benefits relative to firms in other industries and relative to government organizations. On the other hand, it offers fewer benefits than many leading Indian firms (especially given the growth and changes in Indian firms subsequent to this period). Finally, it is important to note that not all Indian companies experience disruption to the same degree that IndCo did. Indeed, many survived this period with much more ease, an example of which is the highly successful global Indian firm, Infosys. My point, however, is that although all these firms are single cases, they represent broad trends in the positions of dominant and subordinate firms in the global economy.

This study contributes to the literature on international work-family policies in several ways. First, it challenges the assumptions of stability in work-family policy and suggests that policies should instead be conceived in terms of change. Second, this study suggests that in international contexts, dynamics of change are often globally interactive rather than merely internal to national contexts. In this study, the "globalization project" drives many of these patterns, through the consolidation of global finance, IMF loans, state restructuring, and the growth of transnational corporations with their new forms of flexible global production. These factors intensify organizational change for Southern nations, so that the same basic organizational changes taking place in AmCo have far greater consequences for work-family programs than in IndCo and TransCo.

For instance, although AmCo workers faced employment insecurity in terms of job shuffling, IndCo workers faced labor speedups and massive layoffs. Similarly, whereas AmCo workers faced organizational restructuring in the form of authority decentralization and use of teams, IndCo faced a more invasive form of decentralization involving the physical displacement of workers and new tensions of commuting. Third, whereas AmCo's changes in corporate ownership were relatively smooth, those at TransCo were intensified by conflicting

organizational cultures and orientations toward work-family policy. Finally, whereas AmCo workers faced minimal or localized *occupational restructuring* in terms of contingent work, TransCo organized its production force almost entirely around it. Even if AmCo is heading in this direction as well, many indicators suggest that the casualization of labor is greater in Southern countries, and is likely to increase (International Labour Office, 2001).

This said, there are some theoretical limitations to the comparison of cases in this study. One is the differential costs of these work-family policies, which may affect their outcomes during organizational change. In other words, AmCo's policies (e.g., flextime) are cheaper to implement than IndCo's (e.g., childcare). This begs the question of how these firms would have responded if their policies had been more similar to begin with: Would AmCo have been more likely to disrupt its policies if they had been more expensive? Would IndCo have been more likely to retain its policies if they had been cheaper? Thus, future research should address the connections between the longevity of policies and their costs during similar types of change.

In addition, the emphasis on *global* factors in this study may compromise due attention to the *local* ones. Many work-family scholars point to the importance of local pressure from institutional environments (Goodstein, 1994; Kelly, 1999; Osterman, 1995) and managerial rationality (Miliken, Martines, and Morgan, 1998) as determinants of organizational policy. Likewise, further research is needed to address the impact of external labor markets (Poelmans, Chinchilla, and Cardona, 2003). For instance, while I have maintained that the labor market for high-tech professionals is tight on a global level (to which TransCo was in a unique position to respond in its work-family benefits), it is possible that the local labor markets of these firms were more varied.

Still, these findings recast traditional explanations of international work-family policies. Arguments regarding states and cultures described in the introduction are put under question in these firms, as organizational changes brought on by global dynamics are undermining or complicating them. For instance, although the Indian state may have been responsible in establishing strong supports for workers and their families (through legislation such as the Factories Act, the Minimum Wage Act, the Maternity Leave Act, etc.), few of these laws continue to have much force in practice given the societal transformations of the early 1990s. IndCo shows decreasing ability to offer provisions such as day-care centers, despite state policies that uphold them. TransCo has even less obligation to offer benefits such as maternity leave, given its exemptions from most labor legislation as a TNC in an export processing zone.

The same is true for cultural influences, which also are attenuated in this period. Whereas "collectivist" ideologies may have originally contributed to strong benefits for the family in India (Komarraju, 1997), such factors lack the economic or political fortitude to withstand recent forces of the global economy. A prime example is IndCo's policy of job security. IndCo had been implementing this policy for decades (even though as a private organization, it was not legally required to do so in the eyes of the state). However, this changed when the firm faced the pressures of economic liberalization and ultimately had to abandon it in order to implement layoffs. The effects of national culture are dissipating in the face of organizational change in TransCo as well. Under the globalizing dynamics of cross-border mergers (Aguilera and Dencker, 2004 forthcoming), "culture" is being fragmented and reshaped as organizational policies from different nations come into contact. Furthermore, TransCo's outcome as an United States/British/Indian hybrid in its alliance with MergerCo shows how "culture"—as a unitary entity—no longer exists in isolation. Rather, organizational forms and policies are increasingly under negotiation, integration, and reformation in the face of globalization. In all these ways, organizational change—as prompted by global factors—is recasting traditional accounts of work-family policy.

For the future, this study suggests many potentially useful ways to study organizational change and globalization of work-family policy. One such direction would be longitudinal research on work-family policies—both at the organizational and state level. This study has shown how policies can be much more tenuous and loosely embedded in organizations than commonly assumed. Therefore, it would be helpful to track them more regularly over the long term to make sure they are protected (and of course improved). It would also be interesting to know more about the contexts where policies are likely to survive the longest, and what kinds of social factors have made it possible.

A second area of study is research on work-family policies in the South. The analysis of IndCo in particular reveals how work-family policies in Southern nations can be more vulnerable to forces of change than those in the North. Therefore, research on how to sustain work-family policies in these contexts would be helpful. Given that the international work-family literature is currently focused on Western Europe, the United States, and other advanced industrial nations such as Japan, the field would benefit from research on Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.

A third area of study is the transnational movement of work-family policies. For instance, the case of TransCo is somewhat unique in displaying both innovations and misuses of work-family policy, and it would be interesting to know if this is confirmed in other case

studies of TNCs. Moreover, TransCo illustrates a case in which the flaws of U.S. policies are exacerbated overseas. Many studies have pointed out how there is a stratification of work-family policies in the United States along lines of race, class, gender, and marital status (Bergmann, 1998; Glass and Estes, 1997; Wexler, 1997). Although this is also true of AmCo, this study has shown how global forces have magnified such dynamics in TransCo. Finally, given the difficulties of negotiating work-family programs in TransCo's mergers, it would be interesting to know more about successes and failures of integrating such policies in other transnational corporate alliances.

Finally, research should address the relative benefits and costs of organizational change for work-family policy. An optimistic finding of this study is that organizational change can create positive outcomes for work-family policies (alongside the negative ones). In fact, this happened in all three firms: In AmCo, managers demonstrated an unusual commitment to job security; in IndCo, managers offered new policies for transportation in TransCo, managers developed a wide array of work-family benefits for employees at the top of the firm and, at the very least, new employment opportunities for those at bottom. Thus, more investigation is needed to disentangle the processes by which change turns good versus bad, and to help determine what types of organizational changes are conducive to better work-family policies.

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7. WORK-FAMILY PROGRAMS

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Contents

Series Foreword

Jeanette N. Cleveland and Edwin A. Fleishman

Foreword

Virginia E. Schein

Editorial Introduction

Steven Poelmans

PART I: INDIVIDUAL-INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

1 An Overview of International Research on the Work-Family Interface

Steven Poelmans, Michael O'Driscoll,
and Barbara Beham

2 U.S. Latino Migrant Farm Workers: Managing Acculturative Stress and Conserving Work-Family Resources

Ellen Ernst Kossek, Darrell Meece, Marguerite E.
Barratt, and Beth Emily Prince

3 An International Comparative Study of Work- Family Stress and Occupational Strain

Paul E. Spector, Tammy D. Allen, Steven Poelmans,
Cary L. Cooper, Peggy Bernin, Peter Hart, Luo Lu,
Karen Miller, Lucio Renault de Moraes, Gabrielle M.
Ostrogay, Horea Pitariu, Vladimir Salamatov, Jesus
Salgado, Juan I. Sanchez, Oi Ling Siu, Mare
Teichmann, Tóres Theorell, Peter Vlerick, Maria
Widerszal-Bazyl, and Shanfa Yu

PART II: ORGANIZATIONAL - INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- 4 Work-Family Culture in Organizations: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches
Ulla Kinnunen, Saija Mauno, Sabine Guerts, and Josje Dijkers 87
- 5 Work-Life Balance and the Effective Management of Global Assignees
Paula Calgutti and Mila Lazarova 121
- 6 Work-Nonwork Culture, Utilization of Work-Nonwork Arrangements, and Employee-Related Outcomes in Two Dutch Organizations
J. S. E. Dijkers, L. den Dulk, S. A. E. Geurts, and B. Peper 147
- 7 Organizational Change, Globalization, and Work-Family Programs: Case Studies from India and the United States
Winifred R. Poster 173
- 8 Workplace Work-Family Arrangements: A Study and Explanatory Framework of Differences Between Organizational Provisions in Different Welfare States
Laura den Dulk 211

PART III: CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

- 9 Cross-Cultural Differences in Crossover Research
Mina Westman 241
- 10 The Work-Family Interface in Urban Sub-Saharan Africa: A Theoretical Analysis
Samuel Aryee 261
- 11 Individualism-Collectivism and Work-Family Interfaces: A Sino-U.S. Comparison
Nini Yang 287

- 12 Easing the Pain: A Cross-Cultural Study of Support Resources and Their Influence on Work-Family Conflict
Margaret A. Shaffer, Janice R. W. Joplin, Anne Marie Francesco, and Theresa Lau 319

PART IV: CASE STUDIES

- Case Study 1: Emigration to Mexico: Promotion and the Dual-Career Couple
Nuria Chinchilla and Steven Poelmans 343
- Instructor's Manual for Case Study 1
Barbara Beham and Steven Poelmans 350
- Case Study 2: Launching Flexible Work Arrangements within Procter & Gamble EMEA
Steven Poelmans and Wendy de Waal-Andrews 357
- Instructor's Manual for Case Study 2
Barbara Beham and Steven Poelmans 377

PART V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- 13 Methodological Issues in Work-Family Research in an Era of Globalization
Rabi S. Bhagat and Balaji C. Krishnan 387
- 14 Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Work-Family Conflict
Michele J. Gelfand and Andrew P. Knight 401
- 15 Emphasizing the Family in Work-Family Research: A Review of Current Research and Recommendations for Future Directions
Jennifer M. Bowers 415
- 16 Organizational Research on Work and Family: Recommendations for Future Research
Steven Poelmans 439

EPILOGUE	Globalization and the Integration of Work with Personal Life	463
	<i>Rhona Rapoport, Suzan Lewis, Lottie Bailyn, Richenda Gambles</i>	

Author Index

485

Subject Index

503

Series Foreword

Jeanette N. Cleveland
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There is a compelling need for innovative approaches to the solution of many pressing problems involving human relationships in today's society. Such approaches are more likely to be successful when they are based on sound research and applications. This Series in Applied Psychology offers publications that emphasize state-of-the-art research and its application to important issues of human behavior in a variety of social settings. The objective is to bridge both academic and applied interests.

We are pleased to welcome this book, "Work and Family: An International Research Perspective" edited by Steven Poelmans, into our Series in Applied Psychology. The book joins the volume edited by Ellen Kossek and Susan Lambert in our Series, entitled "Work and Life Integration: Organizational, Cultural, and Individual Perspectives." The publication of both of these books at this time reflects the growing diversity of research and practice in this area. Changes in family structures are transforming the workplace while changes in parental work patterns are transforming family life. There has been a dramatic increase in the rates of paid employment globally among mothers with children. Further, the research on work and family during the past 30 years has been fueled by the growing proportion of employees who are dual-earner partners or single parents.

