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Working time arrangements and family time of fathers: How work organization(s) shape fathers' opportunities to engage in childcare**

This analysis takes the diagnosis of a gap between German fathers' attitudes and practices as starting point to analyze the influence of the work organization on a father's time with his children. With qualitative interview data and quantitative diary data, the fathers´ ideals and their practices are confronted systematically. It is found that fathers´ work time arrangements may influence the availability of time they have for their children. Here, not only the amount of time is crucial but also the possibilities for the flexible organization of work. However, work organizations influence childcare practices mainly through the work culture which shapes the employed fathers´ anticipated options.

Key words: **fathers´ childcare, work organizations, fathers' work time arrangements, work culture**
(JEL: J81, J71, M51, J88, J45)

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1. Introduction

In Germany, gender arrangements (Pfau-Effinger, 1998) in the division of paid and unpaid labor are changing. Within the public discourse about gender equality, traditional family settings such as the male breadwinner model are becoming more and more uncommon. As a consequence of increasing female labor force participation, fathers are expected to take part in more of the family household tasks. When it comes to childcare, surveys on attitudes and preferences of fathers in Germany show that today many even want to share family tasks equally with their partner and take on the role of engaged father (Baisch, 2012; Volz & Zulehner, 2009). Nevertheless, the idea of becoming an active father seems to encounter difficulties along the way since, in practice, it is the mothers who are still performing most of the childcare (Gershuny & Sullivan, 2003; Grunow, 2014).

A range of different explanations is provided here for the discrepancies between fatherly attitudes and practices. Whereas some concentrate on a lack of structural conditions for fatherly engagement, others emphasize the persistence of gendered norms and gender roles. More recently, the relevance of work time arrangements, as well as particular organizational work settings, has emerged to explain the variance in fathers' possibilities to engage in childcare (Gornick & Meyers, 2003; e.g. Haas & O'Brien, 2010). Here, a father's work hours are expected to mediate his availability to his children. Along with changing demands of work, knowledge work is discussed to provide on the one hand improved flexibility to combine work and family obligations, but on the other hand, demanding extended availability around the clock (Kvande, 2009). In addition to new forms of the organization of work, especially *work cultures*, with their corresponding implicit work-time regimes, are seen to have significant influence on fathers' opportunities to take part in everyday family life (Haas et al., 2002; Burke, 2010; Williams, 2002; Puchert, Gärtner, & Höyng, 2005). That is, work organizations are able to define the work (time) arrangements for male employees in a significant way, and therefore might also influence fathers' possibilities to engage in childcare. In examining the possible reasons for the gap between fathers' wishes and their practices, it is therefore crucial to look at fathers' working conditions.

For German fathers there still is a lack of analyses of the particular organizational setting as a crucial factor in their working hours and available time for their children. This analysis aims to contribute to the ongoing question of how work (time) arrangements may influence fathers' engagement in childcare by answering the following questions: How may fathers' work-time arrangements and working conditions affect their daily time with their children in the workweek? In what way do work organizations shape fathers' working conditions and what role do they play in fathers' likelihood to engage in childcare?

To answer these questions, quantitative diary data and qualitative interview data are used together to match the study fathers' daily practices with their reflections on how their childcare arrangements within the family originated. Using fathers' data from three organizations, this analysis examines how fathers combine work obligations and time for children, with an emphasis on the working conditions that may hinder or even support fathers to engage themselves in the family.

This analysis, linking family research to management research, contributes to the interdisciplinary study of contemporary fathers' work and life conditions and intends to provide a new perspective on the societal impact of work organizations on gender arrangements. The paper is structured as follows: In Section 2, the theoretical background of the analysis is outlined. In Section 3, the data and the methods used for the analysis are described. In Section 4, the results are presented and finally, in Section 5, the results are discussed.

2. Theoretical background

In this section, first the diagnosis of a gap between fathers' attitudes and practices as well as the implications for research on fathers is discussed. In a next step, an overview of the research on fathers' working conditions and how these might affect fathers' childcare practices is presented, followed by a short discussion of selected theoretical conceptions of organizational culture as the foundation of fathers' working arrangements.

2.1 The diagnosis of the "fathers' gap" and the implications for research

In Germany, women's participation in the labor market has increased constantly over the last decades, but men's participation in household tasks and childcare obligations have not increased correspondingly. For this reason, some label the change in gender relations as "one-sided" (Geissler & Oechsle, 1996) or "rhetoric" (e.g. Meuser, 2005). However, survey findings indicate German fathers do want to take on an equal share of the family tasks (Baisch, 2012; Volz & Zulehner, 2009). But after the birth of a first child a traditionalization of the gendered division of labor seems to occur (Grunow, Schulz, & Blossfeld, 2007). Whereas mothers have to reduce their working hours with the birth of a child, fathers' work time appears to remain unchanged (Pollmann-Schult & Diewald, 2007; Döge & Volz, 2004). Hence questions arise about what is happening: what is behind the diagnosed gap between fathers' attitudes towards childcare and their actual practices (e.g. Grunow, 2007; Cyprian, 2005; Bergmann & Hobson, 2002)?

In recent research, structural conditions such as parental leave entitlements exclusively for fathers are often anticipated as having a positive effect on the amount of time they spend with their children (Seward et al., 2006, for US fathers; Brandth & Kvande, 2009, for Norway; Haas & Hwang, 2008, for Sweden). At the same time, the significance of fathers' attitudes towards the division of labor between the sexes, or fathers' self-conceptions of fatherhood are emphasized (Seward, Yeatts, Amin, I., & DeWitt, 2006). Besides structural conditions and self-concepts of what it means to be a good father, the father's time with his children is also a matter of negotiation with his partner. At this level, fathers' engagement may be modified in three ways: firstly, family arrangements may be the result of economic considerations due to the family income (e.g. Becker, 1991); secondly, men may engage themselves in childcare more or less according to their partners' integration into the labor market (Brayfield, 1995); and thirdly, the mother of the children may even act as a gatekeeper to the father's time with them (Baisch, 2012).

More recently, the relevance of fathers' work organizations has emerged to explain the extent of their involvement in childcare (Hobson 2014; Gornick & Meyers,

2003; e.g. Haas & O'Brien, 2010). Here, especially "post-Fordist work" is discussed as providing the explanation for improved flexibility to combine work and family obligations, but contain some accompanying risks of blurring the lines between the work and private spheres (e.g. Van Echtelt, Glebbeek, Lewis, & Lindenberg, 2008; Klenner & Schmidt, 2007). In addition to these effects of the new forms of the organization of work, work cultures, with their corresponding implicit work-time regimes, are also rated as crucial factors in fathers' opportunities to take part in everyday family tasks (Allard, Haas, & Hwang, 2011; Puchert et al. 2005), as they define the standards of their work-time arrangements in a significant way. As Seward et al. (2006) show in their study of 38 US fathers, especially employers' tendency to equate lateness with employees' commitment makes them stay longer at work than required by their contracts.

In the following, the possible obstacles to fathers' involvement in childcare that result from workplace situations are discussed in depth.

2.2 Fathers' working conditions and fathers' time with children

With the transformation of the division of labor between the sexes, men face new tensions (Gärtner, 2009). These tensions may be understood as the consequence of a paradox produced by conflicting but interrelated representations of men as workers and men as fathers (Halford, 2006). However, this paradox is not only one of normative, conflicting representations of the "good father" and the "good worker" (ibid.). For working fathers this paradox is rather a time-paradox, since the demands on their availability for work and for the family are competing directly (Craig, 2006). Thus new conflicts emerge between changed attitudes and wishes for a so-called active fatherhood (e.g. Döge, 2007) as well as from the persistent or even extended demands of employers, with both spheres now competing for a greater share of fathers' time.

The role of the amount of working time for fathers' engagement in childcare

Previous research on fathers' childcare time shows that the amount of time they are at work directly influences how much time they actually spend with their children (for Germany: Klenner & Schmidt, 2007; for the UK: Tanaka & Waldfogel, 2007). Halrynjo (2009) states that Norwegian fathers, especially those in leading positions, are less able to spare time for their children on weekdays, since they tend to work longer hours. Working hours are discerned as significant predictors of conflict arising in reconciling work and family matters (e.g. for Sweden: Allard et al. 2011; Beham, Präg, & Drobnič, 2010[1]). A recent study on the relationship between a new parental leave policy in Germany and fathers' time with children confirms that the amount of their work time is the most significant predictor of fathers' engagement at home during the workweek (Reimer & Andernach, forthcoming). That is, from a demand vs resources perspective there seems to be a trade-off between fathers' time at work and fathers' time with their children.

The role of the work organization in fathers' engagement in childcare

However, not only the amount of time spent on employed work, but also the organization of that work (Sullivan, Coltrane, Mcannally, & Altintas, 2009; Klenner &

[1] With data from West Germany, UK, Sweden, and Hungary.

Schmidt, 2007) – when and where the work is done – is understood as a crucial dimension that influences fathers' time with children. Work organized along business hours, shift-work schedules, flexible hours, or part-time, as well as the option to work from home, might significantly affect fathers' possibilities to engage in daily childcare on workdays (e.g. Halford, 2006). As for flexible work-time arrangements, it is stated that only those flexible measures that meet the fathers' wishes are likely to support fathers (Jürgens, 2003). This is confirmed by Russel et al. (2009) for workplace conditions in Ireland: to ease pressure and conflict for employed parents in dealing with work and family obligations, only options like part-time or relatively self-determined flexible working hours proved helpful. This study further reveals that, surprisingly, working from home or job-sharing are not likely to decrease work-life reconciliation conflicts (ibid.). In a German study on working conditions, working in the evening, at night or on weekends were also found to have negative effects on fathers' available time for childcare (Klenner & Pfahl, 2005).

Today, the 40-hour, 9-to-5 workweek has become less and less the common standard (Gärtner, 2005). Along with changing gender arrangements, the traditional gender border between the spheres of work and family is dissolving, thereby yielding new conflicts and risks to their reconciliation (Jurczyk & Oechsle, 2008; for the Netherlands: van Echtelt et al., 2008; Norway: Kvande, 2009). The new organization of work seems to offer flexible arrangements that may be in the employee's interest – or not. The new type of work organization under the slogan "trust-based working time" (Bauer, Groß, Lehmann, & Munz, 2004) for example, is task-oriented and often brings intense work pressure and long hours. With Australian time-use data, Craig & Powell (2011) show that parents working on non-standard work schedules spend significantly more time on paid work and less time on childcare than those who work standard hours. Flexitimes therefore have an ambivalent character: they create freedoms from the standard male employment model and workday, but at the same time restrict these freedoms by a process of intensification and increased unpredictability and lack of autonomy (Jurczyk, 2009).

2.3 Fathers' work time and workplace cultural foundations

Time demands on employees are not only contractual; they are often also defined by workplace culture (Haas & Hwang, 2007; Puchert et al., 2005). Particularly, the persisting notion that an ideal worker is unencumbered by demands beyond their (paid) work defines the norm that says they "should not have other imperatives of existence that impinge upon the job" (Acker, 1990, p. 149). As this type of workplace culture does not make allowance for familial obligations, it has been problematized in the past mainly for women. However, this has now become to some degree a gender-neutral issue, with the problematizing no longer about gender, but about being a parent. Additionally, the former demand on (male) employees to "put work first" is now intensified in all work environments that can be labelled as those engaging in "knowledge work" (Kvande, 2009). Here the work culture in relation to working hours requires (potentially) travelling the world, being flexible towards customer demands, and being available online (practically) at all times (ibid.). With the shift from "clock [time] to task time" (Van Echtelt et al., 2008), working hours have become boundless, with a

possibly devastating effect on parents' time with children. This work culture not only has an impact on the time spent on work, but also on a person's life "24/7", and can therefore be considered "family hostile" (e.g. Williams, 2002).

Employees may try to refuse for family reasons to accept the work time conception inherent in these work cultures, but if they do, they may suffer wage penalties in the long run, especially in the case of men (Albrecht et al., 1999, for Swedish fathers). This may be attributed to gender stereotyping, since fathers are often still not expected to share in childcare duties (Petroski & Edley, 2006). Fatherly engagement is often still interpreted by colleagues and superiors as an underdeveloped interest in a career or lack of commitment (Heitkötter, Jurczyk, Lange, & Meier-Gräwe, 2009). That is, beyond any official work-life balancing measures to help employees balance work and family life in a work organization, these "new" fathers still have to deal with the "old" norms reproduced by their colleagues and superiors who may thereby function as gatekeepers over a father's time with his children. As Burke (2010) points out, work organizations that want to improve the working conditions of fathers should start to change particularly the work culture and particularly the inherent time culture in the working environment (see also Allard, Haas, & Hwang, 2011).

2.4 Fathers' work-family balance: gendered cultures and capabilities

How should we understand organizational culture? Schein (1990) describes culture in an organization as effective on three different levels: (a) observable artefacts, (b) values, and (c) underlying assumptions. From this perspective, not everything about the culture may be apparent and, what is more, cultures might be even more effective the more their characteristics do not appear on the surface, but instead, as underlying assumptions. However, the values associated with the "good employee" to some extent become visible through employees' rewards and penalties.

Acker (2006) conceptionalizes the "gendered organization" by emphasizing such organizations' (re)production of inequality. She says that the individual is part of a particular inequality regime that (re)produces inequalities characterized by "loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings" (Acker, 2006: 443). Gender inequality regimes in organizations were until then considered to entail disadvantages particularly for women. However, caring fathers today have to face gender disadvantages, too. In work organizations, fathers are oftentimes not perceived as a target group for offers of life-balancing measures (Puchert et al. 2005) and may be therefore (implicitly or even explicitly) excluded from such offers.

Hobson, Fahlen, and Takacs (2011) stress, besides structural factors particularly also cultural conditions in work organizations as parameters of fathers' possibilities ("capability-sets") for finding work-life balance. Considering gendered norms, Hobson (2014) emphasizes that the cultural contexts "shape not only what we choose, but also what we perceive as within the realm of the possible". For fathers these potential options and restrictions might – as a consequence of their perception – become real (e.g. Thomas & Thomas, 1928) and therefore shape their daily engagement in childcare.

Building on these theoretical perspectives, fathers' possibilities and likelihood to engage in childcare might be mediated particularly through workplace cultures. That

is, traditional ideas about the male employee as well as gendered cultures may oppose any increase in the amount of time they devote to their children.

To summarize, fathers' workplace time constraints are considered to have negative effects for the time they have for their children in the workweek. Additionally, beyond the basic amount of work time, the organization of work in flexible work arrangements may influence fathers' available time for childcare. However, it is not only the contractual work time arrangements, but also the perceived work cultures which often determine their time actually spent working significantly. Here, underlying assumptions, gendered cultures and perceived options are in effect. To capture fathers' constraints on (or possibilities for) their engagement in childcare due to work obligations, it is important to answer the following questions:

(1) What working time arrangements may affect fathers' disposition of time for their children in the workweek positively or negatively?

(2) How do workplace cultures account for the fathers' organization of their daily time? That is, how do work organizations influence fathers' possibilities or likelihood of engaging in childcare?

In the next section, the strategy of the analysis as well as the data and methods are described.

3. Data and methods

In this paper the possible reasons for the gap between fathers' attitudes and practices due to their work are examined. For the analysis, qualitative interview data are analyzed together with time-diary data, making it possible to relate the fathers' daily practices with their reflections about how their family arrangements regarding childcare developed. The latter is in agreement with Gudrun Cyprian (2007), who emphasizes the importance of a broader and more accurate description of fathers' time use.

The analysis draws on three different sorts of data: (1) qualitative interview data, (2) short questionnaires, and (3) time-diary data on time use for one week. The qualitative interview data and the corresponding short questionnaires were acquired through the SFB 882 research project "Work Organizations and Life Conduct of Fathers". The additional data on time use and attitudes were collected by the author. To account for the gap between attitudes and practices it was crucial to include only fathers in the analysis who do not support a gendered division of labor in the family. Therefore fathers were selected who did not favor the male breadwinner model or its modern counterpart (e.g. Pfau-Effinger, 2004) of the breadwinner man and part-time working woman. The selection was made by evaluating fathers' responses to a questionnaire[2] that was attached to the time diary. Table 1 gives an overview of the study sample:

With this set of data, the fathers' combination of work and family are captured at the level of everyday knowledge as well as at the level of practices (e.g. Flick, 2007). This triangulation of data was conducted to compensate for "weaknesses and blind spots in the single method" (e.g. Kluge & Kelle 2001; cited by Flick, 2007). What is

2 For further information please see Attachment (I).

more, the data complement each other, as they link a father's practices with his reflections and therefore make it possible to get insights into (a) whether there is a gap between attitudes and practices on the individual level, (b) what working conditions may determine the fathers' time, and (c) how fathers reflect on their family arrangements.

Table 1: Sample "dual earner ideal"

Work organization	Size (number of employees)	Interviews (with employed fathers)	Diary data (from those fathers)	Sample "dual earner ideal"
A (Regional Finances)	~ 2000	15	8	4
B (Social Security I)	~ 11000	14	7	4
C (Social Security II)	~ 2000	18	4	3

The qualitative interviews in this analysis were conducted in 2013 in three different work organizations in West Germany, all of which are regulated by federal law[3]. In the study sample, only fathers of a child not older than six were interviewed in order to account for the specific requirements of younger children. The talks with the fathers were carried out as semi-structured interviews according to the concept of the "problem-centred interview" (Witzel, 2000). They took about 90 minutes each and were conducted during the fathers' working hours. On the short questionnaire[4] each interviewee gave additional information about several socioeconomic factors: their age, education, work position, family income and parental leave-taking, as well as information about partner and children. The interviews together with the socioeconomic data were recorded and fully transcribed and managed in MaxQDA, and for analysis of the qualitative interview data, qualitative content analysis (e.g. Schreier, 2012) was used.

In the three work organizations, 40 per cent of the interviewed fathers agreed to fill out a time diary[5] in which they reported their time use over one week in predefined categories. The categories comprised activities in the spheres of working hours, commuting times, time spent on household tasks, free time and time with children. On an attached two-page questionnaire at the end of the diary booklet, data about attitudes towards gender, family and work were gathered. The time diary and accompanied questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS. The sample basis for this analysis consists of eleven fathers, excluding fathers with traditional ideals regarding the division of labor in the family. The focus of the analysis was the interplay of fathers' work arrangements with their practices on the individual level. Thus, the eleven cases give detailed insight into how the fathers' work sphere interacts with the private

3 For more information about the sampling of these organizations see Alemann et al. (2012).

4 For more information about the design of the questionnaires and the time diary, please contact the author.

5 The time diary was sent to the interviewed fathers in booklet form.

sphere, while also providing a basis for outlining possible systemic influences due to work organizations.

Table 2 gives an overview of the sample. The sample is self-selected, since the cooperation of the work organizations as well as the fathers' participation in the interview was voluntary and only those fathers are part of the analysis who agreed to fill out a time diary. For a better understanding of what kind of group of fathers is represented in the sample, the fathers' mean values on some variables are compared with the numbers on all employed fathers in Germany who had in 2013 at least one child not older than six (see last two columns in Table 2).

Table 2: Sample overview

Name	Work organization	Age	Number of children (+ own children, living in another household)	Weekly working time (fathers)	Weekly working time (partners)	Paid parental leave months taken by the father
Mr. Aschenbach	A	52	2 (+2)	44	50	0
Mr. Albrecht	A	44	1 (+1)	39	28	2
Mr. Arnold	A	35	1	47	on parental leave	2
Mr. Adam	A	34	3	45	0	4 (in part-time)
Mr. Brodersen	B	46	3	40	40	36/2
Mr. Bauer	B	45	3	32	45	3
Mr. Bertels	B	42	2	40	24	4 (in part-time)
Mr. Brink	B	32	2	39	40	2
Mr. Clausen	C	48	1	42	23	0
Mr. Conrad	C	42	2	45	on parental leave	15
Mr. Carstensen	C	41	2	40	30	10
Mean of fathers in sample		41.9	2.00	41.2	25.5	-
Mean of German fathers (employed, with at least one child not more than six years old)		38.0	1.88	43.2	14.8	-

Source of the data on German fathers (last column): SOEP 2013, weighted

4. Results

In the following the question is systematically analyzed whether fathers' working conditions mediate their time for childcare. Do the study fathers perceive particular working (time) arrangements as supportive or obstructive of this? Are there systematic differences between work organizations with regard to their mediating of fathers' time for childcare? Building on the results, the role of fathers' work times, their daily organization of work, as well as the role of work organizations in shaping fathers' lives is discussed in regard to the diagnosis of a gap between fathers' attitudes and practices.

To do this, first the fathers' work organizations with their specific characteristics are introduced. In a next step, the fathers' living conditions, their daily time use and their reflections on their work-life arrangements are presented. Here, especially the fathers' perceptions of their options for flexible working (time) arrangements as well as of (gendered) working cultures are considered. For each work organization, the interplay of the fathers' workplace culture with the time for their children is discussed.

4.1 Being a working father at the firm "Regional Finances"

The work organization "Regional Finances" deals with customer-oriented monetary transactions. Here, the fathers report that their work times are highly determined by opening hours. They report work weeks of 39-50 hours. Especially on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when opening hours end at 6pm, many fathers find themselves having only one hour or less with their children before bed-time. "Regional Finances" provides several measures for reconciling work and family demands. However, these offers seem predominantly directed at mothers. Only the use of paid parental leave in terms of the two so-called "daddy-months"[6] is promoted for men. From time to time employees are asked to attend training programs on Friday evenings and Saturdays. Some of them occasionally even go to regional events on Sundays to socialize with their customers. On top of that, the fathers report a traditional work culture of long hours during the workweek.

Four of the fathers working in this organization will now be introduced. The first, Mr. Aschenbach, has four children, two of them from a first marriage. Only the two younger children (age 5 and 1) from his present marriage live with him during the whole week. His present wife has a 50-hour workweek, and does much of her work on weekends. He reports that on weekdays he is on average more than 10 hours away from home including his commuting times. For him it is therefore difficult to spare any time for his children on workdays.

> [My] family life [before work] is reduced to a few minutes. […] That's unfortunate, but that's how it is. I get home between half past five and half past six. The little one goes to bed at seven, so you can imagine how much time is left. […] that's how it is. […] That's why I don't have much time with my children. (A-13; 52y)

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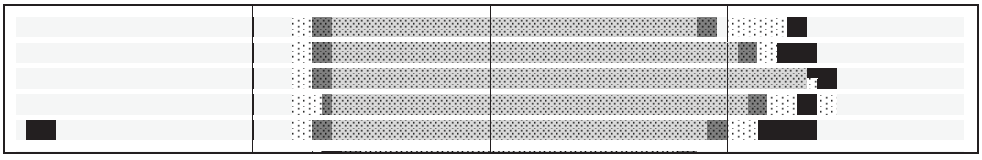
6 In Germany in 2007 a new parental leave policy was introduced, giving the second parent exclusive entitlements for two paid parental leave months (payments consist of 65 percent of former earnings). Since these two months are generally taken by fathers, they are also called "Daddy-months".

Mr. Aschenbach's workweek is determined by his office's opening hours. Having to leave home early and come back late is what restricts his possibilities to engage in childcare significantly. Reducing his working hours is no option for him, as he has to financially support his children from his first marriage. Because his pay is partly bonus-oriented, he often works overtime. During the workweek Mr. Aschenbach sees his children regularly only in the evening, sometimes for no more than half an hour, as in Figure 1. However, he seems to be more engaged in household tasks than in childcare.

Figure 1: Mr. Aschenbach's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; = commuting; = household; = other

Mr. Albrecht, another father working at "Regional Finances", has two children (age 5 and 10), with only the younger one living in his household. His spouse works currently part-time and picks up the daughter from kindergarten at lunchtime. The couple considers sharing work and care times equally to be important:

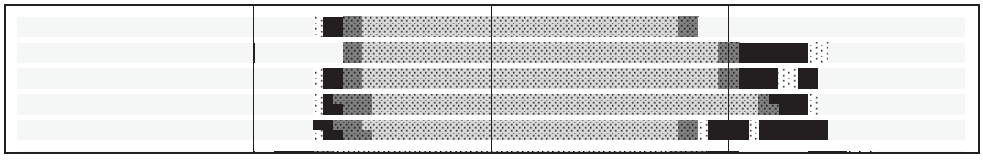
> Okay, I would indeed like to have a bit more time [for my child]. But if you want to spend more time with your family, I do think that's a career killer. So to really have a career and enough time for the family, I don't know if it's possible. For women it's probably the same. Something has to be neglected, I would say. Either job or family. To keep it both in balance is difficult. (A-01; 44y)

Mr. Albrecht sees himself in an either-or situation between work and family. He finds it difficult to gain some sort of balance because actually he doesn't want to neglect either career or family. He says that, sometimes, when there are kindergarten events on workdays, he finds himself in a moral conflict over whether to leave work or not.

> I would like to, but then I say to myself, do you really want to take time off for this? [...] And oftentimes I say: No, I can't just leave work early because of a lantern parade at kindergarten. But strictly speaking, I could do it. (A-01; 44y)

Mr. Albrecht expresses uncertainty over the consequences of showing his interest in his family by leaving his workplace a bit earlier in spite of his flexitime options and the assent of his superior. Here, the father's underlying assumption of a relation between career prospects and presenting oneself as "unencumbered" becomes visible. Mr. Albrecht sees his child most weekdays in the morning at breakfast, and in the evening. On Thursdays he gets home later than usual after longer opening hours. His diary workweek to some extent reflects a nine-to-five schedule. However, together with short commuting times, this leaves room for time with his child.

Figure 2: Mr. Albrecht's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



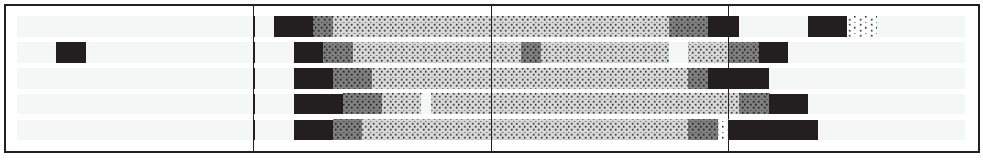
Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; commuting; = household; = other

Mr Arnold has just become a father, having a two-month-old son. His spouse is on parental leave at the moment. The couple wants to share work and childcare hours equally, so both consider working part-time in the future. However for the next couple of years the mother will be the main caregiver. Thinking about his future options, he states that to work part-time would mean having to leave his current position.

> [If I wanted to do part-time], I would have to leave my current position. […] I think that in my department part-time work would be very difficult to realize since, though you might influence the workflow a bit, you can't directly control it, because the customers call as they please. (A-07; 35y)

Regarding his employment tasks, he emphasizes the necessity to be constantly available to customers. Therefore he anticipates that making a request for reduced hours could result in a transfer of position, limiting his career prospects. During the workweek he spends considerable time commuting. Tuesdays' and Thursdays' free time is restricted by the firm's extended opening hours. However, he manages to spend some time with his infant child in the morning as well as in the evening and even during the night. It seems to be the case here that the mother has taken over nearly all household tasks in addition to most of the childcare, regardless of the father's ideal of equal parenting.

Figure 3: Mr. Arnold's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; commuting; = household; = other

Mr. Adam has three children (age 6, 4 and 2). At present, his spouse is on parental leave with the youngest child. His work is partly customer-oriented and partly managerial. He regularly works overtime, which some time ago caused tensions with his spouse.

> [My wife] wanted more initiative from me, and also more participation. And I partly didn't manage to do that, since I […] said to myself that I have to be sufficiently active at work. […] And this was a huge cause of tensions. (A-05; 34y)

He was torn between the perceived demands of work and claims on his time from his partner. He then tried to find some balance between his responsibilities at work and at home.

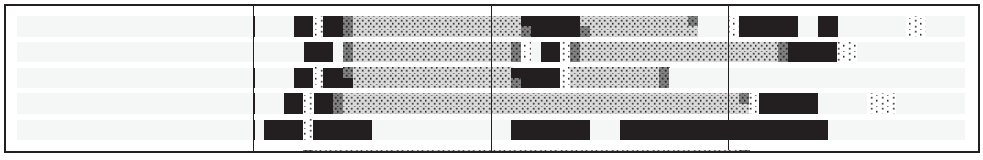
> [Over the past two or three years] I have increasingly taken care of a balance between work and personal life. That is, to not give too much weight to either of them, since that would inevitably lead to problems. And we eventually noticed that quite clearly, if I am too much involved with my work and too little with my family, there is lots of stress at home, and this leads to reactions which really don't do any good. And that's why it's a difficult task to keep that balance. (A-05; 34y)

Today, he defines his family as his main priority. To avoid further dissonances in the family, he communicates his boundaries to his superior:

> I have told [my boss] that, when it comes to working hours, I have to set a limit for myself, so on the short days, […] I want to be at home by 6pm. That's my deadline, so to speak. […] These work times I have declared myself, to be able to do my family justice too, so that I can have dinner with them in the evening, bring the children to bed, play a game with them, read to them or things like that. (A-05; 34y)

In this case, a family crisis enabled the father to confidently set limits against the otherwise nearly unlimited time-claims of his employer. Mr. Adam's commuting time is very short; he can even manage to have lunch with his family. As we see from his time diary, he spends a lot of time with his children and even does housework.

Figure 4: Mr. Adam's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm; Friday: holiday)



Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; commuting; = household; = other

All in all, the fathers working at "Regional Finances" experience extended, sometimes seemingly unlimited time demands at their workplace due to opening hours, customer needs and an apparent culture of long hours which is effective, if not as a rule, at least as an underlying assumption. For fathers in this work organization, being the fulltime male breadwinner the unquestioned norm. Although working part-time is an attractive idea for some of the fathers, they do not think of it as a feasible option, as they expect penalties in the form of reduced career options or transfer to a lower position. The story of Mr. Adams shows that fathers working for this firm have to set their own limits on working hours and be assertive towards their employers about their claims, if they want to be at home for their families. However, in Mr. Adams' case this was only after a family crisis had taken place, and he may have therefore had a special bargaining position.

"Regional Finances" puts great demands on male employees' working hours and availability, whose work-time arrangements make it difficult for them to find a balance between their work and their family lives. As data from the fathers' time-use show, (see Table 3), the fathers' working hours can restrict the scope of their family time, as

the example of Tuesdays and Thursdays shows. What is more, the fathers reported that career options and long presence at the workplace are closely related. Working in this culture, some fathers feel caught in an either-or trap – having to decide between time for family and career prospects.

Table 3: ' Regional Finances' fathers' age, number of children, and mean hours in a workweek

Name	Age	Number of children (+ own children living in another household)	Weekly working time (estimated by the father; fathers/ mothers)	Diary data (from Monday to Friday)	
				Daily hours for work (mean; including commuting time)	Daily hours with children (mean)
Mr. Aschenbach	52	2 (+2)	44/50	10.2	1.1
Mr. Albrecht	44	1 (+1)	39/28	8.8	1.9
Mr. Arnold	35	1	47/0 (parental leave)	8.1	2.0
Mr. Adam	34	3	45/0	8.6	4.4

4.2 Being a working father at "Social Security I"

The firm "Social Security I" deals with social insurance management. Here, the interviewed fathers reported working 32–45 hours per week. In this public work organization, several programs promoting the reconciliation of work and family demands are available. All interviewed fathers rate their work organization as a family-friendly one.

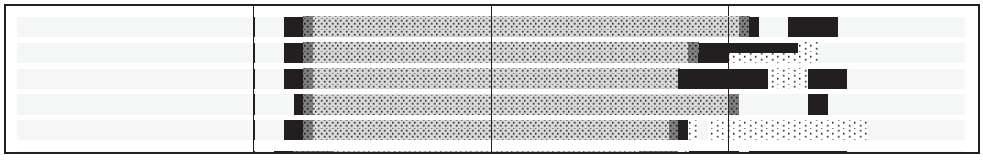
One of them, Mr. Brodersen, has three children (age 15, 11, and 3). For his oldest, he took 36 months of (partly unpaid) parental leave, whereas his spouse continued working after maternity leave. In retrospect, he thinks of this break as a turning point in his career, as he felt overtaken by his colleagues. After the leave, for a period he worked part-time. He reports that during this time he felt he was being stereotyped by his supervisor as an underachiever, which he also saw mirrored in his work evaluations. This gave him the impression that not everything offered on paper (i.e. flexibility options) may actually be taken up by the employees if they want to get ahead.

> So, having the right to do something is not the same as actually doing it, and it does not [even] mean your superiors will acknowledge your right to do it. Anything can be put on paper, but there also have to be people who live that way. And that's very often not the case. […] I think you have to claim this right for yourself. It's not enough if it's written down somewhere, you actually have to claim it. [T]here is one colleague who is doing it his own way. [...] And that's when I think: I would never have the courage to do that, right? But maybe I simply should claim it too, since it is my due anyway – but then again, I haven't. (B-16; 46y)

Despite his official flexitime option, he states that he adapts his work times meanwhile to his superior's needs. Mr. Brodersen struggles to define working hours which will benefit him and at the same time are appropriate at work. His supervisor's idea of a "good" worker, as one who is unencumbered by family demands, stands in the way of

a more satisfying work-family coordination. At the moment, he feels trapped in his position with no further career options, and some colleagues are still asking him if he is still part-time as he cannot get this notion out of their heads. Mr. Brodersen has standardized his hours by coming each day to work at 7:30 and leaving in the afternoon according to his supervisor's needs. After his experiences of having cared for his oldest child for three years fulltime, and later trying to do part-time, he now chooses to present himself as mostly "unencumbered", which has restricted his time for his children. However, he feels his colleagues and superior still do not recognize him as equal or acknowledge his engagement.

Figure 5: Mr. Brodersen's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



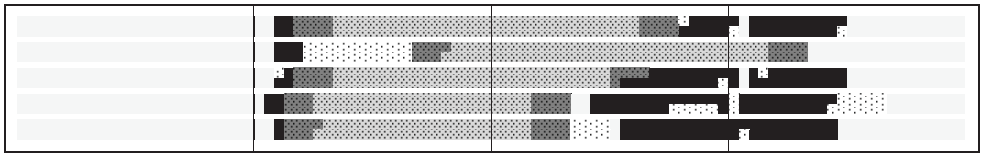
Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; = commuting; = household; = other

Mr. Bauer has three children (age 8, 6 and 2). He has worked part-time since his oldest child was seven months old, and since then his spouse has been the main breadwinner in the family. He now works 32 hours per week. He plans to reduce this to a 24-hour week "…*because we do realize that we are really worn out*" (B-04; 45) – but has not asked his superior about it yet since he fears his reaction. However, he will wait with this at least until the renewal of his work contract, because at the moment he is still not in a permanent position. Besides, as a part-time worker he feels not fully integrated into his team:

> Once a week, we sit together for half an hour [having a team meeting]. So this is another conflict, since I generally cannot participate. [...] So I normally get to know what's going on by hearsay or by reading the protocol. But I'm missing out on what has been talked about. It bothers me that [as a part-time worker I'm excluded from these afternoon meetings]. Since I always feel a bit like the fifth wheel, it's rather unpleasant. (B-04; 45)

That is, Mr. Bauer's commitment to his family acts against his integration with his team at work. This kind of problem is well known to young mothers, but is even more apparent in Mr. Bauer's situation, because he is the only part-time worker on his team. The work organization's regulations made it possible for him to get this part-time position according to his preferences, allowing him to spend a lot more time with his children. However, he says just as his colleague Mr. Brodersen that the possibilities "on paper" often do not match the implicit work cultures of organizations.

Figure 6: Mr. Bauer's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



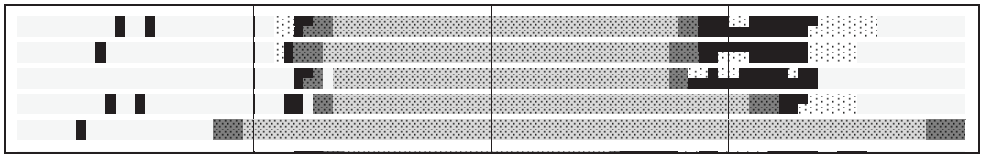
Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; = commuting; = household; = other

Mr. Bertels has two children (age 4 and 2). He works fulltime, sometimes using flextime options. His wife works 24 hours per week and plans to work even less in the future. Mr. Bertels enjoys caring for his children; nevertheless, he currently finds himself as the male breadwinner with no options for reducing his hours as he is needed in his position as an IT expert, and his supervisor had difficulties letting him go even for two months' paid parental leave. Therefore, they agreed on a four-month "part-time leave option":

> And this part-time thing, these four months, that was [my bosses and my] idea; he had said, two months are a long time, it would be a pity, but if you want to take them, then do it. And then I thought I could work part-time and he likes that still better, but he also would have supported the other version. (B-09; 42y)

At least four times a year, Mr. Bertels has to go on business trips. On regular working days he manages to spend a lot of time with his children in the afternoon. Also he often gets up when the children call in the middle of the night.

Figure 7: Mr. Bertels' workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm[7])



Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; commuting; = household; = other

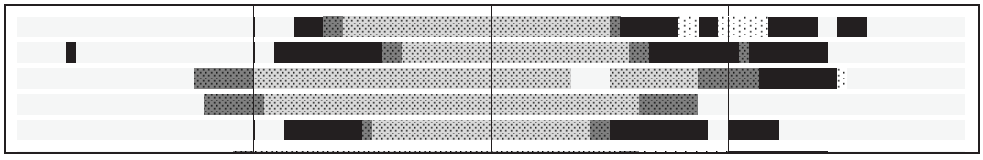
Mr. Brink is a highly educated software specialist and is therefore courted by many companies. He has two children (age 4 and 2). Mr Brink and his spouse both work fulltime. As his first daughter was born, he decided to change employers, looking for a family-friendly work organization. He tells the story of why he changed employers:

> I had heard of the reputation of [this company], that they are family-friendly. That's what they said to convince me at the job interview. And that was the most important factor for me, so that I could say, okay, I need to go home at noon, and then just do it. If I still manage to work my weekly hours, no one here has anything against it. They just say: It's okay, and have a nice day! There are no more remarks about it. At my old employer, when I left at, say, 3 p.m., they would say: Oh, half the day off, eh? After some time this wasn't fun anymore. And it didn't even help to earn more money there. I took an enormous step back financially when I left – they paid me at least twice my present salary. (B-11; 32y)

Mr. Brink found a way to gain more time for the family: he and his family renounced a higher salary and therefore have to pay the price. Being a high-value employee may have strengthened his negotiation position though. This may be especially true for his use of flexible options which allow him to alternate with his spouse to provide childcare.

7 On a business trip on Friday.

Figure 8: Mr. Brink's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; commuting; = household; = other

"Social Security I" is a relatively large work organization which has recently expanded. The fathers in this organization have to deal with very different work arrangements. This is to some extent due to their tasks or their position, and to some extent to their respective superiors. Some fathers report that their work is arranged around tasks and deadlines, while others are expected to be constantly available for managerial tasks or because their supervisor demands it. Some fathers would like to work part-time but have trouble realizing their ideal work arrangement. Many fathers in this work organization experience a lack of sensitivity to their needs, especially from superiors and colleagues. At "Social Security I", family-friendliness for fathers varies to a great extent, depending on employee position as well as on the degree of recognition by colleagues and superiors of traditional work cultures that still stereotype the idealized male employee as an unencumbered one.

The fathers at "Social Security I" manage to have some time with their children on weekdays (see Table 4). However, working part-time or "leaving early" appear to be sufficient conditions for fathers to spend more time with their children. What is striking among these four fathers is that the one father, who took extended parental leave for his child ten years ago and then did part-time before this was generally accepted, now seems to spend the least time of all with his children as a result of his negative experiences following his "outing" as an "active father".

Table 4: ' Social Security I' fathers' age, number of children, and mean hours in a workweek

Name	Age	Number of children (+ own children living in another household)	Weekly working time (estimated by the father; fathers/ mothers)	Diary data (from Monday to Friday)	
				Daily hours for work (mean; including commuting time)	Daily hours with children (mean)
Mr. Brodersen	46	3	40/40	9.8	2.0
Mr. Bauer	45	3	32/45	6.8	4.0
Mr. Bertels	42	2	40/24	10.8[8]	3.3
Mr. Brink	32	2	39/40	7.6	4.1

8 Longer hours due to a business trip.

4.3 Working fathers at "Social Security II"

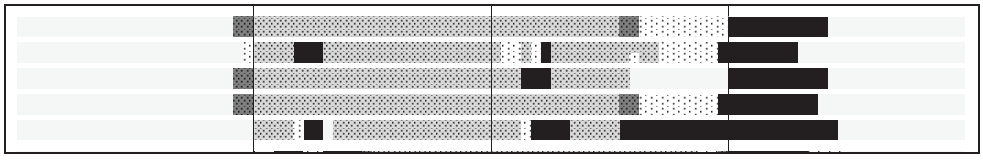
The fathers interviewed at the work organization "Social Security II" all work as teleworkers at least three days per week. These fathers find time throughout their workday to have meals with their families or take their children to kindergarten. As the company computer server operation times are restricted, they cannot work in the evening, at night or on weekends. Fathers whose partners also work emphasize the significance of being able to work at home for their wives' employment and career opportunities. The option of work from home is actively promoted in this organization and at heart gender-neutral. The number of employees that can work from home is restricted; each year, this option has to be renewed by application.

Mr. Clausen has a fulltime contract and estimates his weekly workload to be 42 hours. His only daughter is four years old. His spouse works in the same work organization on a part-time (24 hours/week) contract. Both parents use the home-office option, with at least one of them working from home each day. Mr. Clausen started teleworking shortly after the birth of his child:

> After [my child] was born, I took five weeks off from work; I had accumulated those and so spent them at home. Right from the start I was there to give [her] the bottle, change the diapers and everything, and so my wife could get some rest. But after I started working again, […] during the day the child wouldn't sleep; she was no screamer but wasn't a quiet baby either, and that got really on my wife's nerves. So that was the reason for me to apply for teleworking, which had never crossed my mind before. My wife was still taking parental leave and I was going to work, but the situation at home was far from pleasant. My wife was really a nervous wreck. And that's why I started teleworking. (C-06; 48y)

Mr. Clausen thus chose the teleworking option to support his spouse in caring for their baby. He says that his daughter is a "daddy's child" who comes to him all the time while he sits in his home office, for example to show him a picture she painted for him, and he enjoys these moments a lot. However, with teleworking his career prospects are limited, since in this work organization the leading positions require being present in the office. Nevertheless, Mr. Clausen is satisfied with his position and says: "*I have achieved everything I wanted*" (C-06; 48y). In his time diary, his time in the home-office can easily be recognized: he records the time he spends with his child during breaks from work and has no entries for commuting time.

Figure 9: Mr. Clausen's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



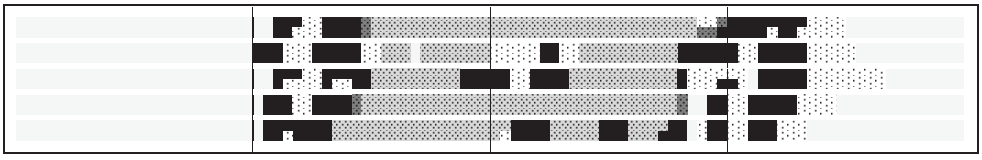
Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; = commuting; = household; = other

Mr. Conrad has two children (age 3 and 1). He estimates his weekly workload to be around 35 hours per week. His spouse is still on parental leave with the 1-year-old. For his elder son he himself took 15 months' paid parental leave to make time for his spouse's studies. He sees himself as a "100% father":

> My role is that of a father who takes care of his children as well as he can and as much as he can. And that's also what I want. I wanted to be a father one-hundred percent, and I regret nothing. I am happy that I got the opportunity for teleworking, that I am able to live on that. And we see ourselves as equal partners. There are no fixed roles for who has to do what, and we try to manage everything together […] One of us does what is needed in the situation. That works out really well for us. (C-11; 42y)

Here the teleworking option enables the couple to share family tasks equally, and Mr. Conrad to be a father along his very own ideas of fatherly engagement. However, he also is aware of the consequences of telework for his career prospects in this work organization.

Figure 10: Mr. Conrad's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



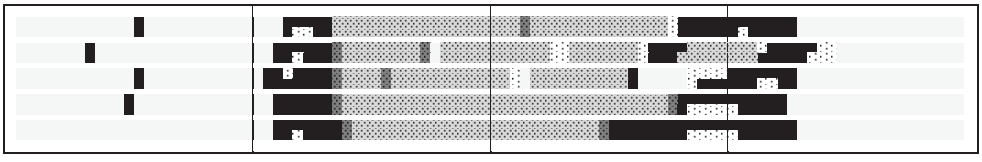
Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; commuting; = household; = other

Mr. Carstensen has two children (age 8 and 2). He works fulltime, and his spouse works 30 hours per week. Mr. Carstensen started teleworking with the birth of his first child. Right from the beginning, his supervisor was extraordinarily supportive.

> So I said to my boss, as he went into retirement that I was really grateful that he gave me enough freedom and that only this had made it possible for us to have a second child at all, and that we definitely wouldn't have been able to manage, even with the first child, if we hadn't had that freedom. (C-01; 41y)

Mr. Carstensen thus held the teleworking option to have been a necessary condition for their decision to have a second child. In his eyes, by giving him the opportunity to homework, his employer may even have influenced their family-planning. However, from a look at the time diary of Mr. Carstensen, it is not visible at first how the teleworking option supports the couple. As he says, it is the flexibility in its use that supports him and his spouse the most.

Figure 11: Mr. Carstensen's workweek (Monday to Friday; 0:01 am – 12:00 pm)



Source: own calculations; = childcare; = work; commuting; = household; = other

In this work organization, the interviewed fathers profit from the teleworking option in order to have more time available for children. However, some of them mention some lack of acceptance for their chosen work arrangements by co-workers and sometimes by single superiors. What is more, being a homeworker in this work organ-

ization means saying goodbye to prospects for advancement, at least for the moment. The fathers therefore know that they have to decide between homeworking and career. From their weekly times (see Table 5) one can see that the homeworkers spend significant, rather flexible amounts of time with their children.

Table 5: ' Social Security II' fathers' age, number of children, and mean hours in a workweek

Name	Age	Number of children (+ own children living in another household)	Weekly working time (estimated by the father; fathers/ mothers)	Diary data (from Monday to Friday)	
				Daily hours for work (mean; including commuting time)	Daily hours with children (mean)
Mr. Clausen	48	1	42/23	8.6	3.5
Mr. Conrad	42	2	45/0 (parental leave)	6.5	4.6
Mr. Carstensen	41	2	40/30	7.6	4.8

4.4 Work organizations and fathers' time with children

As we can see from these fathers' practices and their reflections on their arrangements in the family, working conditions and fathers' time for childcare are interrelated. However, the fathers' diaries show that it is not only the work time that may account for fathers' engagement in childcare; further influential factors are commuting time, arrangements with the spouse or individual definitions of the "good father". As in teleworking, especially work-time structures like flexitime and part-time are suitable to provide fathers more time with their children. These results are in line with the literature already discussed, in which flexible options are found helpful when fathers' use of them is relatively self-determined. Extended opening hours or the demand for constant availability on the other hand, as at "Regional Finances", restrict fathers' time with their children, as work and childcare times are usually mutually exclusive. This trade-off between a father's time for work and his time for children often creates the feeling of an either-or trap.

However, work-time structures are often rooted in work cultures. Male employees are still obligated to the ideal of being unencumbered, with no family obligations in the workweek, and as a consequence, to the norm of long hours at work. This traditional male work culture is reproduced by colleagues and superiors. Departing from this norm sometimes leads to open disrespect shown by colleagues. That is, even if management offers fathers work-family balancing measures, co-workers might still serve as gatekeepers to limit the fathers' time with their children.

In work organizations, fathers become more visible as caring fathers when they take up family-friendly measures. However, being visible as an active father often brings penalties for career prospects, or even exclusion. Most fathers still feel insecure about the consequences of claiming family-friendly options at their work organization. Anticipating possible penalties, many fathers will likely still make no use of them.

By comparing the three presented work organizations with regard to their influence on fathers' available time for children, significant differences between the three organizations are revealed. In organization C, fathers are able to engage in childcare on their own terms because of their home-office options which make their daily organization of work more flexible. The three interviewed fathers who chose the home-working option define themselves not only as engaged fathers, but also as their spouses' equal partners by promoting their careers, while at the same time accepting the fact that their own careers are on hold. The three interviewed fathers do not represent all fathers in the work organization, and the fathers who do not use the home-working option are not accounted for here. That is, work organization C provides possibilities for engagement in childcare, but fathers still have to decide between career and time with children. What is more, using the home-working option these fathers may become even more visible as employees who, at least for the moment, "opt out" from career prospects. By contrast, work organization A restricts the fathers' scope for spending time with their children by demanding prolonged availability and presence at the workplace. Here, workplace demands come first – even on weekends and evenings, for meetings with customers. When work has to be the top priority for fathers, childcare always takes second place at best. However, these fathers continue to say that for them family still comes first. This is why some fathers say that they find it difficult to balance work and family – they feel stuck in an either-or trap where it is difficult to make satisfactory choices. In work organization B, the fathers' possibilities vary greatly, which is due to the different means and attitudes of superiors. Family-friendly measures such as the possibility of part-time have to be negotiated with the superior who is also the employee's regular supervisor. Here, the father's claim to family-friendly options is – as in work organization C – also considered a move towards his renouncing future career prospects. What is more, at some locations in this organization, a more traditional work culture is effective in hindering fathers' use of the family-friendly options that are offered them on paper.

5. Conclusion

This analysis aimed to examine potential factors in the gap between fathers' attitudes and practices on the level of their working conditions. By matching time-use data with interview data from eleven fathers from three different work organizations, the practices and reflections on these practices were confronted. To this end, it was asked how fathers' working time arrangements and their working conditions affected the amount of their daily time with their children in the workweek, and in what way work organizations shape fathers' possibilities to engage in childcare.

It was found that work organizations may mediate fathers' time for childcare to a great extent. In a comparison of the possibilities to engage in childcare by fathers in three different work organizations, the variations reveal the significance of specific workplace factors. Flexible work organization and the possibility to work from home appear to support significantly those fathers who want to spend more time with their children. On the other hand, required longer hours, or training courses beyond the usual working hours hinder the fathers in spending more time with their children. However, besides structural conditions at specific workplaces, especially workplace

cultures shape fathers' possibilities, because: (1) For men there still exists a norm demanding the priority of work, as well as the norm of the "unencumbered worker". This is why many fathers fear to claim flexible options or work part-time, since they expect penalties from colleagues or superiors. (2) In work organizations childcare is often still seen as a female task, and therefore family-friendly measures in work organizations are sometimes gendered, since they are targeted primarily at mothers. This stereotype is imprinted on employees' minds particularly as an "underlying assumption" (Schein, 1990). Fathers therefore find it difficult to actively assert their interests. What is more, (3) these underlying assumptions in a work organization form the basis of the fathers' anticipated options. Even with modern images of an equal division of labor within marriage in mind, they may still not see the possibilities to realize these ideals because they are obscured by imprinted traditional work cultures that are also gendered in nature (e.g. Acker 2006). As a consequence, today's fathers often find themselves in an "either-or trap" manifested as a time paradox as well as traditionally gendered cultures at the workplace: they have to decide between "either career or more time" for their children. That is, work organizations appear to be a crucial factor in the gap between fathers' attitudes and practices, because here the "new" fathers experience the "old" conflicts of mothers.

This analysis provides new insights into the conflicts of fathers in balancing work and family at the individual level. Since this analysis is restricted to fathers in only three work organizations, further analysis is needed to capture more fathers' situations in work organizations and show more comprehensively how these affect the parameters of their available time for childcare.

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Appendix

Attachment (I): Sample Selection

Question:

Consider a family with a child who is not going to school yet.
In your opinion: which is the best possibility to reconcile family and work?

(Multiple selection possible)

The mother stays at home and the father works full time.

- (if selected by the father: case not included)

The mother works part time and the father works full time.

- (case included only if the father also chose the father working part time and mother working full time as best possibility to reconcile family and work)

Both mother and father work full time.

- (if selected by the father: case included)

Both mother and father work part time.

- (if selected by the father: case included)

The father works part time and the mother works full time.

- (case included only if the father also chose the mother working part time and the father working full time as best possibility to reconcile family and work)

The father stays at home and the mother works full time.

- (if selected by the father: case not included)

Attachment (II): Time schedule overview from eleven fathers in three work organizations