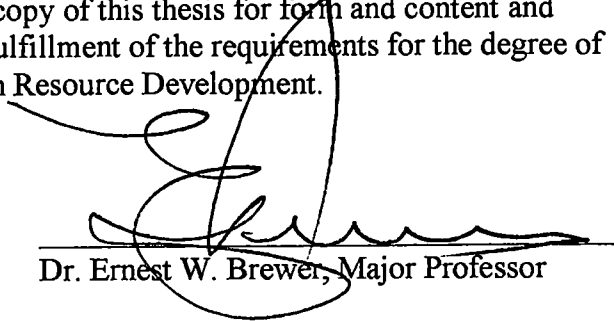
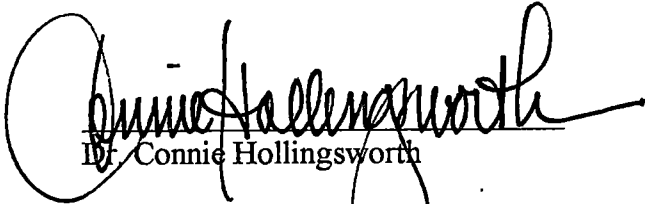
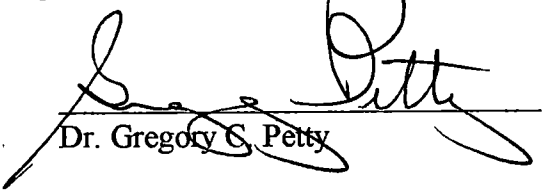


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Tabitha L. Adams entitled *Working Parent Perceptions of Work-Related Problems and Preferences Associated with Child Care Arrangements*. I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Human Resource Development.


Dr. Ernest W. Brewer, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:


Dr. Connie Hollingsworth
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Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

**WORKING PARENT PERCEPTIONS OF
WORK-RELATED PROBLEMS AND PREFERENCES
ASSOCIATED WITH CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS**

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Tabitha Leigh Adams

May 1999

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As this research project comes to a close, it would not be complete without thanking the following individuals for their participation and assistance—to the three members of my committee, namely:

Dr. Ernest W. Brewer, whose belief in me has been the guiding light that led me to this point. I believe that I will rarely meet another who is more committed to his students and his profession. He never had a minute to spare, yet he always had time for me. My graduate experience would have been less worthy without his insight, wit, and genuine interest in my learning. I am thankful to have been his student, and I hope that someday I will have the opportunity to exhibit to my peers in this field the respectable qualities that he has shown me.

Dr. Connie Hollingsworth, who made this whole process less of a mystery and more of a journey. Special appreciation for reworking what I thought was my survey instrument until it was something that I could be happy with. Also, my gratitude to her for sharing her blood, sweat, and tears—her dissertation—with me so that I might have further understanding of just what this journey entails. Her enthusiasm and interest kept me motivated and determined that this project would be a success.

Dr. Gregory Petty, who supported my graduate progression from beginning to end. A special thanks for first introducing the research process to me and making it less intimidating than it might otherwise have been.

And to all three, a special thanks, beyond academia, for being real.

To Sam Harr who helped me with my flowchart in the beginning stage of the project and used his own time to get it just right.

To Johnny Hubbard, who took the time to show me how to do things the right way, time and again.

To Jay McNeil at Dollywood for being so patient during the first stages of this study when I hardly knew where to begin and for being supportive and interested as the results came in.

To the Dollywood employees for their willingness to share their opinions.

To Ron Childress and Katie Burton who gave patient guidance and assistance during the editing process.

To Cary Springer, my statistical advisor, without whom I can not imagine having done this project. She walked me through this process and helped make known all the unknowns. She made this project work by lending her knowledge and expertise so unassumingly. She exhibited constant support and enormous patience through every stage of this project and kept smiling through it all.

To Lee, whose friendship (and e-mail) provided, I'm quite sure, the key to my keeping a cheerful perspective.

ABSTRACT

This descriptive study was conducted to assess the perceptions of working parents regarding problems and preferences with child care. The study used a four-part questionnaire which included elements about work attendance, problems with current child care arrangements, child care preferences, and demographic variables. Written questionnaires were distributed to 171 employees within one service and entertainment based organization in east Tennessee. Subjects were 84 respondents, including both mothers and fathers.

Data were analyzed and research questions tested using frequencies and percentages. A chi-square test was conducted to test differences for the independent variables of family structure and caregiver. The results showed that the group of employees who used a non-familial child care provider found that missing work and leaving work early were more problematic than for those who used familial care. No differences were found between an employee's family structure and problems with current child care arrangements. When differences were tested between caregiver type and problems with current arrangements, the group which used non-familial care reported having significantly more problems with availability, hours, and cost of care than did employees that used a family caregiver.

Overall, on-site child care with extended hours was selected most often as the child care option that would be of greatest benefit to employees. No significant differences were found between the preference of on-site, extended-hour care and family structure. The group using non-familial care reported a stronger preference for on-site care with extended hours than did parents utilizing familial care.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Child care issues have moved outside of the realm of the family setting and into the organizational setting for many reasons. Today's diversity of family configurations has brought about significant changes in the workplace, and more than ever before, women are working outside of the home (Auerbach, 1990; Friedman, 1990). Women choose to work outside the home for many reasons. High divorce rates leave many parents as single-parent providers and two-parent families often opt for dual-incomes. Also, many career women return to the work force after having children (Galinsky & Hughes, 1987; Jennings, 1990; Magid, 1990; Marlow, 1993). All these changes necessitate an increase in the need for child care services and awareness about such issues.

Research has shown that balancing the roles of parent and employee can cause complex and wide-ranging problems (Fernandez, 1986; Galinsky & Hughes, 1987). Problems arising from managing child-related issues and careers impact employees, families, and employers alike (O'Connor, 1993). In recent years, however, employers have begun to examine their role in the child care process because of an increase in the numbers of dual-income families and single-parent providers in the workforce, increased competition among employers to sponsor child care initiatives, and increased government incentives (*Employers consider*, 1987). As a result, employers are now implementing a variety of family-responsive programs designed to help employees better cope with work and family responsibilities. Child care is one topic that has gained much attention among

employers, and much has been reported on employer-supported child care centers. These on-site facilities provide benefits to employers and employees including less absenteeism, increased productivity and morale, greater job satisfaction, and decreased stress among employed parents (Burud, Aschbacher, & McCroskey, 1984; Gampel, 1990; Perry, 1978; U.S. Department of Labor, 1988).

As employers consider the benefits of involvement in the child care process, they must also weigh risks which include high start up costs, strict codes and regulations (*Tennessee Department*, 1987), fluctuating supply and demand (Huth, 1989; Moss, 1992; Perry, 1978), affordability problems (*Employers consider*, 1987), and work-site configurations (Fernandez, 1986). These factors make on-site facilities unappealing for many employers. If employers choose to offer such services, however, they must select among the numerous employer-supported child care assistance options best for their organization, a step crucial to successful implementation of a child care service.

Statement of the Problem

If it can be assumed that issues of work and family often intertwine (Friedman, 1990), and if it can be further accepted that these issues spawn negative on-the-job consequences (Burden and Googins, 1985; Fernandez, 1986, Galinsky, 1988), then it stands to reason that employer involvement aimed at reducing the negative impact of these consequences is an integral part of the solution. If an employer wants to work toward solving work and family issues by assisting with child care, the employer must first identify which child care options currently exist, which options are best suited for employees, and which ultimately meet the needs of the employer.

There is a preponderance of research regarding employer-supported child care. Studies regarding types of employer assistance as well as perceptions of employers and employees who use these services offer insight to perceived benefits of such programs. In these studies, variables regarding race, gender, age of respondent, age of children, and marital status have been compared in these studies. It must be noted, however, that very few studies assessing how child care options are perceived by employees before implementation have been identified. No studies have been identified which use the variables of family structure or caregiver as related to the perceptions of employed mothers and fathers not receiving employer support for child care.

If several employer-supported child care options exist, and if the needs of employees vary within each organization, then it follows that an examination of the child care needs of employees before implementation is essential if those needs are to be met effectively. Developing a coordinated, equally beneficial work and family program requires careful consideration, and must consider parents needs. These needs can be assessed through an analysis of employee needs (Galinsky, Riesbeck, Rodgers, & Wohl, 1993). Given the complexity and interconnectedness of work and family issues, the problem to be investigated in this study was the identification of employee perceptions regarding current child care arrangements, problems inherent in those arrangements, as well as identification of employer-supported child care preferences.

Purpose of the Study

This study was divided into four objectives. The first was to identify the target population of employees with children 12 years of age or younger. The second was to

describe the respondents in terms of existing problems and preferences regarding child care, and demographic variables. The third objective was to explore the impact of two independent variables—family structure and caregiver type—on problems and preferences with care. The fourth objective was to identify the differences, if any, among these two independent variables.

Research Questions

The following questions were developed after analysis of related literature and identification of the problem:

1. Are there differences in perceptions of the influence of child care arrangements and their effect on attendance at work related to caregiver type?
2. Are there differences in perceptions of problems with current child care arrangements related to family structure?
3. Are there differences in perceptions of problems with current child care arrangements related to caregiver type?
4. What do employees perceive as the preferred type of child care assistance?
5. If there is a preference, is it related to either caregiver type or family structure?

Assumptions

The following assumptions were placed on this study:

1. Both employer and employed parents at Dollywood have an interest in determining how work and family intermingles and how these areas can be improved.

2. The study assumed that the respondents are aware of and will report their perceptions honestly and accurately.

Limitations

This study was limited in the following way:

1. Because each participant received only one survey, some responses were generalized for participants with more than one child.

Delimitations

This study was delimited in the following ways:

1. The research sample was conducted among all male and female employees who were a parent of a child 12 years of age or younger.
2. The characteristics of child care problems and preferences reported by respondents were limited to the 38 items included in the Child Care Survey.
3. Many employer-supported child care initiatives are already in existence. This study included only those initiatives relating directly to the types of care being provided to a child and not to initiatives which alter an employee's job schedule, such as flextime, parental leaves, or job sharing.
4. The study was limited to one organization.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions were based upon a review of related literature and their use in this research project:

Age refers to the age level of respondents on one of six levels: (a) up to 20 years, (b) 21-30 years, (c) 31-39 years, (d) 40-49 years, (e) 50-59 years, and (f) 60 years or older.

Ages of Children refers to an open-ended question asking respondents to list the ages of the children included in this study.

Attendance refers to the opinions of respondents regarding their perceptions about child care arrangements and how they affect a parent's presence at work.

Caregiver refers to the type of child care currently being provided for respondents' children and includes the following six levels: (a) spouse or parent, (b) self-care, (c) non-family member, (d) family member, (e) child care center, and (f) mixed care.

Child Care Arrangement refers to any type of arrangement outside the home that is provided for a child when the parent or legal guardian is at work.

Child Care Assistance refers to any type of employer-provided child care program designed to help employees meet their child care needs.

Child Care Resource and Referral Service refers to a service that provides information or counseling to assist employees in their search for child care and offers resources to improve the quality and quantity of available child care options sponsored by the employer (Fernandez, 1986).

Child Care Survey refers to the instrument used in this study. The Child Care Survey was developed as a modified survey based on Kossek's survey measuring the extent of child care problems. This particular survey measured problems and preferences with child care based upon individual questions regarding demographic variables, work attendance, problems with current arrangements, and preferred employer assistance options.

Dual-Income refers to the employment status of an individual family where both adults are employed outside the home in either a full-time or part-time job.

Employee refers to any male or female respondent working for Dollywood.

Employer-Supported Child Care refers to any type of child care program aimed at helping employees balance work and family responsibilities specifically involving children.

Employment Category refers to the employment status of a respondent as either a seasonal employee working 3,6, or 9 months or a permanent employee working year-round.

Familial Care refers to the respondent's current caregiver as being a family member.

Family Income refers to one of six levels of the total yearly combined incomes of the survey participant and any other household contributor including: (a) less than \$10,000, (b) \$11,000-\$20,000, (c) \$21,000-\$30,000, (d) \$31,000-\$40,000, (e) \$41,000-\$50,000, and (f) \$50,000 or more.

Family-Responsive Program refers to any type of program provided by an organization and aimed at helping employees balance work and family responsibilities.

Family Structure refers to whether the respondent represents (a) a two-parent family with both parents working, (b) a two-parent family with one parent working, or (c) a single parent.

Flextime refers to work hours that accommodate an employee's child care needs while allowing an employee to work the required number of hours per week (Fernandez, 1986; Jacobson, 1994).

Gender refers to the sex of the respondent, either male or female.

Length of Employment refers to the total amount of time the respondent has been employed at Dollywood and includes five choices: (a) first season, (b) second season, (c) third season, (d) fourth season, and (e) fifth season or more.

Non-familial Care refers to the respondent's current caregiver as not being family member.

Number of Children refers to the number of children 12 years of age or younger for whom a respondent is legally responsible, either as a parent or legal guardian.

Number of Hours Spouse Works Per Week is an optional category to be answered if the spouse of the respondent is employed by Dollywood. It refers to the estimated average amount of time a respondent's spouse works per week for Dollywood and includes five choices: (a) less than 10 hours, (b) 11-20 hours, (c) 21-30 hours, (d) 31-40 hours, and (e) 40 hours or more.

Number of Hours Worked Per Week refers to the estimated average amount of time a respondent works per week for Dollywood and includes five options: (a) less than 10 hours, (b) 11-20 hours, (c) 21-30 hours, (d) 31-40 hours, and (e) 40 hours or more.

On-Site/Near-Site Child Care Center refers to a child care facility located at or near the work site of its sponsoring organization.

Single Parent Provider refers to a parent who has sole financial responsibility for supporting the family (Magid, 1990).

Spousal Employment refers to whether or not a respondent's spouse is currently employed by Dollywood.

Spousal Employment Category is an optional category designed to confirm that Dollywood employs the spouse of the respondent. It refers to the employment status of the participant's spouse either as a seasonal employee (3,6, or 9 months) or permanent employee (work year-round).

Vouchers refers to employer reimbursement for an employee's child care arrangement (Fernandez, 1986; Jacobson, 1994).

Weekly Child Care Expenses refers to an open-ended question in the questionnaire asking participants for the total dollar amount spent each week on child care.

Work Schedule refers to the work shift the respondent most often works and includes three choices: (a) morning/day, (b) evening, and (c) night.

Variables

Dependent and independent variables are listed and defined in the Definitions section of Chapter One. For this study, 3 dependent variables and 15 independent variables were selected. Dependent variables included work attendance, child care problems, and preferences. Independent variables included: number and ages of children, weekly child care expenses, caregiver type, work schedule, length of employment, spousal employment, number of hours worked per week, number of hours spouse worked per week, employment category, employment category of spouse, age, gender, family structure, and total family income. A chi-square test was conducted on all independent variables during initial analysis of results. For final analysis, only two independent variables—caregiver and family structure—were used and the remaining independent variables were used for demographic reporting. The caregiver and family structure

variables were selected for final analysis because these variables relate more directly to child care arrangements. Other variables, such as gender, length of employment, number of children, etc., were important in delineating demographic information, but none directly corresponded to the purpose of this study as related to child care arrangements.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The interconnectedness of the organization and the working parent has been given much attention in recent years, and as a result, much literature exists on this topic. The following literature review discusses the structural changes that have occurred in the family unit, examines the effects between work and family connection, traces the options that exist in employer-supported child care, and cites specific related studies.

Family Changes

The composition of the American family has changed dramatically in recent years. The traditional family unit, composed of an employed husband, a homemaker wife, and children, makes up approximately 7% of all households while other family configurations have become more common (Nollen, 1989), with the two most noted configurations being the single-parent provider and the dual-income household. The most recognizable result of this change in the family structure is the increasing number of women, particularly single women, in the workforce, a number which has increased steadily since World War II (Voydanoff, 1987). The number of women in the workforce doubled from 30 million in 1970 to 60 million in 1997, with women accounting for approximately 46% of total labor force participation (U.S. Department of Labor, 1992, 1998c).

The number of women in the workforce has increased, as has the number of working mothers with young children. Weissman (1987) stated, "The most significant change in the family has been the entrance of women with children into the work force" (p. 30). In 1940, only one in eight mothers worked outside the home, but by the 1960s, that number had risen to one in three (Ruderman, 1968). Voydanoff (1987) reported that, until the 1970s, women with no children under age 18 saw more labor force participation than did women with children ages 18 or younger. In 1940, approximately 9% of women with children age 18 or younger were among the work force (Galinsky, 1986). By 1986, 63% of women with children ages 18 or younger were employed (Galinsky) as compared to 48.2% of working wives without children (Voydanoff). In 1997, it was reported that of the 60 million women employed in the United States, approximately 15 million were mothers of young children (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998c). The U.S. Census Bureau estimated that by 1995, as many as 34 million school age children would have a mother who was working or seeking employment (Hofferth & Philips, 1987).

In the United States today, households with dual-incomes are a common place. In 1997, 14.6 million families had both parents working (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998b). In a dual-income household, each spouse must accommodate for the other's career, as well as for addressing individual duties on the job and at home (Jennings, 1990). Conflict between work and home responsibilities is a common problem for parents, and children often experience the negative effects (Magid, 1990).

Another familial change that is more common today is the single-parent provider. In 1980, approximately 20% of households with children ages 18 or younger were part of a single-parent family, while in 1997, 4.7 million households were headed by a single

working mother (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998b). It was estimated that by age 18, as many as 50% of all children will have been part of a single-parent family (Glick & Norton, 1980). Burden (1986) suggested that "Nearly one fifth of all parent employees are likely to be single parents at any given time" (p. 43). Single parents may have additional challenges because they must perform their expected duties both on the job and at home without the financial and emotional support of a partner. Often, this excessive load negatively effects every member of the household (Burden).

The staggering increase in the numbers of both dual-income households with children and single-parent providers has led to changes within the family and on the job (Austin, 1994; Kossek, 1990a; Galinsky & Stein, 1990). Voydanoff (1987) explained the interdependence of work and family by stating, "The issue, then, is not whether there are linkages between work and family but the nature of the linkages and their implications for individuals, families, work organizations, and society" (p. 11). Understanding this linkage is key to creating work and family solutions that benefit all.

The Impact of Work and Family

Research presented in the previous section illustrates that the support typical of the nuclear family is, for a significant number of families, absent while the need for support has increased (Yogman & Brazelton, 1986). Imbalance of support interferes with a parent's ability to manage work and family roles. As the demands of participation in one area become incompatible with the demands in the other, conflict occurs (Adams, King, & King, 1996), and so it is with work and family responsibilities.

Work and family conflict increases significantly among dual- and single-income providers (Voydanoff, 1987). To investigate the dynamics involved, various studies have

been conducted that assess the impact of work and family responsibilities on parents. Greenberger and O'Neil (1990) conducted a study to aid in understanding how parents manage both work and family roles and to test the relationship between parental concerns about their children, their own well-being, and their feelings about work. The study involving both dual- and single-income providers, found that the concerns parents had about their children had a negative impact on parental well-being and feelings about work.

In 1984 Burden and Googins (1985) surveyed all employees within one selected organization to assess work and family issues. The study examined the relationship between work and family conflict, stress, and role management. The majority of respondents, representing dual-income families, stated that few had sought formal child care arrangements. The sources of work and family conflict most frequently reported involved scheduling difficulties for after school care, sick-child care, and difficulty in transporting a child to and from care. The study found that female parent employees were at an increased risk for work and family role strain and decreased well-being. Also, according to this study, this group had the highest reported absenteeism rates among all parental groups (Burden & Googins, 1985).

Burden (1986) investigated the impact of multiple demands of work and family life on single parent employees by surveying parents and non-parents, and single as well as married employees. Interestingly, no significant differences were identified between single and married parents regarding role strain, job and family management, or the number of child-related problems reported. When compared to employees without children, parent employees reported more difficulty with job and family management and

role strain. Results concluded that single female parents were at a higher risk for a number of stressors including role strain between job and family, increased depression, and decreased life satisfaction. Single female parents also reported the greatest amount of stress involving managing both work and family responsibilities.

Several studies focus on the difficulties facing single mothers within the workforce. This population experiences many challenges common to all working parents; however, these women may experience greater levels of stress. They often may have less or no choice about working outside the home, fewer options of where they will work, and they do not have the benefit of a dual-income. Greenberger and O'Neil (1990) conducted a study among 321 working parents—dual-income and single-parent providers. Researchers found that single mothers generally exhibited increased signs of depression and negative health-related symptoms when compared to mothers who were part of a dual-income household.

Scott's 1996 study was designed to determine the impact that child care has on single and married mothers, and it was determined that few differences exist. In Scott's examination of job satisfaction, job involvement, role conflict, role strain, and life satisfaction, it was found that single mothers reported significantly lower life satisfaction than did married mothers. No differences were reported between single and married mothers for role strain or role conflict. Scott suggested that single and married mothers have different degrees of responsibility and both experience stress that is manifested in different situations. This report concluded that levels of role conflict and strain between married and single mothers are similar.

Fathers are not immune to the challenges involved in managing both work and family. According to a number of studies, both men and women are negatively affected by the stresses involved in work and family responsibilities. In one national study, Galinsky (1986) reported that the conflicts that arose from work and family responsibilities were felt equally among men and women. In another organizational study, Galinsky noted that the stress of managing work and family responsibilities was found to be the greatest predictor of depression for all employees, regardless of gender. A survey conducted by *Fortune* magazine among male and female employees found that at some point in their careers, approximately 75% of all respondents took time off from work for child related issues. Furthermore, both men and women in the *Fortune* study said that they had declined a job change because of the impact it would have on the family (Jennings, 1990).

Because so many families depend on dual- or single-parent incomes, no one is at home to deal with the day-to-day issues involved in running a household. Issues that were once being dealt with immediately must often be put aside. These issues may be left temporarily unattended, but they are not forgotten, and they do not disappear. On the contrary, many reported problems arise at work because employees are left to ponder unresolved home-related issues. Absenteeism, safety violations, tardiness, low productivity, low morale, decreased job satisfaction, lack of commitment, and psychological burnout are some of the reported problems on the job that have been related to unresolved work and family issues (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Bankert & Googins, 1996; Barling, 1990; Eichman, 1992; Fujimoto & Glass, 1995; Gordon, Hequet, Picard, Stamps, & Zemke, 1996; Graham, 1996; Magid, 1990).

Child care is one specific issue that causes many problems on the job. Fujimoto and Glass (1995) found that a major source of parental stress at work emerged from child care problems. Galinsky and Stein (1990) identified specific stressors related to child care problems, specifically that child care is not readily available to every parent. Rather, quality child care is in high demand and is costly (Hofferth & Phillips, 1987; Jacobson, 1994). Often, even when child care is available and affordable, parents face difficulties because it is not flexible and does not accommodate the schedules of working parents (Nollen, 1989). Galinsky and Hughes's study (1987) examined attitudes of dual-income parents and found that 20% of those sampled reported having difficulty finding appropriate and affordable child care. Of employed parents in three companies who were asked whether locating quality child care was a problem, 47% reported this to be a problem of major significance (Galinsky, 1988). There also exists differences in the quality of child care (Galinsky & Stein). Greenberger and O'Neil (1990) found that lower perceived quality child care among married and single mothers made significant negative contributions to their physical health and negatively affected fathers' feelings toward work.

Another major source of stress stemming from child care problems occurs when child care arrangements breakdown. Breakdowns in child care arrangements occur for various reasons, including sickness, reliance on multiple child care arrangements, or loss of a child care provider (Galinsky, 1988). Galinsky and Stein (1990) reported that many parents rely on multiple child care arrangements, and breakdowns in those arrangements have numerous and far reaching ramifications. Research shows that breakdowns affect work attendance, tardiness, and in some cases, health and stress levels among parents. On

a more encompassing level, breakdown of child care has been attributed to lower marital and parental satisfaction (Galinsky & Hughes, 1987).

A study conducted among a sample of approximately 4,400 U.S. families with children under age 13 examined work attendance and the breakdown of child care arrangements (Hofferth, Brayfield, Deich, & Holcomb, 1991). It was determined that breakdowns in the child care process caused 15% of employed mothers to lose some time from work and 7% to miss at least one day of work during the preceding month. Of the one-third of respondents who reported having a sick child during the previous month, more than one-half missed at least one day of work during that time to care for the child. The study reported that approximately 25% of female respondents employed outside the home had missed at least one day of work in the previous month as a result of their child's illness or as a result of a breakdown in regular child care arrangements (Hofferth et al, 1991). These numbers add up to an enormous loss of time and productivity for employers.

Fernandez's (1986) survey examined work and family issues among 4,971 employees in five large companies. Fernandez found excessive employee absences were directly related to sick child care. Specifically, 56% of women who were absent one to three times during the year prior to the study compared to eighty-two percent who were absent more than six days attributed the absence to caring for a sick child. Percentages were lower for male respondents, but the correlation was the same—the more absences a man had, the more likely the absence was related to caring for a sick child.

A survey, developed by Bank Street College for *Fortune* magazine, conducted among 405 dual-income parents nationwide determined that parents who had difficulty

finding child care were more likely to be absent from work than parents with no difficulty. Furthermore, these results indicate that the breakdown in child care arrangements was predictive of parents leaving work early or being late for work. Of respondents who reported tardiness or leaving work early at least once during a three-month period, 72% did so because of family responsibilities.

The increase in need for dependable, affordable, quality child care creates a tremendous need for expanded types of child care services outside the home (Weissman, 1987). Yogman and Brazelton (1986) explained, "Employment policies have probably the greatest impact on family life of an external system, since they involve an exchange of money for parents' time. Child care alternatives . . . can . . . influence the family in either a positive or a negative manner" (p. 5). Many employers address their employees' child care arrangement needs by providing various programs designed to help parents balance work and family responsibilities.

History of Employer-Supported Child Care

Before the industrial revolution, families worked together and depended on each other to meet all of the needs of the family and to sustain a living. This interdependence of the family changed during and after the industrial revolution when industry brought a high demand for workers. During this time and during periods of depression and war, women were called on to step outside the home and join the ranks of the employed. To enable women to leave the home and join the workforce, government sponsored child care centers were established (Fernandez, 1986; Robins & Weiner, 1978).

It is interesting to note that the end of World War II brought an end to government support for child care centers (Fernandez, 1986), and virtually all centers closed. It was

not until the 1960s, bills were introduced by Congress aimed at providing varying forms of child care assistance to low-income families (Robins & Weiner, 1978). Although it was vetoed, the Comprehensive Development Act of 1971 proposed funding for new child care centers (Fernandez). Then, during the 1970s and 1980s, tax credits were placed on child care expenses and employers who offered child care assistance were encouraged by tax benefits (Fernandez, 1986), and the number of child care centers grew substantially during this time. In 1976, approximately 18,300 licensed, child care centers were in existence. Ten years later, that number increased to approximately 63,000 (Hofferth & Phillips, 1987).

Numbers of employer-supported child care centers have steadily been on the rise since their beginnings (Burud et. al., 1984). In 1971, only 11 employers provided child care assistance of any kind (Fernandez, 1986) and in 1978, there were 105 employer-supported child care centers (Perry, 1978). Employer involvement in the child care arena continued to increase during the 1980s, and in 1982, some 600 employers provided child care assistance in some form. By 1984, that number more than doubled to 1,850. By 1985, approximately 2,500 employers were providing some type of child care assistance (Friedman, 1986b). In 1989, the Bureau of Labor Statistics surveyed a sample of 1,647 organizations representing a total population of 32.4 million full-time employees. This survey reported that approximately 5% of employees received employer support for child care, an increase from 1% in 1985 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1990). Although this increase seems to represent phenomenal growth, it is important to note that these employers represent only a small portion of the approximately six million employers in the United States (Fernandez).

Even in the recent past, many employees had little or no use for employer-supported child care services. Hope and Rayworth stated, "Prior to 1980, day care centres were seldom found in the workplace . . ." (1992, p. 15). Before this time, the majority of the workforce was made up of men who had few outside family issues to attend to because they had full-time support at home (Deckman & Ezra, 1996). The few benefits and policies that were in effect were developed to accommodate this single-income provider (Fujimoto & Glass, 1995). Today's diverse workforce requires that employers provide more inclusive policies that are responsive to the varying types of support needed.

Types of Employer-Supported Child Care

Currently, there are more than 5,000 employer-supported child care assistance programs exist in U.S. companies (Peters, Peters, & Caropreso, 1990). The range of companies offering child care assistance is as diverse as are the programs they provide. Both large and small businesses, as well as companies with multiple work sites, companies that have irregular work hours, and non-traditional companies are providing various types of child care assistance for employees (Scott, 1989). It is important to note that child care services can and should vary greatly. Auerbach (1990) categorized these programs and services as follows: (a) child care information, such as resource and referral services; (b) financial assistance, (c) alternative work scheduling, including flextime; and, (d) direct services, including on or off-site child care services. This research study focused on only those child care options that directly relate to the type of care provided to the child and not to initiatives that alter an employee's job schedule, such as flextime, parental leave, or job sharing.

A child care information service serves to educate working parents (*Facts about*, 1990) through a variety of information service options. For example, an employer may contract with other organizations or may provide in-house information in the form of seminars, training, or written materials that delineate child care options (Densmore, Harper, & Motwani, 1993). Employers may offer counseling or provide referral services that match employee needs with appropriate child care providers (Friedman, 1986a; Galinsky, 1989). Because these services are only as good as the information provided, it is important that employers stay abreast of trends and changes in local child care facility activities, policies, and procedures. Employer involvement in local child care options can include recruitment, training, or placement of local child care providers (Galinsky, 1988).

In a U.S. Department of Labor report (1998b), forty organizations were highlighted for their child care programs. These organizations were selected because they exemplified the wide scope of child care options available to employers of all sizes, compositions, and types (U.S. Department of Labor). One highlighted organization was the Virginia Mason Medical Center, named in this report because it offers a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week resource and referral program. The service is available by phone to all employees and their family members. Another was the Salt River Project in Tempe, Arizona, a public electric and utility firm, contracting with a local consulting firm to provide workshops and lectures on parenting issues for its 4,300 workers (U.S. Department of Labor).

Many employers opt to provide financial assistance for child care and not to become directly involved in the child care service process (Densmore, et. al., 1993). Some methods of financial assistance include reimbursement or subsidies for local child

care, flexible spending accounts, cooperative discounts provided to employees by a local child care provider, and child care vouchers to be used at a day care center of choice (Densmore et. al; Huth, 1989; Nollen, 1989). This is often a preferred form of assistance since reimbursement for child care allows employees the freedom to choose their own provider. Flexible spending accounts are made available through Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code. Employees may choose to reduce their salaries and be reimbursed with their pre-tax contributions (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998a). Cooperative discounts or vendor programs occur when employers provide funds to local centers in exchange for special privileges for employees (*Child Care Options*, 1995). Vouchers are especially appealing since they allow parents the freedom to choose a child care provider with the employer paying for a portion of the expenses (*Child Care Options; Workplace Childcare*, 1996). Through employer provision of financial assistance, employee costs are reduced and child care options previously unavailable or unaffordable are now possible (Burud, 1986).

The U.S. Department of Labor named several organizations for their best practices in offering child care discounts and reimbursements (1998b). One organization, All Metro Health Care of New York, offers a child care subsidy of 30 hours of free in-home, back-up care. About 20% of All Metro's in-house staff have used the in-home service, and use continues to increase. Johnson and Johnson contracts with child care companies to provide its employees a 10% discount at recognized centers nationwide. All Metro Health Care also established a child care network of family day care providers at its New Brunswick, New Jersey location where it subsidizes fees on an adjustable scale based on family income.

Direct delivery of services provides the most comprehensive form of employer initiatives. On-site or near-site centers are among the most recognized form of direct employer involvement. These centers are run by either the employer, the employees, a contracted child care provider, or jointly by a number of area businesses (Chapman, 1987; *Child Care Options*, 1995; Galinsky, 1989; Nollen, 1989). Small companies or businesses operating in close proximity can collaborate to manage a center (Friedman, 1986b). It is also possible that centers provide care before-school, after-school, and during the summer as well as for sick care (Eichman, 1992). Employer involvement in these types of programs range from little to intensive (Galinsky, 1989).

The U.S. Department of Labor named several companies for their delivery of direct child care services (1998b). Quad/Graphics, a commercial printing company, offers on-site child care to a total workforce of 11,000 employees 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The organization also provides after-school, summer, and holiday care for school-age children. Trout-Blue Chelan, Inc., an apple packing cooperative in Washington with a workforce comprised of mostly mothers, runs an on-site child care center as well as before-school and after-school programs for infants, toddlers, and school-age children. AlliedSignal, Inc. is a technology and manufacturing firm with an on-site child care facility at its Morristown, New Jersey headquarters. The center is subsidized with a sliding scale fee and provides full-time care for children up to age 6, part-time care for children up to age 12, emergency/back-up care when regular arrangements break down, and summer care. Prior to implementation, this company conducted a feasibility study and an employee survey. Once the center was established, AlliedSignal surveyed participating parents during start-up and again one year later. Parents reported they were

more productive and employers reported an 89% decrease in lost work time (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998b).

The breakdown of regular child care arrangements occurs for various reasons and when this happens, alternative arrangements must be made quickly. When parents have no back up plan and no options, the only other alternative for many parents is to miss work to care for the child. One company recognizes that breakdowns occur in even the best arrangements. DuPont Company provides a flexible back-up/emergency child care program. When regular arrangements breakdown, employees may use a toll-free number to arrange in-home, on-site, or near-site care for school holidays, snow days, or sick days. A company survey determined that if this service not been in place, 80% of the employees who used the service would have had no option but to miss work. Kaiser Permanente of Aurora, Colorado provides emergency/back-up child care for any of its 7,500 employees who experience breakdowns in regular child care arrangements or when a child is sick, school is closed, or permanent arrangements are disturbed (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998b).

The City of Mesa, Arizona employs 3,276 and contracts with a private child care provider for in-home, sick-child services. The City provides partial subsidies for this service while employees pay a transportation fee plus an hourly fee. By providing sick-child care, the City allows employees the option of either staying home with their child or coming to work with the security in knowing the child is being cared for (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998b).

School-age care is a type of direct service provided during the summer months as well as on school holidays and snow days (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998b).

Texas Instruments Incorporated, a semiconductor company, provides a summer camp for children of its employees at its Dallas worksite. In addition to the summer camp, the organization is currently creating a camp for school children during spring break and is also considering a Christmas break camp.

Related Studies

Many organizational studies have been conducted that assess perceived benefits of employer-supported child care. Some reported benefits include increased employee morale and loyalty, lower absenteeism, decreased turnover, better recruitment, a more positive public image, and reduced stress (Burud, 1986; Dean, 1992; Finney, 1996; Fujimoto & Glass, 1995; Galinsky & Stein, 1990; Hope & Rayworth, 1992; Love, Galinsky, & Hughes, 1987; O'Connor, 1993; Schandl, 1991; Sheley, 1996; Smith, 1996).

Perry (1978) conducted a study of 305 employer-supported child care centers to verify the number of employer-supported centers available and the characteristics of and perceived benefits and problems of such centers. Perry stated that on-site centers provide child care that is more affordable and convenient, and there was a reported benefit of lower absenteeism among those employees who placed their children in the centers. Other benefits included greater recruiting ability, positive employee attitudes toward the employer and their work, and better community relations.

In 1987, Weissman conducted an investigation of the differences in employee job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and perceived stress between employees who had employer-supported child care and those that did not. Respondents who participated in on-site child care services reported greater job satisfaction than

respondents who received no employer support. No significant differences were noted between commitment to the organization or perceived stress.

A study of similar nature was conducted measuring and comparing the perceptions of coping and satisfaction between dual-income parents, some that used employer-supported child care and some that did not (Davis, 1989). Davis surveyed 142 dual-income parents and found that respondents using certain employer-supported child care services perceived significantly higher levels of coping with their familial situation. In the results, Davis did not differentiate between the various types of employer support. Therefore, it is unclear how individual forms of employer support affected responses.

Gampel (1990) compared employee perceptions of the benefits of on-site child care by sampling the human resource directors of the 43 organizations in Florida identified as having on-site child care as well as employed parents from two organizations. Respondents were provided 20 statements regarding the possible influence of an on-site facility in relation to the corporate climate. The survey determined that more than 50% of employers and employed parents reported a positive impact for the following aspects: company image, recruitment, turnover, productivity, morale, community relations, absenteeism, job satisfaction, employee stress, overtime capabilities, and return from parental leave.

Gampel (1990) concluded that the results supported current research on the advantages of on-site child care facilities. The results from Gampel's study are not entirely surprising since being provided with the benefit of on-site child care is better than not having it. Therefore, employees who are provided with on-site child care and who are asked about the benefits will understandably perceive the provisions as

beneficial and report them as such. But if one is to understand the level of benefit that an on-site center provides, they should be compared to other employer-supported alternatives. In Gampel's study, no such comparison was made. Therefore, the benefits of the on-site center were not measured against any of the other employer-supported child care provisions in existence.

A study of 15 employers who offered on-site child care was conducted to determine the effects of on-site child care center on certain work behaviors (Schandl, 1991). Samples of the three sets of employees included: those using the on-site facility, those using an alternate child care arrangement, and those who had no need of child care services. A significant number of employees using the on-site facility reported that it positively affected their decision to continue working for the current employer. Employees using the on-site center reported significantly higher job satisfaction than did the other two groupings.

A study conducted among 276 University of Tennessee, Knoxville employees examined the perceptions of employers and employees about the benefits of on-site employer supported child care (Dean, 1992). The four-part questionnaire contained a section with 29 questions pertaining to perceived advantages and disadvantages of on-site child care as they relate to both employers and employees. Dean surveyed both administrators and employees and used gender, age, income level, education level, and family structure as independent variables to test between groups. Gender was the only dependent variable with statistically significant differences as females had more positive perceptions about the benefits of on-site child care than did males. Dean found no

differences between employers and employees regarding their perceptions of on-site child care.

Participant's in this study were also provided 10 employer-assistance options and asked to rank them in order of importance. The subsidized child care option was the only one that specifically related to child care while other options included sick leave, medical insurance, life insurance, and vacation leave. In the final ranking, subsidized child care was selected as the eighth most important option among all respondents and among respondents who used the on-site facility, subsidized child care was selected as the fourth most requested option.

Results from this study questionnaire do not provide a clear understanding of what employees prefer relative to on-site child care. Employees did report, however, their perceptions on the advantages and disadvantages of on-site child care. But when employees were asked what employer assistance options were most important to them, only one child care option was listed. It stands to reason that with only one child care option listed, and with the majority of the sample population not using that option, subsidized child care would not rank high in importance. Only nine of the respondents used the on-site facility, but 57 employees indicated the use of another form of child care. It seems from these numbers that the on-site facility benefited only a small group. The only child care assistance option included in this study was the one already in place—subsidized care. Had more child care options been listed in this study, it could be determined not only how employees perceived their on-site facility but also how it ranked, in order of importance, when compared to other employer-supported child care options in existence.

Kossek and Nichol (1992) surveyed 155 hospital employees in one corporation who used either on-site child care or whose children were on a waiting list for such services. The survey examined employee perceptions of several child care factors. Users of the on-site center rated child care services to be of higher quality than non-users who relied on alternate arrangements. Center users were less likely to experience problems with care and were significantly more likely to have positive attitudes regarding work and family responsibilities.

A needs assessment was conducted of all 361 employees in one organization (Jacobson, 1994). Through the use of a census approach, approximately one-half of the respondents were parents while 47.9% had no children. Although the majority of employees (60.1%) indicated that emergency child care was a problem, and approximately 60% indicated that sick care was a problem, on-site child care was selected as the most valuable employer-supported child care benefit among the respondents with children. Among this group, 71% also reported that child care costs were a concern.

Fortune magazine's child care study of 405 employed parents nationwide found that only 6% of respondents received employer child care assistance through the provision of a child care center. Of that 6%, 68% reported being satisfied with the program. Of the 11 respondents receiving information and referral service, 88% were satisfied with the program (Galinsky & Hughes, 1987).

Although results from the *Fortune* study documented that respondents had generally positive responses regarding child care provisions, the sample sizes were too small to infer generalizable conclusions. Furthermore, the report indicated satisfaction

regarding assistance already in place. Other questions were not asked, such as: (a) Did employees have a choice in selecting this service, and (b) Would employees be equally satisfied with the form of child care they received if other options were available?

It is not known whether or not parents in many of these studies were given a needs assessment before implementation of the child care service. To gain more insightful conclusions about the perceptions of an employer-supported service after it has been implemented, a needs assessment conducted prior to implementation would be recommended. Then, it could be determined not only how employees perceived their child care provision but also how their perceptions were related to their needs.

Summary

Many employer-supported programs are implemented based upon upper management decisions without input of the work force most affected (Love et. al., 1987). In a study of 100 organizations providing child care assistance were asked how it was decided which type of child care assistance would be provided. Over one half of the respondents, 56%, reported that management made the decision (*Workplace Childcare*, 1996). Of employer-supported child care programs currently available, most are located in large corporations serving higher paid workers (Love et. al.). This leaves a significant number of employees certainly without input and probably with little or no child care options. This does not have to be the case as there are a variety of child care options that can be designed to meet the needs of any employer.

Therefore, before implementing any child care program, it is important to determine employees' needs to ensure that the program will meet the needs of those it will assist (*Workplace Childcare*, 1996). Although much research has been conducted on

perceived benefits of such programs, more research is necessary to identify how programs may best be put to use (Kossek, 1990a). Although employees using employer-supported child care assistance may find it beneficial, they still may not be receiving what they specifically need or want. Even if a program seems successful, it is possible that an employer's efforts may better assist the employees by using another program.

This sentiment was summarized in the following statement:

Not including employees in decision making can backfire, even for the most well intentioned employer. For example, top management at a company . . . recently decreed a work/family solution without even asking if this solution addressed a problem that employees faced. Although the solution . . . was well designed, there was much complaining, even by the managers who would administer the program, about the expenditures for the program in view of its seeming irrelevance. (Love et. al., 1987, p. 20)

The needs of an increasingly diverse workforce can not be accurately addressed only through the provision of standard child care assistance packages. Implementation has reported benefits, but implementation alone is not the best solution. The options available to employers are as diverse as the workforce they are aimed at assisting. Many questions must be answered before implementing any such plan. Questions include: (a) Which employees need child care? (b) Is the care currently provided sufficient or is there dissatisfaction with certain aspects of care that might be improved with the help of employer involvement? and (c) What type of employer assistance would be most helpful? It is only through properly identifying employees' needs before program implementation

and by choosing the most suitable option that an employer-supported child care initiative will best meet the needs of the employees it assists.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Population

The population selected for this study included non-managerial employees from Dollywood—an organization located in east Tennessee with approximately 1,800 employees. The target population included only parents who had children age 12 or younger. The use of this criteria for consideration as a population variable was selected with the assumption that, although all working parents have work and family responsibilities, child care arrangements for children ages 12 and under differ from arrangements applicable to older children. A review of related literature also determined that previous studies have used this age as a population variable as well (Fernandez, 1986; Galinsky & Hughes, 1987; Jacobson, 1994; Kossek, 1990a; Marlow, 1993).

The organization, Dollywood, was chosen for this study for three reasons. First, Dollywood is a medium-sized organization in the entertainment, attraction, and service industry with approximately 1,800 employees. Second, Dollywood, at the time of this study, had no family-responsive policies or programs directly related to child care; however, the organization was considering implementation of a child care program. Finally, given the nature of this organization, work and work schedules were diverse and varied. Work requirements varied throughout the year and the hours of operation included morning, day, and night shifts. The organization offered seasonal employment lasting up to nine months, or yearly employment in some positions. Surveying employee perceptions in an organization with this type of work scheduling is noteworthy because

results from this study may be easily generalized to other industries that also have varying work schedule arrangements. Irregular work hours are common practice in today's organizations. By 1991, nearly one in five full-time employees—14.3 million—worked non-traditional hours, and a significant percentage of employees working these hours were mothers (Bookman, 1995).

Sample Selection

The target population was determined using both a complete employee list and a current list of employees with children ages 12 or younger. Lists generated from the personnel files of Dollywood's Human Resource Department identified 174 employees to be included in this study. Because this population was readily accessible and relatively small in size, a census approach was used (Gay, 1996, p. 252).

Research Design

Gay (1996) described descriptive research as that used in studies typically concerned with assessing attitudes, opinions, demographic information and conditions; therefore, descriptive research methods seemed most appropriate for this study. This study examined selected demographic characteristics of working parents and identified working parents' attitudes toward child care arrangements, child care problems, and child care preferences.

Instrumentation

After reviewing various instruments in *Tests in Print III* (Mitchell, 1983), *Tests* (Keyser & Sweetland, 1990), and *The Ninth Mental Measurements Yearbook* (Mitchell, 1985), one written questionnaire was selected for use as the survey method in this research study. The instrument was identified in the *Directory of Unpublished*

Experimental Mental Measures (Goldman & Mitchell, 1995). Dr. Ellen E. Kossek developed the instrument, entitled "Child Care Problem Scale." Kossek's survey was selected for use in this study since "The survey was designed to assess the dependent care needs of employees . . ." (Kossek, 1990a, p. 776). Other surveys measured similar variables but were often exclusive to organizations in which the employer was already providing child care assistance. Similarly, other child care surveys were identified, yet for the purpose of this study, none were found suitable that specifically measured employee perceptions of child care services.

Permission was obtained via electronic mail to modify the original survey for use in this particular study. Kossek's survey (1990b) contained a number of sections addressing various issues related to child care arrangements. Some sections of Kossek's survey were not applicable to the purpose of this study; therefore, only three sections of Kossek's survey were modified and included in this study: (a) a section addressing attending work and handling child care problems while at work; (b) a section addressing problems with care; and (c) a section addressing preferences for care (see Appendix A). Kossek adapted the first section regarding work attendance from a previous research study on child care conducted at a hospital's on-site facility. The second section regarding problems with care had a reported coefficient alpha of .90 and was based on scales developed by Burud, Aschbacher, and McCroskey and a 1984 study by Fernandez at AT&T (Kossek, 1990a).

The Child Care Survey questionnaire used in this study was designed using the criterion listed by Dillman (1978) for developing surveys. This questionnaire contained four parts—the three sections developed from Kossek's survey and a section containing

demographic information designed by the researcher. A scale was used in Part One to measure employee perceptions of the extent to which child care arrangements affected work attendance. Based on a five-point Likert-type scale with 1 representing never and 5 representing always, employees were asked to indicate the extent to which their child care arrangements had an affect on the following activities: getting to work, missing work, being late for work, leaving work early, and being able to stay late at work. Part Two used the same Likert-type scale listed above with 1 representing never and 5 representing always and asked employees to rate the extent to which they had problems with certain child care arrangements. Items in this section included: availability of care, cost of care, quality of care, location of care, hours of care, summer school age care, before/after school care, provider dependability, and emergency care.

In Part Three, employees were presented seven child care options and were asked to rate on a five-point Likert-type scale the extent to which they would use each of the options. The seven services listed in Part Three included: (a) on-site/near-site child care center with regular child care center operating hours; (b) on-site/near-site child care center with extended operating hours; (c) emergency (sick) care; (d) before/after school care; (e) weekend care; (f) child care referral information service; and (g) financial assistance. After rating each of the seven services, employees were asked to rank their first, second, and third choices in order of greatest importance. The final question in Part Three asked employees to indicate how much more they would be willing to spend on child care arrangements if their employer provided an on-site center of equal quality to their present care and included 6 choices: (a) none, (b) \$1.00-\$10.00, (c) \$ 11.00-\$20.00, (d) \$21.00-\$30.00, (e) \$31.00-\$40.00, or (f) more than \$40.00.

Demographic information on 15 independent variables was obtained in Part Four of the questionnaire. Questions in that section included information about the number and ages of children, weekly child care expenses, caregiver type, work schedule, length of employment, spousal employment, number of hours worked per week, number of hours spouse worked per week, employment category, employment category of spouse, age, gender, family structure, and total family income. Questions in Part Four regarding a respondent's spousal employment were to be completed only if the spouse was employed by Dollywood. Research determined that several previous studies used many of these variables to report demographic information about their populations; therefore, many of the same demographic variables were selected for use in this study. The last page of the questionnaire contained an optional comment section and asked employees to provide written comments about child care.

Validity and Reliability

The three-member Research Advisory Committee assigned to this study served as the panel of experts for review of the questionnaire. The panel assessed the content validity for the questionnaire and recommended revisions were made. The review panel deemed to content of the cover letter to be appropriate. The cover letter was created for the survey population and the language was based on the reading grade level standards as determined by The Kincaid Readability Formula (*Reading Grade Level*, 1998). The average number of syllables per word and the average number of words per sentence determined the formula. These factors were combined for a numeric score that indicated the reading difficulty of the document expressed as a grade-school level (*Microsoft Word*,

1993; *Reading Grade Level*). At the recommendation of the review panel, the cover letter wording was at the Flesh-Kincaid Grade Level of 10.5.

Procedures

Prior to execution of the study, it was necessary to obtain certain permissions. Kossek was contacted via electronic mail and permission to use the survey was requested (E. E. Kossek, personal communication, August 13, 1998). Kossek provided a written electronic mail response granting permission to modify the original survey for use in this particular study (see Appendix B). The University of Tennessee official seal was used on the cover page of the questionnaire. A letter requesting permission to use the seal was faxed to the University's Office of University Licensing (see Appendix C). Verbal permission to use the University seal was granted over the telephone (B. Beardsley, personal communication, September 16, 1998). A series of informal meetings was held between the researcher and the Personnel Director at Dollywood to discuss the survey process and instrument. During these meetings, verbal permission was obtained to conduct the survey among employed parents at Dollywood whose children were 12 years of age or younger (J. McNeil, personal communication, September, 1998). Participation among the target population would be voluntary, as per the terms of the verbal agreement.

To improve the questionnaire before it was distributed, the researcher conducted a pilot study of two voluntary groups of adults. Group One consisted of five adults who would not be included in this study but who met the criteria for inclusion because they were working parents with children age 12 or younger. Group Two included five working adults who did not have children age 12 or younger. Both groups were asked to review

the survey instrument and to give feedback regarding survey relevance, content, length, structure, and vocabulary. Feedback was also sought regarding the types of information requested in the survey. Verbal feedback was obtained and modifications were made prior to final survey approval. As per suggestions received from the Research Advisory Committee, the pilot study, and compliance regulations for the use of human subjects as stated by The University of Tennessee, final survey modifications were made and permission was granted for the execution of the study.

Via the questionnaire, data for this study were collected during the months of September and October, 1998. Procedures for execution of this study were based on those provided by Dillman (1978) in the procedures for conducting a mail survey. A cover letter and the Child Care Survey (Appendix D) questionnaire were attached to the paychecks of the 174 employees included in the target population. The cover letter included: (a) an explanation of the survey, (b) assurance of confidentiality, (c) an explanation of incentive for participation, and (d) a deadline date for survey response (see Appendix E). In the cover letter, employees were asked to return the surveys within a two-week period in specially marked boxes located conspicuously throughout the facility.

A list of the target population was compiled so that each employee in the target population was assigned with a number. A corresponding identification number was assigned to each questionnaire in the top right hand corner for follow-up purposes only. A follow-up letter (see Appendix F) was mailed to the home of each eligible employee thanking those who had responded and reminding others of the deadline. A second follow-up mailing was used only for non-respondents. The second follow-up contained a

cover letter, a replacement questionnaire, and a self-addressed stamped envelope. A second incentive for participation was described in this cover letter (see Appendix G).

Data Analysis

Data was entered into the computer using the *Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS)* version 8.0 software package, and all statistical calculations in this study were performed using the *SPSS* software. A major assumption underlying use of a parametric test is that there is normal distribution among the population (Gay, 1996). During initial analysis of data, an ANOVA was performed but rejected for two reasons: the population was not normally distributed, and the data in this study did not represent an interval or ratio scale of measurement (Gay). Therefore, a non-parametric test was chosen as the method of analysis for this study.

A one-sample chi-square test was used to compare observed frequencies of categories named in the research questions. No assumptions have been made about distribution of data. Observed values for each category were collected, and the chi-square statistic was calculated by examining the differences between categories (SPSS, 1997). Percentages were calculated for certain demographic variables. The data in Chapter IV of this study were included based on their relation to the research objectives (Burud, 1986).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

A chi-square test was used to test the five major research questions presented in this study. The independent variables of family structure and caregiver type were included in the analysis. The family structure options included: single parent; two-parents, one employed; two parents, both employed, and grandparent. The caregiver options included: spouse or parent, other family member, self-care, non-family member, child care center, and mixed care. All caregiver and family structure components were included independently for the reporting of demographic data. In the initial exploration of data, however, similar groupings and low counts were detected. As a result, the categories used to analyze data were collapsed.

The collapsed family structure variable did not include grandparent. Caregiver was collapsed into two groups: care by a family member (spouse or parent, other family member) and care by non-family member (child care center, non-family member, and mixed care). In a similar study, Scott (1996) performed regrouping of categories into either familial care or non-familial care. All further analyses conducted that included the family structure and caregiver variables used collapsed groups. Frequencies and percentages were reported on demographic data, and the chi-square test was conducted to test differences between and among groups.

Demographic Data

Of the initial 171 surveys distributed, 97 questionnaires were returned providing a response rate of 57%. Because of outdated personnel records, 13 employees whose children were older than age 12 were mistakenly provided questionnaires. Those 13 responses were excluded from the total number of valid returns. The total number of valid responses for this study was 84.

Frequencies were performed on the demographic results obtained from the respondents, and chi-square tests were conducted to test differences. Of the 84 employees responding, 56 (67.5%) were female, 27 (32.5%) were male. The ages of respondents ranged from 20 or younger to 60 and older. The total number of children reported was 128, and 46 of the employees had one child while 31 employees had two children. Only seven employees had three children. The ages of the children ranged from 6 weeks to 12 years. The age groupings of respondents' children are presented in Figure 1.

During regular operating hours, approximately 18% of employees reported working up to 30 hours a week, 22% worked between 30 and 40 hours per week, and 60% reported working an average of 40 or more hours per week. Approximately 78% of the respondents reported working mornings or days, with approximately 20% working evening shift, and only 2% working nights. Even though Dollywood does not provide yearly employment for the majority of its workers, the majority of respondents were returning employees. Some 16% reported that this was their first season of employment with Dollywood. Approximately 18% were working a second season while 22% were in the third or fourth season; and, 45% were working a fifth season or more. Dollywood

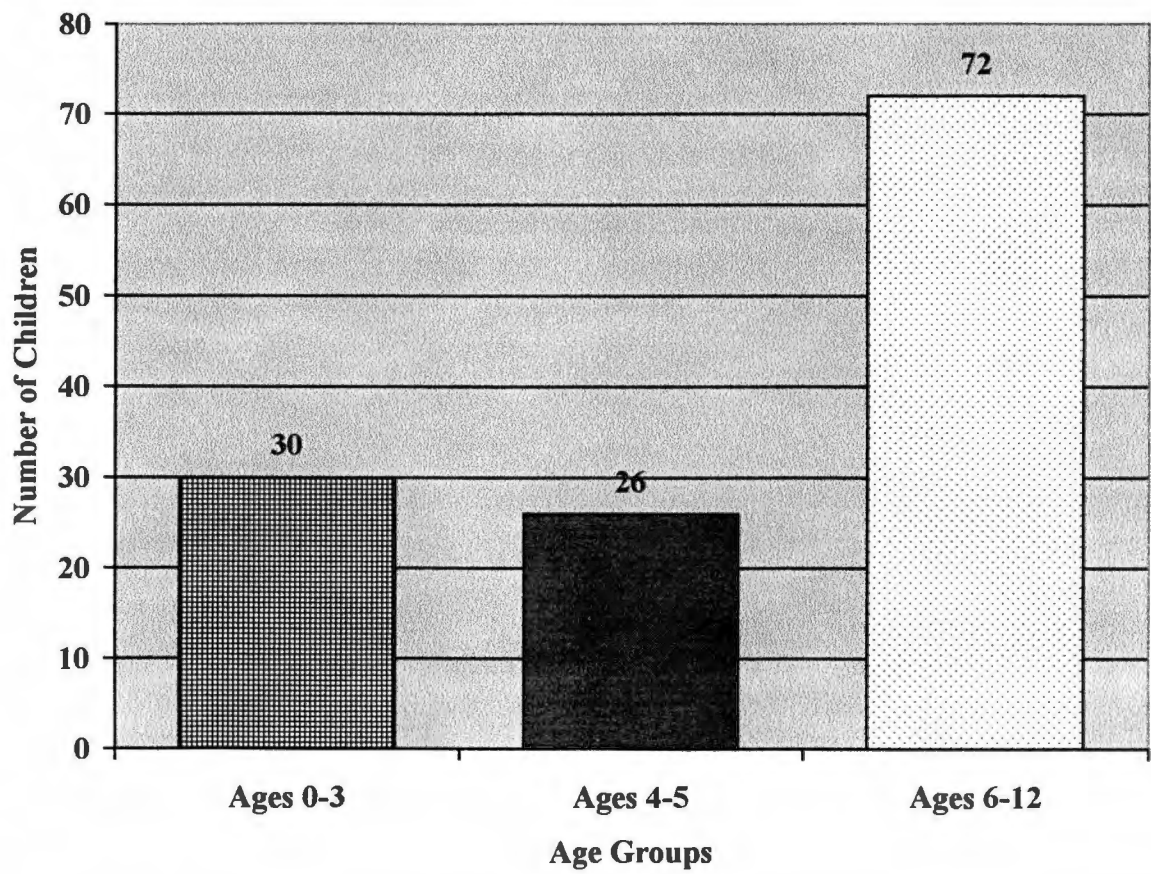


Figure 1. Number of Children by Age Group

provides 12-month employment but offers seasonal employment for most positions.

Some 75% of respondents reported being seasonal employees, while 25% were employed year-round.

Table 1 displays the types of family structure represented among respondents. The majority of respondents (53.1%) were part of a two-parent family with both parents working. This group of employees was also the group with the most children ($n = 42$). Of those children, 12 were age 3 or younger, 14 were preschool age, and the majority ($n = 28$) were ages 6 through 12. The family structure group containing the least number of respondents was the 6% of grandparents parenting a grandchild. Other family structure groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 2 illustrates the various types of child care upon which respondents relied. The largest group of respondents (33.7%) depended upon a spouse or parent as the primary caregiver. When all caregiver variables were collapsed into either familial or non-familial care, approximately 63% of respondents relied on family members as primary caregivers for their children. The least-preferred type of child care was self-care, with only one employee relying on this arrangement. Listed in Table 2 are other forms of child care and the corresponding usage among respondents.

Child Care and Work Attendance

Part One of the Child Care Survey questionnaire listed five questions regarding child care arrangements and their effects on work attendance. A five-point Likert-type scale was collapsed into two groups to indicate the absence or presence of problems. Using the collapsed scale, Group One represented never or seldom, and group two represented sometimes, often, or always. A chi-square test was conducted for Research Question

Table 1. Family Structure of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Single Parent	16	19.0	19.8
	2 Parents, One Employed	17	20.2	21.0
	2 Parents, Both Employed	43	51.2	53.1
	Grandparents	5	6.0	6.2
	Total	81	96.4	100.0
Missing	System	3	3.6	
Total		84	100.0	

Table 2. Caregiver for Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Spouse or parent	28	33.3	33.7
	Self-care	1	1.2	1.2
	Non-family member	5	6.0	6.0
	Family member	24	28.6	28.9
	Childcare center	9	10.7	10.8
	Mixed care	16	19.0	19.3
	Total	83	98.8	100.0
Missing	System	1	1.2	
Total		84	100.0	

One to test for a significant differences between work attendance and caregiver. To help control for type one error, the Bonferroni adjustment was made for questions in Part One. Part One consisted of five separate tests. Therefore, five chi-square analyses were performed with an adjusted alpha of .01. Significance was determined for any analysis with an alpha of less than .01. Any analysis with an alpha less than .05 but greater than .01 was deemed marginally significant and was identified in the results but not expanded upon. The adjusted alpha was used for all five questions in Part One.

There was no significant difference related to the caregiver type and parents getting to work (chi square = 1.325, $df = 1$, $p = .250$). There was no significant difference related to caregiver type and being late for work (chi-square = 1.108, $df = 1$, $p = .292$).

Table 3 depicts the significant difference detected between caregiver type and missing work (chi-square = 8.058, $df = 1$, $p = .005$). Missing work was a much greater problem for parents who relied on non-familial care compared to those who used familial care. Approximately 71% of respondents using familial care reported that missing work was never to seldom a problem, and approximately 62% of those who used non-familial care indicated that missing work was sometimes to always a problem.

There was a significant difference related to caregiver type and leaving work early (chi-square = 6.580, $df = 1$, $p = .010$) as seen in Table 4. Parents who used non-familial care reported having to leave work early more often than parents who used familial care. Approximately 66% of parents who used non-familial care said that having to leave work early was sometimes to always a problem.

Table 3. Chi-Square Test for Caregiver and Missing Work

			Missing Work		Total
			Never to Seldom	Sometimes to Always	
Type of childcare	Spouse, Parent, or Other Family Member	Count	34	14	48
	% within Type of childcare		70.8%	29.2%	100.0%
	Childcare Center, Non- Family, or Mixed Care	Count	11	18	29
	% within Type of childcare		37.9%	62.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	45	32	77
	% within Type of childcare		58.4%	41.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 8.058 $df=1$, $p=.005$

Table 4. Chi-Square Test for Caregiver and Leaving Work Early

			Leaving Work Early		Total
			Never to Seldom	Sometimes to Always	
Type of childcare	Spouse, Parent, or Other Family Member	Count	31	17	48
		% within Type of childcare	64.6%	35.4%	100.0%
	Childcare Center, Non-Family, or Mixed Care	Count	10	19	29
		% within Type of childcare	34.5%	65.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	41	36	77
		% within Type of childcare	53.2%	46.8%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 6.580, $df=1$, $p=.010$

In contrast, approximately 65% of parents who used familial care reported that having to leave work early was never to seldom a problem

A marginal significant difference was identified relative to caregiver type and the ability to stay late at work (chi-square = 4.957, $df = 1$, $p = .026$). Having to work late was a greater reported problem for respondents who used non-familial care. Approximately 76% of parents who used non-familial care reported having to stay late for work was sometimes to always a problem. Parents who used familial care were evenly divided in their responses—50% reported that staying late was never to seldom a problem, and 50% reported that it was sometimes to always a problem.

Problems With Care

Part Two of the Child Care Survey questionnaire listed nine questions pertaining to problems with child care including availability, cost, quality, location, hours, summer school care, before/after school care, provider dependability, and emergency care. The results from a five-point Likert-type scale used for rating responses was collapsed into two groups to indicate the absence or presence of a problem. Using the collapsed scale, 1 represented never or seldom, and 2 represented sometimes, often, or always. Two research questions were developed pertaining to Part Two.

Research Question Two asked if there were significant differences between child care problems and family structure. To help control for type one error, the Bonferroni adjustment was made for questions in Part Two. Part Two consisted of nine questions. Therefore, nine chi-square analyses were performed with an adjusted alpha of .006. Significance was determined for any analysis with an alpha of less than .006. The

adjusted alpha was used for all nine questions in Part Two. No significant differences were detected in the perceptions of problems with child care related to family structure.

Research Question Three identified significant differences between the perceptions of child care problems caregiver type. The collapsed two-level grouping was used for analysis. Using an adjusted alpha at the .006 level of significance, significant differences were detected for several questions in part two relative to problems with child care specifically regarding the caregiver. Any analysis with an alpha less than .05 but greater than .006 was deemed marginally significant and was identified in the results. The adjusted alpha was used for all nine questions in Part Two.

There was a significant difference related to caregiver type and availability of care (chi-square = 8.022, $df = 1$, $p = .005$). Table 5 illustrates that approximately 76% of respondents using non-familial care sometimes to always had problems with availability of care, whereas approximately 57% of respondents who used familial care never to seldom had problems.

A significant difference related to caregiver type and cost of care was identified (chi-square = 14.247, $df = 1$, $p = < .001$). Respondents who relied on non-familial care reported experiencing greater difficulty paying child care costs than did respondents using familial care. Approximately 83% of parents who used non-familial care reported that cost was sometimes to always a problem; approximately 61% of those who used familial care reported that cost was never to seldom a problem (see Table 6).

Table 5. Chi-Square Test for Caregiver and Availability of Care

			Availability of Care		Total
			Never to Seldom	Sometimes to Always	
Type of childcare	Spouse, Parent, or Other Family Member	Count	28	21	49
	% within Type of childcare		57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
	Childcare Center, Non- Family, or Mixed Care	Count	7	22	29
	% within Type of childcare		24.1%	75.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	35	43	78
	% within Type of childcare		44.9%	55.1%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 8.022, $df=1$, $p=.005$

Table 6. Chi-Square Test for Caregiver and Cost of Care

			Cost of Care		Total
			Never to Seldom	Sometimes to Always	
Type of childcare	Spouse, Parent, or Other Family Member	Count	30	19	49
	% within Type of childcare		61.2%	38.8%	100.0%
	Childcare Center, Non-Family, or Mixed Care	Count	5	24	29
	% within Type of childcare		17.2%	82.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	35	43	78
	% within Type of childcare		44.9%	55.1%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 14.247, $df=1$, $p<.001$

Table 7 depicts the significant difference related to caregiver type and hours of care (chi-square = 8.843, $df = 1$, $p = .003$). Approximately 47% of respondents who relied on familial care reported that hours of care was never to seldom a problem. Approximately 86% of families who used non-familial care reported that hours of available care was sometimes to always a problem.

A difference of marginal significance was detected between type of caregiver and availability of summer school care (chi-square = 6.476, $df = 1$, $p = .011$). Respondents who used familial care were less likely to report problems finding summer school care than respondents who used non-familial care, but 64.3% of those who used non-familial care reported that finding summer care was sometimes to always a problem, and 66% with familial care reported that it was never to seldom a problem.

Preferences

Research Question Four asked employees to identify their preferred type of child care assistance. Respondents were presented seven choices regarding child care assistance including: (a) on-site/near-site child care center with regular operating hours, (b) on-site/near-site child care center with extended hours, (c) emergency care, (d) before/after school care, (e) weekend care, (f) child care referral information service, and (g) financial assistance. Respondents ranked first, second, and third most preferred child care service options. Relative to the first choices of respondents, Table 8 depicts on-site child care with extended hours appeared significantly more often than did the other options (chi-square = 53.931, $df = 5$, $p = .001$).

Table 7. Chi-Square Test for Caregiver and Hours of Care

			Hours of Care		Total
			Never to Seldom	Sometimes to Always	
Type of childcare	Spouse, Parent, or Other Family Member	Count	23	26	49
	% within Type of childcare		46.9%	53.1%	100.0%
	Childcare Center, Non- Family, or Mixed Care	Count	4	25	29
	% within Type of childcare		13.8%	86.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	27	51	78
	% within Type of childcare		34.6%	65.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 8.843, $df=1$, $p=.003$

Table 8. Expected and Observed Frequencies of Respondent's First Choices for Most Preferred Employer

Assistance Option

	Most Preferred Employer-Assistance Option		
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
On-Site with Regular Hours	10	9.7	.3
On-site with Extended Hours	30	9.7	20.3
Emergency Care	4	9.7	-5.7
Before/After School Care	5	9.7	-4.7
Financial Assistance	4	9.7	-5.7
Weekend Care	5	9.7	-4.7
Total	58		

Chi-Square=53.931, $df=5$, $p<.001$

Table 8 provides the expected frequency for each option had there been no difference in preferences. Had there been no differences among respondents, each service would have been selected approximately 9.7 times. Table 8 also provides a residual that presents the difference between the observed and expected outcomes to highlight which options were selected more or less often. On-site care with extended hours was selected 30 times—far more often than any other option.

As a result of this finding, responses of participants who selected on-site care with extended hours were examined to answer research Question Five. A chi-square test was conducted for research Question Five, which stated, “If there is a preference, is it related to caregiver or family structure?” A chi-square test was performed to detect differences between preferences for on-site care with extended hours and caregiver.

Table 9 depicts the significant difference reported relative to on-site, extended-hour care and caregiver type (chi-square = 8.640, $df = 1$, $p = .003$). Respondents who used non-familial care reported that they would be more likely to use an on-site center than did respondents who used familial care. Approximately 78% of respondents who used non-familial care reported that they would often to always use an on-site center with extended hours. While approximately 58% of respondents using familial care reported that they would never to seldom use an on-site center.

A chi-square test was conducted to test for a significant difference between on-site care with extended hours and family structure. No significant difference was found related to on-site care, extended-hour care and family structure.

Table 9. Chi-Square Test for Caregiver and On-Site Child Care with Extended Hours

On-Site Child Care with					
		Extended Hours			
		Never to Seldom	Sometimes to Always	Total	
Type of childcare	Spouse, Parent, or Other Family Member	Count			
		26	19		45
	% within Type of childcare	57.8%	42.2%		100.0%
	Childcare Center, Non- Family, or Mixed Care	Count	6	21	27
	% within Type of childcare	22.2%	77.8%		100.0%
Total		Count	32	40	72
	% within Type of childcare	44.4%	55.6%		100.0%

Chi-Square = 8.640, $df=1$, $p=.003$

Summary

The results of the analyses determined that there were significant differences in the perceptions of respondents regarding certain aspects of their current child care arrangement. Analysis of the independent variable of caregiver type and the dependent variable of attendance indicated significant differences for leaving work early and missing work. Analysis conducted on the independent variable of family structure identified no significant differences related to perceptions of problems with child care.

When analysis was conducted on the dependent variable of problems with care and the independent variable of caregiver type, significant differences were identified between availability of care, cost of care, and hours of available care. Among respondents, on-site care with extended hours was the most often preferred child care assistance option. Finally, a significant difference was determined between the dependent variable of extended-hour, on-site child care and the independent variable of caregiver type.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the research conducted in this study. A summary of the research questions developed and the methodology used is presented. A summary of the results of the tested research questions is also presented. Finally, conclusions, recommendations, and implications are developed based upon the research findings.

Summary

This study began with an examination of the connection between work and family. A review of related research on work and family topics revealed that employers were aware of this connection and have begun to provide assistance. The review also revealed the perceptions of employees regarding employer-supported child care. No studies were identified in the literature that assessed how child care options were perceived by employees before implementation in relation to their caregiver or family structure.

Because research has shown that men and women were affected equally by work and family issues (Galinsky, 1986), both were included in the target population for this study. The target population for the study included parents employed at Dollywood with children age 12 or younger. Valid responses included only parents whose children were ages 12 or younger. This population was selected based on several previous studies similar in nature (Fernandez, 1986; Galinsky & Hughes, 1987; Jacobson, 1994; Kossek, 1990a; Marlow, 1993).

Fifteen independent variables were included in the initial analysis of the results. Final analysis of results as applied to the research questions included two independent variables: family structure and caregiver. A total of five research questions were developed for this study.

Research Question One determined whether or not there were significant differences between perceptions of work attendance and caregiver. The work attendance variable was broken into five elements: getting to work, missing work, being late for work, needing to leave work early, and being able to stay late for work.

Research Question Two focused on whether or not significant differences existed between perceptions of problems with care and family structure. Problems with care was separated into nine elements: availability of care, cost of care, quality of care, location of care, hours of care, summer school age care, before/after school care, provider dependability, and emergency care.

The third research question examined whether or not significant differences existed between the perceptions of problems with care and caregiver using the same nine elements in Question Two. Research Question Four asked what employees perceived to be their most preferred type of child care assistance based on seven options: on-site/near-site care with regular hours, on-site/near-site care with extended hours, emergency care, before/after school care, weekend care, child care referral information service, and financial assistance. Research Question Five examined whether or not there was a preference and whether or not that preference was related to caregiver type or family structure.

The survey for this study used a Child Care Survey questionnaire attached to the paychecks of the 171 employees included in the target population. The Child Care Survey questionnaire contained four parts: (a) a work attendance section which included five elements: getting to work, missing work, being late for work, needing to leave work early, and being able to stay late for work; (b) a section on problems with care which included nine elements: availability of care, cost of care, quality of care, location of care, hours of care, summer care, before/after school care, provider dependability, and emergency care; (c) a section regarding child care preferences which included seven elements: on-site/near-site care with regular hours, on-site/near-site care with extended hours, emergency care, before/after school care, weekend care, child care referral information service, and financial assistance; and (d) a section containing an optional comment section and 15 demographic variables including: the number and ages of children, weekly child care expenses, caregiver type, work schedule, length of employment, spousal employment, number of hours worked per week, number of hours spouse worked per week, employment category, employment category of spouse, age, gender, family structure, and total family income.

All participants were mailed follow-up letters one week after the initial distribution to thank those who had responded and to encourage those who had not. One participant was randomly selected and awarded a television as an incentive for participation. A second follow-up mailing, sent to only the non-respondents, included a replacement questionnaire. A total of 97 questionnaires were returned providing a 57% response rate. Thirteen questionnaires were invalid, and the total number of valid responses was 84.

Frequencies and percentages were reported in Chapter Four for the demographic variables of gender, age, number of children, ages of children, number of hours worked per week, work schedule, length of employment, employment status, family structure, and caregiver. A chi-square test was used to determine whether or not there were significant differences among employed parents based on elements of work attendance, problems with child care, and child care preferences. A chi-square test was also used to determine whether or not significant differences existed among respondents and non-respondents. Ten percent ($n=8$) of the non-respondents were randomly sampled by telephone. Due to the small sample size of non-respondents, exact p -values were calculated. The two primary dependent variables were tested. There was no significant difference related to caregiver and survey response (chi-square=.000, $df=1$, $p=.657$). There was no significant difference related to family structure and survey response (chi-square=2.127, $df=2$, $p=.413$).

Major Findings

Based on responses to the research questions, this study found:

1. Regarding work attendance, caregiver type was an indicator of missing work and leaving work early.
2. Family structure was not an indicator regarding problems with child care.
3. Regarding problems with child care, caregiver type was an indicator of availability of care, cost of care, and hours of care.
4. When ranking first, second, or third most preferred service, on-site with extended hours was selected most often—a total of 44 times making it the top choice overall. On-site with regular hours was chosen 25 times. Weekend

care, emergency care, and financial assistance were all selected approximately 26 times. Before/after school care was the least chosen option with only 12 selections.

5. Regarding employees' most preferred employer-assistance option, caregiver type was a predictor of on-site care with extended hours.

Comments

In the optional comment section provided on the last page of the questionnaire, 30 written responses were received from participants. Many of them stated similar concerns. Three main concerns emerged: transportation/distance, flexibility, and cost. First, a concern among many parents was transportation. Several employees were driving long distances to take their child to the center and then even longer distances back to work. Perry (1978) noted that when distance and transportation were issues, an on-site center would relieve parents of added driving time. Respondents in this study echoed that sentiment. One parent remarked:

It would make it easier for us in getting to work on time and not have to worry about rushing home in an emergency. The child would benefit being by closer to the parents so the parent could spend time with them on breaks (Dollywood employee).

The second concern stated in the written comments was flexibility with hours of care. An on-site center was the topic of the majority of comments. Parents expressed a desire for an on-site center with flexibility in hours. Many parents were having difficulty finding child care arrangements that corresponded to their varying work schedules. This

made it difficult to meet the stricter schedules of a typical child care facility. One parent stated:

My child is currently enrolled in a day care. They pick him up at school at 3:00 p.m., but they close at 5:30 p.m. This causes problems because my husband and I usually work until 6:00 p.m. or later. Extended hours child care provided by Dollywood would solve this problem and I would be happy to use it (Dollywood employee).

Another parent remarked:

I work random hours. This makes it very hard for me to find weekend care especially (Dollywood employee).

Another parent had this to say:

At Dollywood, you never know what schedule you will work so finding someone to watch kids at night, for example, is a problem (Dollywood employee).

Several parents of school-age children voiced similar special needs, such as after school and summer care. One parent responded:

To find child care for an 8 year old on weekends is impossible. We found some help during the day this summer, provided we could pick him up on time. Some days this was difficult. I've been late for work and had to leave work early to pick him up ...Help!!! (Dollywood employee).

Another parent had a similar opinion:

I do pay for after school care for my two school-age children. I am charged an extra fine if I am late picking them up. If Dollywood would provide a child care service, it would save me a lot of driving time, after school care fees, relieve a lot of stress, and make it easier on my whole family. Most important, I could spend more quality time with my children (Dollywood employee).

One final respondent remarked:

Most child care facilities do not accept older children (over 6). After school care is difficult to find and evenings I must depend on a sitter. Summer care is impossible to find for an 8-year-old. My husband I would occasionally like to have the same day off for family time. We can't do this during the summer because someone must be home with the child (Dollywood employee).

Cost was the third concern that emerged from the written comments. Some parents stated that they currently paid one rate for child care, even if their child did not attend every day. Parents expressed a desire for more flexible arrangements that would not include fines if a child were not in attendance. One respondent had this to say:

I pay child care on a per-week basis, whether my child is sick or absent. Let me stress that I would love to have my child closer to me. I certainly believe that this would benefit Dollywood because it would (Dollywood employee).

Another employee expressed the opinion held by several others by stating:

I would only require child care on certain days; therefore, I would not want to pay for days not used (Dollywood employee).

Although written comments were optional and only approximately 36% of respondents chose to complete this section, the statements provided interesting conclusions. For example, the three main concerns that emerged—transportation, flexibility, and cost—were the same major concerns that emerged in Fernandez's study (1986). Fernandez's sample size was much larger ($N=4,971$), and it was conducted among five companies. None the less, Fernandez found that the child care components with which respondents were most dissatisfied included distance to work, cost, and hours.

Another interesting finding from the written comments was the supportive remarks from parents who said they would not need an on-site facility but still believed that it would be beneficial. Even though other employer assistance alternatives were listed in their survey (financial assistance, child care referral information service, emergency care, etc.), and even though these parents stated that they would not benefit from an on-site center, they still regarded an on-site center as being especially beneficial. This sentiment was expressed in the following statement:

I think there is always a need for quality child care in the area. Right now, though, I would not need an on-site facility because both of my children receive quality care from neighboring facilities. These facilities provide after school, summer, and snow day (emergency) care. Were these programs not available, I would have to look for another child care option. Even though I don't

need on-site services, I think any assistance Dollywood could offer working parents would be appreciated (Dollywood employee).

Finally, there were comments that supported the findings of current research about the benefits of employer support for child care. Prospective benefits listed in current research and also raised by respondents included: (a) increased employee morale, (b) better work attendance, (c) greater productivity, and (d) better employee recruitment and selection opportunities.

Sentiments expressed by parents in the written comment section of the questionnaire showed that assistance of any kind would be appreciated. The written comments reflected findings of current research, including: (a) all parents are in need of quality, affordable child care; (b) child care arrangements and parental work schedules are often problematic, and (c) employed parents are especially in need of child care that is convenient and flexible. One parent seemed to express it best, stating:

I am in desperate need of not-so expensive, good quality, close-by child care (Dollywood employee).

Conclusions

The following conclusions have been based on the results of this study:

1. Regarding work attendance, the most common problem overall is being able to stay late for work, with 60% of all respondents reporting the presence of a problem—30% indicated sometimes, 30% indicated often to always. Almost 76% of those parents who relied on non-familial care reported that being able to stay late for work was sometimes to always a problem. Even those

employees who relied on familial care reported that being able to stay late for work was sometimes to always a problem 50% of the time.

2. Regarding problems with care, the most common problem was hours of care, with 65.4% of all respondents reporting hours of care was sometimes to always a problem.
3. On-site care with extended hours was the most often preferred type of employer-assistance among Dollywood employees. Other studies have reported similar conclusions. Fernandez (1986) found that 55% of sampled employees selected an on-site, for-profit facility as the type of assistance that should be provided by employers. It was implicitly stated in the present study that an on-site facility would be for-profit by including a question that asked, in addition to their present child care costs, how much more employees would be willing to pay for on-site care if it were provided by Dollywood. A Gallup Organization Poll given to a group of working professionals also determined that out of all employer-supported options, 31% (the largest percentage) of respondents would choose a child care facility at their place of work if costs were reasonable (Williams, 1993). In a 1994 needs assessment conducted among 361 employees from one organization, on-site child care was selected as the most preferred child care benefit (Jacobson, 1994).

Recommendations

Based upon the results of this study and the conclusions drawn from it, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Several parents raised questions about the transportation of children to and from school to an on-site program. Remarks were that an on-site center would be beneficial, but transportation would still be a problem for parents of school-age children. Future needs assessments might include considerations about transportation for school-age children.
2. Employer support for child care services should consider not only the needs of employees but also community supply (Galinsky, 1986). The focus of further needs assessments might be broadened to include local child care providers. This inclusion would help determine how local efforts might be affected by employer support and how employers and local providers might collaborate to combine benefits.
3. Instead of presenting on-site child care with extended hours as one service, future needs assessments might state more specifically what this provision would entail so that respondents could pinpoint exactly how and when they would use the service.
4. To help evaluate costs, a future needs assessment might ask employees exactly how much they would be willing to spend for on-site child care with extended hours.

Implications

Based on the conclusions of this study and the review of related literature, the following implications are drawn:

1. Employers must realize that work and family issues today are interrelated and the initiative (or lack of) that they take does affect their employees and their organizations as a whole.
2. Employers must recognize that the choice of caregiver influence employee work attendance, perceptions about problems with child care, and their child care preferences.
3. It was interesting that of the 128 children included in this survey, the majority of them (n=72) were school age. Yet, the most preferred service among respondents was on-site care with extended hours. Even though most of these parents did not rank arrangements such as after school care or summer care as a their top priority, it may be possible that they assumed an on-site facility would incorporate some of these arrangements. Similarly, the largest percentage of respondents in Jacobson's study (1994) indicated that finding sick care and emergency care was a problem. However, respondents selected on-site care as their most preferred employer-supported benefit. Therefore, even when other child care arrangements, such as sick care and emergency care, caused more problems for parents, on-site care was preferred over sick care or emergency care. It may be that respondents in Jacobson's study also felt that an on-site facility would combat their sick care and emergency care problems.

This study marks the first comprehensive child care needs assessment conducted at Dollywood. Although this study was conducted among only one organization, it does support the wider body of research for employer-supported child care by reporting child

care problems experienced by working parents and the most preferred employer-assisted child care provision. By examining the work-related child care problems and preferences expressed in the results, the need for employer support at Dollywood is revealed.

Research indicated that initial employer involvement with child care often expands to include other arrangements. On-site care could branch out to include school-age care; emergency care could lead to summer care (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998b). The preferences expressed in this study for extended-hour, on-site child care should be teamed with the varying types of assistance options in existence to create a child care program at Dollywood that will benefit the parents of children in any age group.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
MODIFIED SURVEY

Feedback Report
Findings from the June – October 1990

Data Collection of the
Productivity Impact of
Mercy Health Center's
Child Development Center

Dr. Ellen Ernst Kossek
School of Labor and Industrial Relations
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824

The author would like to thank the following organizations for providing funding for this study: the Michigan State University Foundation, the Sisters of Mercy Health Care Corporation, and the Social Science Research Bureau at Michigan State University. I would also like to thank Victor Nichol, a Ph.D. student at Michigan State, for coordinating the mailing of the employee survey and for conducting the SPSS-X data analysis for the entire study.

Attending Work and Handling Child Care Problems While at Work

In order to investigate whether center users had better attendance than employees on the waiting list, a scale was developed to measure the extent to which child care arrangements influenced attendance at work. Based on a five point scale with 1 representing almost never, 3 representing sometimes, and 5 representing almost always; employees were asked to indicate the extent to which their child care arrangements had a negative effect on their behavior in the following ways:

getting to work,

being late for work,

missing work,

being able to stay late at work,

needing to leave work for child related matters.

Problems with Care

Employees were asked to rate the extent to which they were having problems with their care arrangements for twelve problem areas using a five point scale (1 = no problem, 3 = moderate problem, and 5 = major problem). The areas included the following: availability of care, cost of care, quality of care, hours of care, location of care, sick care, emergencies, provider dependability, summer school age care, before/after school care, transportation, and work late when my job calls for it. The problems with care scale was based on a modified scale that had been used in Fernandez's AT&T study.

A comparison of problem areas for users and nonusers are shown below for the youngest child. Using employee ratings for problem with care arrangements for their youngest child, in all areas except one, waiting list employees had more problems with care than nonusers. Then exception was sick care, since in the case of a sick child, center users must immediately go and take their child home, while a waiting list employee may have the option of a family member or sitter caring for the child in their home, for example.

Percent Rating Problem Area a Moderate to Major Concern

<u>Problem Area</u>	<u>Users</u>	<u>Nonusers</u>
availability of care	17%	40%
cost of care	32%	44%
quality of care	5%	31%
hours of care	12%	42%
location of care	2%	27%
sick care	79%	50%
emergencies	41%	53%
provider dependability	2%	19%
summer school age care	2%	9%
before/after school age care	4%	9%
transportation	17%	19%
work late when job calls for it	28%	42%

Preferences for Additional Mercy Child Care Assistance

Employees were also asked to rank the services that they would most likely use if offered by Mercy. As the following table shows, employee preferences for assistance are consistent with the preceding ratings of problems with care. Sick care is definitely an employee need. There may also be sufficient employee interest in a small extended hours care and weekend care program, although additional study by Mercy is recommended for confirmation. There is not a great need for night shift care. Evening shift care is also less of a problem for the employees.

<u>Service</u>	<u>Yes, would definitely use</u>	<u>Possibly would use</u>	<u>No, not needed</u>
Sick care	44%	44%	12%
Evening shift care	13%	36%	47%
Extended hours care (after 6 p.m.)	23%	40%	37%
Night shift care	0%	37%	69%
Weekend care	24%	38%	38%

APPENDIX B
PERMISSION FOR SURVEY MODIFICATION

Subj: Re: permission for use of survey
Date: 8/13/98 3:44:29 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: (Ellen Ernst Kossek)
To: Tabitha Adams

It is fine to use my instrument as long as I am cited in all formal and informal publications and I receive a copy of anything you publish.

At 10:50 AM 8/7/98 EDT, you wrote:

Dear Ellen,

Hello. I wrote to you about two months ago requesting a copy of your child care survey, which I received. I am working on my thesis at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in Human Resource Development. I am going to survey a company that does not offer ANY form of child care assistance, but is considering it. Thank you so much for the feedback report. I am preparing my own survey now. I am also preparing my thesis proposal to be presented to my committee. Before I meet with them, I would like to have with me a written copy stating your permission for use of your survey. A short (very short!!!) email will be just fine – just something that I might show them to let them know you are aware that I am using part of your survey for my thesis work on child care. If you have a moment, I would appreciate your correspondence.

Thank you again for allowing me to use your survey as a tool. Although I have modified it for my own use, I will most definitely credit you at all necessary points, both in my proposal and in the thesis.

Many thanks,

* Tabitha Adams

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

APPENDIX C
LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION
FOR USE OF UNIVERSITY SEAL

September 15, 1998

Attn: Brian
Office of University Licensing
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee
Fax (423) 974-XXXX

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a graduate student in Human Resource Development at the University of Tennessee and am preparing a simple survey for my thesis. I would like permission to use the University Seal on the cover page of this survey. The population to be surveyed will be all Dollywood employees with children ages 12 and younger. The five-part survey asks employees to rate (on a five-point Likert scale) their perceptions about their child care needs and wants. The survey has been approved by my committee and will be finalized and distributed upon your approval.

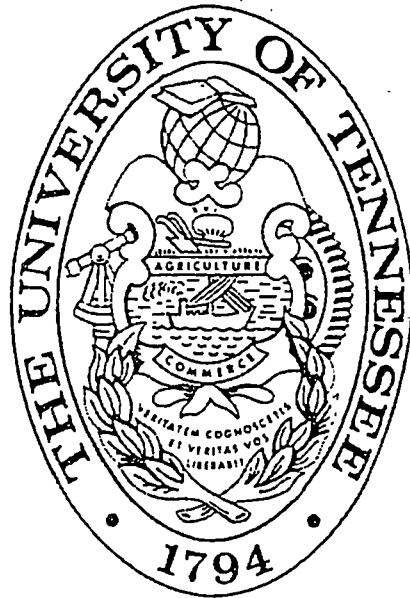
If there are any questions or concerns regarding this request, please call me at (423)-XXX-XXXX or fax me at (423)-XXX-XXXX.
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tabitha Adams

APPENDIX D
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Code No. _____



Child Care Survey

Participant Survey

This survey will enable us to better understand the child care wants and needs of Dollywood employees. Please answer all of the questions. If you wish to comment on any question use the back page. Return this questionnaire to the:

Specially marked boxes in all Host Lounges

Your code number at the top right hand corner will be used for follow-up purposes and for the drawing for the 30" color television. Individual data or comments will not be reported in any way as to reveal the source. All data will be confidential and grouped for reporting. Thank you very much for your participation.

Child Care Survey

Participant Survey

Part I.

This part of the questionnaire asks you to describe how often your child care arrangements affect your attendance at work. Use the following scale in answering each item, select one answer for each question.

	<u>Never</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Always</u>
1. Getting to work	1	2	3	4	5
2. Missing work	1	2	3	4	5
3. Being late for work	1	2	3	4	5
4. Needing to leave work early (ex. child gets sick)	1	2	3	4	5
5. Being able to stay late at work	1	2	3	4	5

Part II.

This part of the questionnaire asks to what extent do these child care arrangements cause you problems? Use the following scale in answering each item, select one answer for each question.

	<u>Never</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Always</u>
6. Availability of care	1	2	3	4	5
7. Cost of care	1	2	3	4	5
8. Quality of care	1	2	3	4	5
9. Location of care	1	2	3	4	5

	<u>Never</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Always</u>
10. Hours of care	1	2	3	4	5
11. Summer school age care	1	2	3	4	5
12. Before/After school care	1	2	3	4	5
13. Provider dependability	1	2	3	4	5
14. Emergency Care	1	2	3	4	5

Part III.

This part of the questionnaire asks you if the following child care services were offered to you by Dollywood, how likely would you be to use them? Use the following scale in answering each item, select one answer for each question.

	<u>Never</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Always</u>
15. On-site/Near-site child care center with regular child care center operating hours	1	2	3	4	5
16. On-site/Near-site child care center with extended operating hours	1	2	3	4	5
17. Emergency care (ex. sick care)	1	2	3	4	5
18. Before/After school care	1	2	3	4	5
19. Weekend care	1	2	3	4	5
20. Child care referral information service	1	2	3	4	5
21. Financial assistance (ex. voucher or stipend)	1	2	3	4	5

22. If provided by Dollywood, which of the services listed above in Part III would be of GREATEST importance to you? (Put number of item in appropriate box.)

☐ MOST IMPORTANT

☐ SECOND MOST IMPORTANT

☐ THIRD MOST IMPORTANT

23. If Dollywood provided an on-site center of equal quality to your current care how much more would you be willing to spend?

- _____ None
- _____ \$1 to \$10.00
- _____ \$11 to \$20.00
- _____ \$21 to \$30.00
- _____ \$31 to \$40.00
- _____ \$40 plus

Part IV. Demographic Information

This part of the questionnaire asks you to provide some personal information.

24. How many children do you have ages 12 and under? If none, write zero ("0").

25. List their ages: _____

26. On average, how much do you spend per week on total child care arrangements?

Answer each of the following questions by placing an (X) to the left of your answer, Select only one answer for each question.

27. When you are at work, what type of child care do you rely on MOST often?

- ☐ SPOUSE OR PARENT
- ☐ SELF-CARE
- ☐ NON-FAMILY MEMBER (EX. BABYSITTER)
- ☐ FAMILY MEMBER
- ☐ CHILDCARE CENTER
- ☐ MIXED CARE (EX. DAY CARE CENTER AND GRANDPARENT)

28. What is the schedule that you work MOST OFTEN?

- ☐ MORNING/DAY
- ☐ EVENING
- ☐ NIGHT (3RD SHIFT)

29. How long have you been employed at Dollywood?

- ☐ 1ST SEASON
- ☐ 2ND SEASON
- ☐ 3RD SEASON
- ☐ 4TH SEASON
- ☐ 5TH SEASON OR MORE

30. Is your spouse employed at Dollywood? (if no, skip questions 32 and 34)

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

31. So far this season, what is the average number of hours you work per week at Dollywood?

- ☐ LESS THAN 10 HOURS
- ☐ 11-20 HOURS
- ☐ 21-30 HOURS
- ☐ 31-40 HOURS
- ☐ 40+ HOURS

32. So far this season, what is the average number of hours your spouse works per week at Dollywood?

- ☐ LESS THAN 10 HOURS
- ☐ 11-20 HOURS
- ☐ 21-30 HOURS
- ☐ 31-40 HOURS
- ☐ 40+ HOURS

33. What is your employment category at Dollywood?

- ☐ 3, 6, or 9 months (seasonal)
- ☐ 12 months (year round)

34. What is the employment category of your spouse at Dollywood?

- ☐ 3, 6, or 9 months (seasonal)
- ☐ 12 months (year round)

35. Your age is:

- ☐ UP TO 20 YEARS OF AGE
- ☐ 21- 30 YEARS OF AGE
- ☐ 31 - 39 YEARS OF AGE
- ☐ 40 - 49 YEARS OF AGE
- ☐ 50 - 59 YEARS OF AGE
- ☐ 60 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER

36. Your gender is:

- ☐ FEMALE
- ☐ MALE

37. Indicate your type of family income.

- ☐ SINGLE PARENT
- ☐ 2-PARENTS, ONE EMPLOYED
- ☐ 2-PARENTS, BOTH EMPLOYED
- ☐ OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

38. Indicate your approximate total yearly family income before taxes in 1998.

- ☐ LESS THAN \$10,000
- ☐ \$11,000 - \$20,000
- ☐ \$21,000 - \$30,000
- ☐ \$31,000 - \$40,000
- ☐ \$41,000 - \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,000 +

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your child care wants and needs? If so, please use this space for that purpose. Any comments you wish to make that you think may help us in our future efforts to understand the child care needs of Dollywood employees will be appreciated.

This concludes the Child Care Survey. Thank you for your time and participation. Return this survey in the specially marked boxes located in the Host Lounges. To be eligible for the drawing your responses are needed by Monday, September 28th. Thanks!

APPENDIX E
SURVEY COVER LETTER



Department of Human Resource Development
25 HPER Building
1914 Andy Holt Ave.
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-2745
(423) 974-4466
FAX: (423) 974-3961
ewbrewer@utkux.utcc.utk.edu

September 18, 1998

Dear Dollywood Employee:

Child care has become an important issue at work in recent years. Employers realize that child care arrangements that work for one parent may not work for another. As a parent, you realize that problems with child care arrangements affect employees not only at home, but on the job as well.

Dollywood has expressed an interest in understanding the child care needs and wants of its employees. Before child care needs can be addressed, first we have to know what they are. Your responses are the key to helping Dollywood understand the child care needs and wants of employees.

You are assured complete confidentiality. Your survey has a code number so that I may check your name off the mailing list when your survey is returned. Also, when you return your survey to the any of the host lounges, this code number will automatically register you to win a 30-inch color television! Everyone that turns in the survey by the September 28th deadline will be eligible to win. The lucky winner will be contacted immediately.

You may call me at (423) _____ at your convenience and I will gladly answer any questions you might have. This survey should take about 5 minutes to fill out. I sincerely appreciate your participation and hope that these results can be used to make a difference at Dollywood.

Sincerely,

Tabitha Adams
University of Tennessee

APPENDIX F
FIRST FOLLOW-UP LETTER

October 2, 1998

On September 18 a questionnaire seeking your opinion about child care was attached to your paycheck.

We want to thank all of you who responded and congratulate XXXXXXXX who was the winner of the drawing for the color television.

If you did not have a chance to get your survey turned in, your response is still needed. If your survey has been misplaced, please call me today, collect and I will mail you another. The survey response boxes will remain in the host lounges for one more week so that additional surveys may be dropped off. Since the survey was given to only those Dollywood employees with children, it is important that your response is included in the study so that the final results will be a true representation of the opinions of Dollywood employees.

Sincerely,

Tabitha Adams

APPENDIX G
SECOND FOLLOW-UP LETTER

NO TRICKS... JUST TREATS!

Halloween is here again...
And I still need your views.
Just fill this little survey out,
You've got nothing at all to lose!

Just in case you misplaced it,
Or it got lost in a rush,
I'm sending another survey
Then after that I'll hush!

See, if I thought it didn't matter,
If I thought they wouldn't care,
I wouldn't take such measures
To make Dollywood aware...

- that you've got kids at home,
This week ghosts and goblins too!
And while you're working for Dollywood
They depend on you!

So while the kids are trick-or treating,
Eating candy 'till they're blue,
Grab your pen and fill this out,
And I'll have one last treat for you:

I've gotten a good response, but, I still need about 50 to 75 responses. If I get *at least 50 responses* this time around , I will pick 1 winner from all of those people who mail in this follow-up survey for a **\$100.00 cash drawing**. Please mail in your surveys by **Friday, November 6th** ... and that's it!

This survey is the only real way that Dollywood is going to find out what you need as a parent to help with your child care arrangements. Dollywood is anxious to see these results, and I want to make sure that we get as many responses as we can so these results are strong and useful!

Many thanks!

Tabitha Adams

VITA

Tabitha Adams was born in Kingsport, Tennessee on September 4, 1973. She attended schools in the public school system there and graduated from Sullivan South High School in 1991. She received a Bachelor of Arts in speech communication from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in August 1995. After working as an administrative assistant for a year, she entered the Master's program in Human Resource Development at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in August, 1996. During the summers of 1997 and 1998, she was employed as a personnel intern and then a trainer for Dollywood. She received the Master's degree in May 1999 and will be pursuing a career in Human Resources.