It's All about Control: Worker Control over Schedule and Hours in Cross-National Context

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Abstract

Workers' ability to control their work schedules and hours varies significantly among industrialized countries. We integrate and extend prior research from a variety of literatures to examine antecedents of control and worker outcomes. Using hierarchical linear modeling and data for 21 countries from the 1997 ISSP Work Orientations Survey supplemented with national indicators developed from a variety of sources, we find that control is associated with country characteristics (affluence, welfare state generosity, union coverage, and working-time regulations), worker attributes (being male, being older, and being better educated), and job characteristics (working part-time, being self-employed, having higher earnings, and having more advancement opportunities). We also examine the relationship of control to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and strain-based work-family conflict. Generally, low levels of control are linked to negative outcomes for workers, especially for women, an effect sometimes modulated by country-level policy measures.

Keywords

cross-national research, flexible work arrangements, gender, schedule control, work-family conflict

In many industrialized countries, the temporal organization of work is changing from a fixed 8-hour day and 40-hour week to flexible work arrangements (FWA), that is, arrangements that give workers more control and discretion over the number and scheduling of their work hours. These changes are intended to address a worldwide time bind that is most pronounced in the United States and Japan, and is of growing concern in many other industrialized countries (Gornick and Meyers 2003; Jacobs and Gerson 2004; Medalia and Jacobs 2008). The demand for flexibility emanates from a variety of sources, such as increases in dual-earner households, single-parent households, older workers, employees with elder-care responsibilities, and men's

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greater involvement in family caregiving, but has been especially linked to the increase in women's paid employment. To the extent that flexibility can help women combine work and family responsibilities, it has also been heralded as a strategy for mitigating persistent gender gaps in employment rates and working time, thus linking flexibility to larger issues of social stratification.

Europe has been a trendsetter in the development of innovative approaches to working time. In many European countries, especially Nordic countries, these policies are part of a larger policy agenda that explicitly seeks to raise women's labor market attachment and status (Crompton and Lyonette 2006). By the mid-1990s, all European Union (EU) countries were required to establish maximum weekly work hours, minimum paid days off, and parity between part-time and full-time workers in wages and occupational benefits (Hegewisch and Gornick 2008). In addition, several European countries have reduced full-time work weeks to fewer than 40 hours. U.S. legislation, in contrast, continues to set the standard full-time work week at 40 hours (a level established seven decades ago) and is silent on maximum weekly hours and part-time parity (Gornick and Meyers 2003; Hegewisch 2005).

Most of what we know about FWA is based on individual-level research conducted in the United States or United Kingdom, both Anglophone countries with fairly similar labor market structures and regulatory environments. Given the considerable cross-national variation in policies surrounding flexibility and workers' control over work time, it is important to understand how workers gain access to flexibility within and across countries and to assess the consequences. In addressing these issues across 21 industrialized countries, this article makes several contributions to the literature on workplace flexibility.

First, we use an improved and standardized measure of flexibility, which we operationalize as workers' control over their work schedules and their total hours worked. Previous research typically measured flexibility with a variety of different work arrangements, which

makes comparison across studies, much less countries, difficult. Flexibility measured as control also has the advantage of being applicable to a wide variety of work settings and environments (Kelly and Moen 2007).

Second, we identify both individual- and country-level antecedents of flexibility, thereby bridging the micro-macro gap (Kunovich 2009). At the individual level, we examine a range of worker and job characteristics that previous research shows influence access to flexibility. Our cross-national design allows us to assess whether findings from research carried out primarily in Anglophone countries can be replicated in other national contexts. In recognition of the importance of national context, we test effects of several country-level social, economic, and policy features that, based on prior research, are understood to influence flexibility or related work outcomes. By using direct and distinct measures of country context rather than broad typologies, we can identify which specific features of context are most important in determining workers' ability to control their work time.

Third, we extend existing research by using nationally representative samples, from a large number of countries, that include workers with varying degrees of access to FWA. This research design enables us to generalize our results to a larger set of countries and to overcome the selection bias inherent in some prior studies that included only respondents with access to FWA.

Finally, while most previous research focuses on either causes or consequences of flexibility, this study is among the first to integrate these concerns and examine both. Our research thus elucidates not only factors influencing flexibility use by worker, job, and country characteristics, but also some key outcomes associated with its use.

Broadly speaking, this article addresses several research questions. Which workers have flexibility, or control over their working time, and which national or contextual characteristics are conducive to their having more (or less) control? To what extent are individual-level antecedents invariant across countries?

Given the claims that have been made for flexibility and the rationale for its implementation, what are the implications for workers and their employers of having more (or less) control in terms of workers' commitment to their employers, satisfaction with their jobs, and perceptions of strain-based work-family conflict (WFC)? Finally, given the traditional gendered nature of work-family arrangements and the explicit goal of advancing gender equality in some countries, do women and men differ with respect to these effects or outcomes?

FLEXIBILITY: CONCEPTUALIZATION, MEASUREMENT, AND RESEARCH

Flexibility is an omnibus term that encompasses many different types of FWA. Social science and popular discourse use the term in a variety of ways to refer to temporal arrangements of work (e.g., part-time work and job-sharing) and to where work is performed (e.g., telecommuting from home). Previous studies have been faulted for failing to clarify who benefits from flexibility and whose interests receive priority—employers, workers, or some combination of the two (Hegewisch and Gornick 2008; MacDermid and Tang 2006).

A major criticism of prior research is the absence of a standard definition of flexibility (Eaton 2003; Glass and Finley 2002; Kelly and Moen 2007). In their meta-analysis of workplace flexibility outcomes, Glass and Finley (2002:325) characterize the practice of "conflating a variety of different schedule arrangements such as flextime, part-time, and job-sharing under the general heading of flexible or alternative work arrangements" as "especially problematic." They conclude that flexibility's benefits operate primarily through increasing workers' perceptions of control and recommend that research on flexibility should focus on "studying issues of worker autonomy and control" (p. 333).

Similarly, Berg and colleagues (2004:331–32) examine flexibility in terms of workers'

control and define "'employee control over working time' as the ability of *individual* workers to increase or decrease their working hours and to alter their work schedule." According to Berg and colleagues (2004:333–34), employee control involves two different aspects: (1) "control over the timing of work" and (2) "control over the duration of work hours [or length of work day]." This and other research (e.g., Kelly, Moen, and Tranby 2011) demonstrates that schedule control is the mechanism by which flexible work initiatives influence favorable employee outcomes. As Kelly and colleagues (2011:267) point out, schedule control is distinct from other aspects of job control in that it has the advantage of affecting both work and family domains, and "turns our attention to work conditions that affect employees' lives off the job by determining their ability to manage work and non-work responsibilities more fluidly and effectively."

Hill and colleagues' (2008) review and critique of the conceptualization and measurement of workplace flexibility echo these observations. They define workplace flexibility as "the ability of workers to make choices influencing when, where, and for how long they engage in work-related tasks" (p. 152). In the present study, we focus on the *temporal* dimensions of flexibility, workers' choices or preferences, and the degree to which workers, rather than employers, control their own schedules and realize their preferences. Specifically, we investigate two aspects of worker control: (1) control over work schedule, that is, starting and stopping times and (2) control over the number of hours worked. The latter, which is also called "hours mismatch," indicates whether workers have a deficit of hours (i.e., workers prefer more hours than they currently work) or an excess of hours (i.e., they prefer fewer hours than they currently work) (Golden 1996; Reynolds 2004). To the extent that workers' preferred hours deviate from actual work hours, hours mismatch (in either direction) reflects employees' lack of control, relative to that of their employers (Golden 1996; Jacobs and Gerson 1998; Reynolds 2003).

Workplace Flexibility: Individual-Level Influences

A voluminous research literature, conducted primarily in the United States and the United Kingdom, addresses individual workers' access to flexibility. This research shows that access is a function of both workers' and jobs' characteristics.

Micro-level factors: worker characteristics. Although the studies reviewed here use different measures of flexibility, the accumulated research shows that flexibility is generally linked to gender, age, education, and marital and family status. Men are more likely to have access to flexible scheduling (Ezra and Deckman 1996; Golden 2001; Mellor 1986; Presser 1989; U.S. Department of Labor 2005), although women tend to use more flexibility policies in general (Allen 2001; Thompson, Beauvais, and Lyness 1999) and schedule flexibility specifically (Galinsky, Bond, and Hill 2004). Younger employees report greater use of flexible scheduling than do older employees (Allen et al. 2000; Tausig and Fenwick 2001). More highly educated employees report more FWA availability (Parker and Allen 2001), greater use of schedule flexibility (Golden 2001; Sharpe, Hermsen, and Billings 2002), and higher levels of perceived schedule control (Tausig and Fenwick 2001). Married workers are more likely to have flexibility in the timing of their work compared to unmarried workers (Golden 2001, 2008; Presser 1989), as are workers with children, especially women (Golden 2001, 2008; Sharpe et al. 2002).

Micro-level factors: job characteristics. Part-time workers (Golden 2001, 2008) and small business owners (i.e., the self-employed) report greater schedule flexibility than do wage and salaried employees (Bond et al. 2002; Golden 2001; Parasuraman and Simmers 2001). Numerous studies have found that workers who have access to schedule flexibility tend to be exempt from overtime regulation and to hold jobs (typically professional or managerial) characterized by high status, high earnings, and opportunities for advancement (Bond and Galinsky 2006; Glass and Estes 1997; Miller and Prichard 1992; Sharpe et al. 2002).

Workplace Flexibility: Contextual Influences

A small but growing literature looks at the influence of country context on various aspects of workplace flexibility. One stream draws on the welfare state regime framework associated with Esping-Andersen (1990), who classified the major welfare states of the West into three clusters defined by shared principles of social provision.

Researchers have extended this regime paradigm to include policies—such as paid leave, childcare, and working time regulations—that affect parents' ability to combine employment with childrearing responsibilities. Generally, Nordic countries are most supportive of working parents, followed by the Continental countries (although these countries encourage gender inequality in the home), with the least public support provided in Anglophone countries, especially the United States, where work hours are especially long and relatively unregulated (Crompton and Lyonette 2006; Gornick and Meyers 2003).

Only a few studies include country-level factors in their assessments of schedule control. Stier and Lewin-Epstein (2003), in a 22-country study, looked at effects of country-level characteristics on the likelihood of hours mismatch, that is, that workers prefer either fewer or more hours than they currently work. They found that workers are more likely to want shorter work hours (bundled with lower earnings) in countries with higher GNP per capita and more generous social transfers. Their explanation for this finding was that workers with more economic security are more likely to prefer a reduction in their working time, relative to their current employment.

Reynolds (2004) also studied effects of country context, including strong safety nets and extensive unionization, on hours mismatch,

analyzing separate micro-level models for four countries (Japan, Sweden, West Germany, and the United States). His micro-level results are consistent with previous research on flexibility, finding that hours mismatch is influenced by both individual worker characteristics (e.g., gender and family composition) and job characteristics. Part-time status tends to be associated with a desire for more work hours, especially in the United States, and full-time employment is generally linked to a desire for fewer hours, although the United States is distinctive in that a relatively high proportion of its full-time workers want to work *more* hours. For all four countries, higher earnings and more opportunities for advancement are linked to workers' desire for more hours, presumably as a way of signaling their work commitment. Although Reynolds did not use direct measures of country context, his interpretation of the findings drew on country context, especially social welfare safety net provisions, existence of work-family reconciliation policies, and union strength, all of which, he argues, enhance workers' capacity to obtain their desired hours.

Berg and colleagues (2004) drew attention to effects of institutional features on employees' control over their working time, including schedule and hours, for seven countries (Australia, Japan, the United States, and four European countries). In agreement with Reynolds (2004), they conclude that institutions that strengthen employees' bargaining capacity, especially unions, increase workers' control over their working time, specifically their capacity to negotiate work schedules that benefit employees.

Consequences of Flexibility: Micro-Level Studies

An even more voluminous literature, conducted primarily in the United States and the United Kingdom, assesses the impact of, or outcomes associated with, flexibility. Rigorous meta-analytic research reviews (Baltes et al. 1999; Glass and Finley 2002) conclude that schedule flexibility can positively affect selected individual and organizational outcomes. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are among the most commonly studied outcomes of flexibility. Scholars have defined job satisfaction as an employee's affective or emotional reaction to a job, based on comparing actual outcomes with desired outcomes (Cranny, Smith, and Stone 1992). Organizational commitment is the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Porter, and Steers 1982). Employees with access to FWA report high morale and job satisfaction (Baltes et al. 1999; McCampbell 1996; Rodgers 1992; Shinn et al. 1989; Thomas and Ganster 1995), as well as high levels of company loyalty, discretionary effort, and organizational commitment (Bond and Galinsky 2006; Bond et al. 2002; Grover and Crooker 1995).

Flexibility's effect on work-family conflict—the major organizational rationale for introduction of FWA—is less clear-cut (for comprehensive reviews, see Baltes et al. 1999; Glass and Finley 2002). Work-family conflict (WFC) is a form of inter-role conflict in which role pressures from the work and nonwork domains are incompatible (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985). Based on meta-analytic research, Byron (2005) concludes that schedule flexibility is negatively related to WFC, but another meta-analysis found no relationship between flexibility and WFC (Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran 2005).

A small but growing body of research seeks to resolve this apparent contradiction by focusing on schedule control rather than mere availability or use of specific FWA. Most studies find schedule control to be positively related to work-life integration (or negatively related to WFC) (e.g., Halpern 2005; MacDermid and Tang 2006; Schieman, Milkie, and Glavin 2009; Tausig and Fenwick 2001; Voydanoff 1988). Among these, research by Kelly and colleagues (2011) is most compelling because they used a longitudinal design and found that employees' WFC decreased after the introduction of schedule control initiatives. However, other correlational studies

have found schedule control to have no effect on work-life outcomes (Thompson and Prottas 2006; Voydanoff 2004). These inconsistent results suggest the need for further study.

Consequences of Flexibility: Comparative Research on Contextual Influences

Several comparative studies explore the influence of a country's gender egalitarian culture and policy environment on workers' work-life conflict and similar constructs (e.g., Lyness and Kropf 2005). Generally, within and across European countries, women and men who work longer hours, hold demanding jobs, and have younger children are more likely to report WFC or lower work-life balance (Cousins and Tang 2004; Lyness and Kropf 2005; Ruppanner 2011; van der Lippe, Jager, and Kops 2006). Schieman and colleagues (2009) found similar results in the United States. At the country level, however, results are surprising, with most research showing that parents in countries with the most egalitarian gender roles and highly supportive work-family policies—such as Sweden—report more, not less, work-conflict than do parents in countries with less generous work-family policies, such as the Anglophone and Eastern European bloc countries (Cousins and Tang 2004; Crompton and Lyonette 2006; Strandh and Nordenmark 2006; van der Lippe et al. 2006). In trying to make sense of this seemingly anomalous result, scholars have suggested that more progressive gender norms may actually heighten work-family conflict by increasing pressures for men and women to be involved in both work and family spheres. In contrast to this prevailing pattern, Ruppanner's (2011) recent multilevel study of 10 Western countries found that work-family policies appear to modulate WFC only for women who are parents of young children. With regard to influences on work-family conflict, the surprising and contradictory results of prior research, based on a relatively small number of countries, also suggest the need for further study.

MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

We estimate a multilevel model of workplace flexibility or, as we conceptualize it, worker control over working time, defined as control over one's work schedule and hours. Our model includes micro-level worker and job characteristics that research shows are associated with flexibility. Our model also includes effects of several country-level factors identified in the small prior cross-national literature about contextual antecedents of workers' flexibility. These include macroeconomic factors, labor market characteristics, and policy indicators related to social spending and regulation of working time. In light of claims made about the beneficial consequences of workers' control over their working time, we also evaluate the impact of our flexibility measures on three crucial policy-relevant outcomes. Figure 1 shows our model, which assesses both antecedents and consequences of worker control over working time.

At the micro-level, based on the foregoing literature review, we hypothesize that women will have less flexibility or control. We hypothesize that age, education, and having a partner will all be positively linked to worker control. We also include micro-level job characteristics and hypothesize that working full-time will result in less control than working part-time, but that being self-employed or working in exempt, high-paying jobs with opportunities for advancement will result in more control.

At the country level, we examine effects of many salient aspects of national context, including standard of living (GDP per capita), public social welfare effort (measured by social expenditures), and characteristics of the labor force (women's labor force participation, service sector employment, and union coverage). We hypothesize that all these macro-level contextual features will be positively associated with worker control. We also include two measures of working time regulation: length of the standard work week (in hours) and amount of paid leave granted annually (in days). Both directly affect the
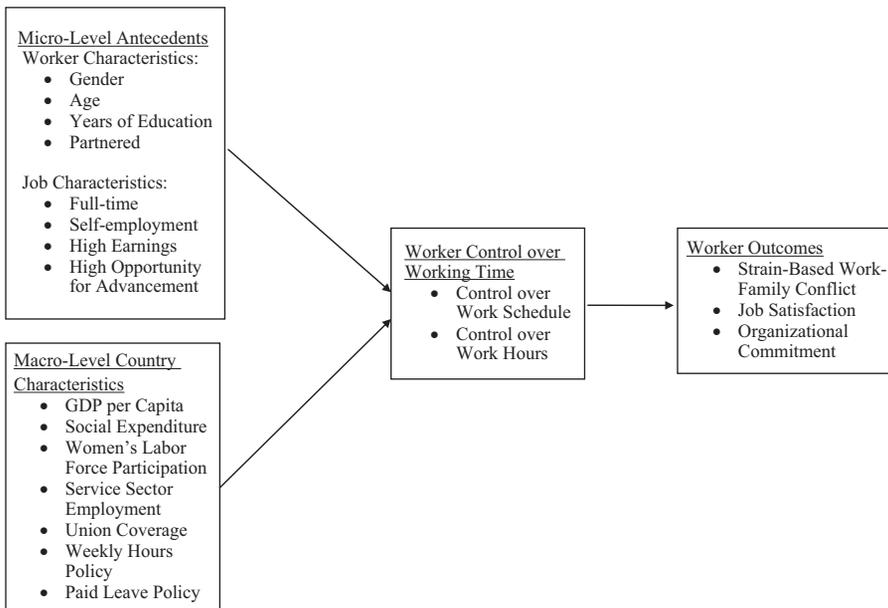
Figure 1. Antecedents and Consequences of Worker Control over Working Time

number of hours worked; the former influences weekly hours and the latter shapes annual hours. Both may also indirectly affect schedule control, for example, by altering the environment in which working time negotiations take place, or by reflecting more supportive work-family policy regimes (for a fuller discussion, see Gornick and Meyers 2003). Finally, we hypothesize that both forms of schedule control will enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment and reduce work-family conflict.

METHOD

Sample

We obtained micro-level data from the Work Orientations II Survey conducted in 1997 in association with the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP; Lewin-Epstein 1997). The 1997 ISSP data contain information from 27 countries about respondents' work attitudes, preferences, job characteristics, and demographic characteristics. Data were collected from January 1997 to March 1999; details about survey design and admin-

istration are available at http://www.issp.org/. We excluded six countries due to various data limitations and analyzed the 21 remaining diverse upper-income countries: Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. We limited our sample to prime-age workers 25 to 54 years old, excluding respondents in agricultural and armed forces occupations. Our sample includes 10,687 respondents with complete data (for country sample sizes, see Table S1 in the online supplement [http://asr.sagepub.com/supplemental]). We supplemented ISSP micro-level data with country-level measures from a variety of sources.

Measures

Worker control over working time. We measured control with three variables. We assessed *control over work schedule* with an ISSP item that asked respondents how much control they had over their starting and stopping times (1 = starting and finishing times are

decided by my employer; 2 = I can decide the time I start and finish work, within certain limits; 3 = I am entirely free to decide when I start and finish work). We measured *control over work hours* with two new variables derived from an ISSP item that asked about preference for time in a paid job using a five-point scale (1 = much more time to 5 = much less time). We collapsed the five response options and created two dichotomous variables reflecting different types of hours mismatch: (1) *hours deficit,* that is, worker preference for more work hours (coded 1 = hours deficit; 0 = no deficit, worker preference for same or fewer hours) and (2) *hours excess,* that is, worker preference for fewer work hours (coded 1 = hours excess; 0 = no excess, preference for same or more work hours).

Worker outcome variables. Work-family conflict (WFC) occurs when work interferes with performance of nonwork roles; strain-based conflict, an important type of WFC, occurs when work-related strain or fatigue interferes with a nonwork role (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985). We measured strain-based conflict with the ISSP item: "How often do you come home from work exhausted?" (1 = never to 5 = always). We measured *job satisfaction* with the ISSP item: "How satisfied are you in your job?" (1 = completely dissatisfied to 7 = completely satisfied). We measured *organizational commitment* by averaging two ISSP items: (1) "I am willing to work harder than I have to in order to help the organization or firm I work for succeed" and (2) "I am proud to be working for my firm or organization" (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The alpha coefficient for the scale was .65.

Worker characteristics. Worker characteristics included gender, coded as *female* (0 = no, 1 = yes), *age* (between 25 and 54 years), *education* measured in years, and *partnered* status (i.e., married/living with partner; 0 = no, 1 = yes).

Job characteristics. Job characteristics included *full-time* work status (0 = no, 1 = yes) and *self-employment* (0 = no, 1 = yes). We also included two characteristics associated with desirable jobs, measured as the extent to which these characteristics described respondents' current jobs: *high earnings* (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) and *high opportunity for advancement* (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Earnings and advancement opportunity, along with workers' education, capture various aspects of social class, as we will discuss later. Data about *weekly hours worked* were available for only 20 countries (data not available for New Zealand) and were used for supplementary analyses.

National characteristics. Data are from 1997, the first year of individual-level data collection, unless otherwise noted. We obtained *gross domestic product (GDP) per capita* (adjusted for purchasing power parity and measured in current dollars) from the United Nations (United Nations Statistics Division 1995). *Social expenditure,* which measures public social welfare spending as a percentage of GDP, comes from the OECD *Fact Book 2007* (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2007), another OECD source for Russia (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2001), and an ILO source for Slovenia (1991), Bulgaria (1996), and Hungary (ILO Department of Statistics 1997a).

Women's labor force participation rates were reported in an OECD statistical annex (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 1997); for Bulgaria, Russia, and Slovenia, data come from the World Bank GenderStats database (World Bank Key Development Data & Statistics 2008). We computed the percentage of employees working in industries classified as belonging to the *service sector* from a yearly statistical classification of industries into agricultural, manufacturing, and service sectors. We obtained data from the ILO Department of Statistics Laborsta database (ILO Department of Statistics 1997b); data for Bulgaria (1996) and France (1999) come from the CIA *World Factbook* (Central Intelligence Agency 2007).

Union coverage refers to the percentage of workers covered by collective bargaining agreements, which is a better measure than union membership for capturing unions' power to affect working conditions (Visser 2006). Data for most countries (in the early or mid-1990s) come from an OECD publication (Visser, Martin, and Tergeist 2004); data for Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Slovenia come from the ILO's International Institute for Labor Studies (Cazes 2002).

Weekly hours policy refers to the length of the standard work week, expressed in hours; the standard week (sometimes called the "normal" work week) corresponds, in most countries, to the mandatory threshold for overtime compensation. Some countries establish the standard work week via statute while others rely on widespread collective agreements. In the two countries where both mechanisms operate, we chose the lower of the two. There is little cross-country variation in standard weekly hours, which range from 37 to 40. *Paid leave policy* captures the number of days of annual leave granted by statute; in three countries entitlements differ by sub-group (employment sector, work tenure, or age), in which case we used the average. The source for both national-level measures is a working-time policy database, centered on 1997, compiled for this study by Rebecca Ray at the Center for Economic and Policy Analysis (Ray 2010); the original sources include a combination of ILO documents and country-specific labor codes.

Analytic Strategy

After an examination of gender differences in our main outcome indicators, the worker control variables and the worker outcome variables, we conducted multilevel analyses, with respondents grouped within the 21 countries, to test determinants of worker control over schedule and work hours. We included micro determinants (individual-level worker and job characteristics) and also macro determinants (country-level characteristics [e.g., GDP per capita]), controlling for the micro determinants. We used GDP per capita as a control variable in all macro analyses to see if other country characteristics had independent effects. We also examined the consequences (strain-based WFC, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment) of such control for workers, controlling for micro-level worker and job characteristics. We conducted HLM analyses to estimate multilevel linear models for the continuous dependent variables (schedule control and worker consequences) and HGLM analyses to estimate multilevel logistic models for the binary dependent variables (hours excess and hours deficit). In addition, we examined gender differences in the micro determinants of worker control and its consequences. (See the online supplement for equations and technical details.)

RESULTS

Descriptive Results: Country Group and Gender Differences in Outcome Variables

We organized countries by groups that, for purposes of understanding context, map roughly to welfare regimes (Crompton and Lyonette 2006; Esping-Andersen 1990; Gornick and Meyers 2003). Table 1 shows gender differences within these country groups for the outcome variables (see Table S1 in the online supplement for individual country means). Women reported significantly less schedule control than did men in all but the Anglophone countries; however, few countries show significant gender differences in work hours excess or hours deficit. In the Continental European group, women were less likely to report excess hours and more likely to report hour deficits. Women in Nordic countries also reported more hour deficits, but in Eastern Europe, men were more likely to do so.

With regard to consequences, we see significant gender differences in strain-based WFC, with women reporting higher levels than men in every group except Asian/Pacific Rim, represented only by Japan. However, we see

Table 1. Means for Worker Control Variables and Outcome Variables by Gender within Country Groups

| | | | Worker Control Variables | | | | | | Worker Outcome Variables | | | | | |
| | n | | Control Over Schedule | | Hours Excess | | Hours Deficit | | Strain-Based Work-Family Conflict | | Job Satisfaction | | Organizational Commitment | |
Group	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Nordic	992	999	1.75	1.58***	.52	.51	.06	.09*	3.20	3.38***	5.34	5.36	3.66	3.62
Continental European	1,691	1,413	1.72	1.67*	.47	.35***	.10	.14***	3.19	3.27**	5.29	5.36	3.59	3.48***
Southern European	729	507	1.63	1.48***	.29	.31	.17	.19	3.40	3.56**	5.28	5.14*	3.74	3.66
Anglophone	699	764	1.65	1.59	.43	.48	.14	.15	3.33	3.42*	5.14	5.29*	3.78	3.80
Eastern European	1,316	1,211	1.50	1.36***	.25	.28	.25	.21**	3.45	3.53*	4.99	5.01	3.45	3.41
Asian/Pacific Rim	225	141	1.50	1.28**	.51	.42	.04	.09	3.24	3.21	4.67	4.70	3.78	3.48**

Note: Significant gender differences within each cluster, based on two-tailed *t*-tests, are indicated.
* *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001.

few gender differences in job satisfaction or organizational commitment and no consistent pattern across country groups. Women were more satisfied in Anglophone countries and less satisfied in Southern European countries. In Continental Europe and Japan, men reported more organizational commitment than did women. Table S2 in the online supplement shows country values for the macro (country-level) characteristics used in our analyses.

Multilevel Analyses: Determinants of Worker Control over Working Time

Control over schedule. We first analyzed an unconditional multilevel model with no predictors and found the grand mean for worker schedule control (γ_{00}) = 1.58 (SE = .03). Table 2 shows results of analyses testing micro and macro determinants of worker control over schedule. Among the micro determinants, three worker characteristics and all four job characteristics are significantly related to schedule control (Model 1). Women reported less schedule control than did men, and worker age and education are positively related to schedule control. Only the random effect for gender's relationship to schedule control is nonsignificant, suggesting that this relationship does not vary significantly across countries. Working full-time (versus part-time) is negatively related to schedule control and being self-employed is positively related. Characteristics of desirable jobs, including high earnings and opportunities for advancement, are positively related to schedule control. These micro results are generally consistent with findings from prior U.S.-based micro-level studies.

We tested relationships of the seven macro (country) characteristics, including two policy variables (Models 2 through 8), as predictors of worker control over schedule, controlling for the eight micro determinants. GDP per capita has a positive relationship, indicating that workers in higher GDP countries reported more schedule control than did workers in lower GDP countries (Model 2). Controlling for GDP per capita, social expenditure also has a positive relationship to schedule control (Model 3); together, GDP per capita and social

expenditure reduce the cross-national random effects for the model intercept almost in half (Model 1 versus Model 3), and thus explain about half of the cross-national variation in workers' schedule control. Among the labor force characteristics—women's participation, the proportion of workers in service industries, and union coverage (Models 4, 5, and 6)—only union coverage has a significant coefficient, with a positive relationship to schedule control.

Of the two working time policy variables (Model 7), paid leave policy has a positive relationship, but weekly work hours policy is not significantly related to schedule control. We also tested the policy variables as moderators of the gender gap in schedule control by adding gender x policy (and gender x GDP per capita) interaction terms to the model (Model 8). Although the gender gap in schedule control is no longer significant, neither working time policy has a significant moderating effect.

Control over hours: hours excess. We used HGLM to estimate multilevel logistic models for the binary variable, hours excess (worker preference for fewer work hours). A model with no predictors reveals the estimated log odds of reporting hours excess (γ_{00}) = −.551 (SE = .153); the negative coefficient indicates the odds are less than .50, and the odds ratio corresponds to a probability of $1 \div (1 + \exp\{.551\})$ = .366 (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002). Among worker characteristics, only gender and education are significant predictors of hours excess (Table 3, Model 1). Women were more likely than men to report an hours excess; the odds ratio indicates that holding constant the other predictors and the random effect, the expected odds that a woman would report an hours excess are about 23 percent higher than those for a man. Education is positively related to hours excess; holding other predictors constant, a one-year increase in education is associated with a 6 percent increase in the expected odds of reporting an hours excess. Based on its random effect, the education relationship does not vary significantly across countries. Among

Table 2. Multilevel Analyses Predicting Control over Schedule with Individual- and Country-Level Variables

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Individual-Level Fixed Effects								
Intercept (γ_{00})	1.577***	1.409***	1.281***	1.332***	1.411***	1.310***	.714	.734
	(.031)	(.049)	(.076)	(.104)	(.144)	(.068)	(.589)	(.597)
Worker Characteristics								
Female (γ_{10})	–.033*	–.033*	–.033*	–.033*	–.034*	–.033*	–.033*	.015
	(.015)	(.015)	(.016)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.378)
Age (γ_{20})	.004**	.004**	.004**	.004**	.004**	.004**	.004**	.004**
	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.000)
Years of Education (γ_{30})	.026***	.026***	.027***	.026***	.026***	.027***	.026***	.026***
	(.003)	(.003)	(.002)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.002)	(.002)
Partnered (γ_{40})	.023	.025	.025	.025	.025	.025	.025	.025
	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.012)
Job Characteristics								
Full-Time (γ_{50})	–.086*	–.085*	–.085*	–.085*	–.085*	–.085*	–.085*	–.085*
	(.036)	(.036)	(.036)	(.036)	(.036)	(.036)	(.037)	(.034)
Self-Employment (γ_{60})	.906***	.904***	.904***	.903***	.904***	.905***	.904***	.904***
	(.058)	(.059)	(.058)	(.059)	(.059)	(.058)	(.058)	(.057)
High Earnings (γ_{70})	.068***	.069***	.069***	.069***	.069***	.068***	.069***	.069***
	(.008)	(.009)	(.009)	(.009)	(.009)	(.009)	(.009)	(.008)
High Opportunity for Advancement (γ_{80})	.049***	.049***	.049***	.049***	.049***	.050***	.049***	.049***
	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)
Country-Level Fixed Effects								
Intercept x GDP per Capita (γ_{01})		.009**	.007**	.008*	.009*	.007**	.010***	.010**
		(.002)	(.002)	(.003)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)
Intercept x Social Expenditure (γ_{02})			.007*					
			(.003)					
Intercept x Women's Labor Force Participation Rate (γ_{02})				.002				
				(.002)				
Intercept x Service Sector (γ_{02})					–.006			
					(.314)			
Intercept x Union Coverage (γ_{02})						.220*		
						(.078)		

(continued)

Table 2. *(continued)*

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Intercept x Weekly Hours Policy (γ_{02})							.014 (.014)	.014 (.014)
Intercept x Paid Leave Policy (γ_{03})							.006* (.003)	.006 (.003)
Female Slope x GDP per Capita (γ_{11})								−.000 (.002)
Female Slope x Weekly Hours Policy (γ_{12})								−.001 (.009)
Female Slope x Paid Leave Policy (γ_{13})								.000 (.001)
Intercept Random Effect (μ_0)	.020***	.013***	.011***	.012***	.013***	.013***	.012***	.012***
Female Slope Random Effect (μ_1)	.002							.002

Note: Entries are unstandardized coefficients; standard errors are in parentheses. $N = 21$ countries. GDP = gross domestic product. Gross domestic product per capita was measured in thousands.
*$p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

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Table 3. Multilevel Analyses Predicting Hours Excess with Individual- and Country-Level Variables

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Individual-Level Fixed Effects								
Intercept (γ_{00})	.562**	.201***	.109***	.056***	.028***	.201**	.004	.002
	(−3.666)	(−6.006)	(−5.222)	(−5.745)	(−4.844)	(−3.985)	(−1.629)	(−1.841)
Worker Characteristics								
Female (γ_{10})	1.232**	1.230**	1.230**	1.231**	1.231*	1.230**	1.223*	7.970
	(2.961)	(2.896)	(2.891)	(2.898)	(2.890)	(2.895)	(2.785)	(1.040)
Age (γ_{20})	1.004	1.004	1.004	1.005	1.005	1.004	1.004	1.004
	(1.026)	(1.176)	(1.178)	(1.218)	(1.281)	(1.179)	(1.204)	(1.201)
Years of Education (γ_{30})	1.056***	1.055***	1.054***	1.055***	1.055***	1.055***	1.055***	1.056***
	(6.270)	(6.171)	(6.178)	(6.215)	(6.273)	(6.153)	(6.198)	(6.234)
Partnered (γ_{40})	1.078	1.099	1.103	1.102	1.102	1.099	1.103	1.093
	(.960)	(1.215)	(1.265)	(1.285)	(1.264)	(1.228)	(1.266)	(1.131)
Job Characteristics								
Full-Time (γ_{50})	3.232***	3.454***	3.485***	3.462***	3.500***	3.458***	3.521***	3.531***
	(7.104)	(7.452)	(7.403)	(7.296)	(7.640)	(7.462)	(7.530)	(7.560)
Self-Employment (γ_{60})	1.030	1.022	1.026	1.013	1.011	1.022	1.022	1.022
	(.275)	(.204)	(.240)	(.119)	(.100)	(.205)	(.207)	(.208)
High Earnings (γ_{70})	1.019	1.016	1.016	1.012	1.016	1.016	1.012	1.010
	(.506)	(.420)	(.418)	(.340)	(.404)	(.415)	(.319)	(.261)
High Opportunity for Advancement (γ_{80})	.905**	.906**	.905**	.906**	.904**	.906**	.906**	.907**
	(−3.734)	(−3.643)	(−3.646)	(−3.614)	(−3.603)	(−3.646)	(−3.567)	(−3.502)
Country-Level Fixed Effects								
Intercept x GDP per Capita (γ_{01})		1.054***	1.052***	1.016	1.017	1.054**	1.065***	1.066***
		(4.355)	(4.349)	(1.107)	(.886)	(4.239)	(4.499)	(4.575)
Intercept x Social Expenditure (γ_{02})			1.032					
			(1.754)					
Intercept x Women's Labor Force Participation Rate (γ_{02})				1.033**				
				(3.108)				
Intercept x Service Sector (γ_{02})					68.128*			
					(2.648)			
Intercept x Union Coverage (γ_{02})						.982		
						(−.040)		

(continued)

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Table 3. *(continued)*

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Intercept x Weekly Hours Policy (γ_{02})							1.080	1.097
							(.964)	(1.175)
Intercept x Paid Leave Policy (γ_{03})							1.035*	1.036*
							(2.181)	(2.223)
Female Slope x Gross Domestic Product per Capita (γ_{11})								.990
								(−1.194)
Female Slope x Weekly Hours Policy (γ_{12})								.970
								(−.636)
Female Slope x Paid Leave Policy (γ_{13})								.975*
								(−2.725)
Intercept Random Effect (μ_0)	.507***	.310***	.256***	.231***	.281***	.319***	.318***	.321***
Female Slope Random Effect (μ_1)	.056**							.042*

Note: Entries are odds ratios (and *t*-ratios) from unit-specific models. $N = 21$ countries. GDP = gross domestic product. Gross domestic product per capita was measured in thousands.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

job characteristics, full-time work has a positive relationship to hours excess and opportunities for advancement has a negative relationship; the nonsignificant random effect suggests that the advancement opportunities relationship does not vary across countries.[1]

GDP per capita has a significant positive relationship to hours excess (Table 3, Model 2). Holding constant the other predictors and the random effect, for every \$1,000 increase in GDP per capita, the expected odds that a respondent would report hours excess increases by about 5 percent. Controlling for GDP per capita, women's labor force participation and service sector employment have positive relationships to hours excess (Models 4 and 5). Also, GDP per capita in combination with each of these characteristics reduces the cross-national random effects for the model intercept by approximately half, and thus explains meaningful cross-national variation in workers' reported hours excess. Neither social expenditure nor union coverage is a significant predictor (Models 3 and 6).

Of the two policy variables, paid leave policy has a significant positive relationship to hours excess, but weekly work hours policy is not significantly related (Model 7). Also, paid leave policy has a significant negative moderating effect on the micro-level relationship between gender and hours excess, such that the overall gender relationship is no longer significant when paid leave policies are taken into account (Model 8). The gender gap thus varies depending on paid leave policies; in countries with more generous paid leave policies (e.g., Sweden with 25 days), women are more similar to their male counterparts in likelihood of reporting an hours excess, whereas in countries with less generous leave policies (the United States being the extreme with no guaranteed leave) there is a larger gender gap, with women more likely than men to report an hours excess.

Control over hours: hours deficit. We also used HGLM to estimate multilevel logistic models for hours deficit (worker preference for more work hours). Based on a model with no predictors, the estimated log odds of reporting an hours deficit (γ_{00}) = –1.838 (SE = .159), which corresponds to a probability of .137.

Of the worker characteristics, women and workers with partners (married or living as married) were less likely to report an hours deficit than were men or workers without partners (Table 4, Model 1). Based on its random effect, the relationship of gender to hours deficit does not vary significantly across countries. Three job characteristics are significantly related to hours deficit (Model 1): full-time work and high income work have negative relationships to hours deficit, and being self-employed is positively related.[2] Only the relationship with self-employment does not appear to vary significantly across countries.

GDP per capita has a negative relationship to hours deficit (Table 4, Model 2). The odds ratio indicates that holding constant the other predictors and the random effect, for every \$1,000 increase in GDP per capita, the expected odds that a respondent would report an hours deficit decrease by about 7 percent. After controlling for GDP per capita, social expenditure and women's labor force participation have significant negative relationships to hours deficit (Models 3 and 4). GDP per capita, as well as GDP per capita in combination with these other two national characteristics, reduce the cross-national random effects for the intercept by over one-third, and thus explain meaningful cross-national variation in workers' reported hours deficit. Service sector proportion and union coverage are not significant predictors (Models 5 and 6).

Of the two policy variables (Model 7), paid leave policy has a negative relationship to hours deficit, but weekly hours policy is not significantly related. Both paid leave policy and weekly hours policy are significant positive moderators of the relationship between gender and hours deficit. After controlling for effects of these interactions, the relationship between gender and hours deficit is weaker but still statistically significant.

Tests of gender differences. To see if relationships of worker and job characteristics

Table 4. Multilevel Analyses Predicting Hours Deficit with Individual- and Country-Level Variables

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Individual-Level Fixed Effects								
Intercept (γ_{00})	.134***	.511*	1.423	1.468	.823	.540	210.905	8.929
	(−11.353)	(−2.425)	(.831)	(.667)	(−.227)	(−1.401)	(1.418)	(.619)
Worker Characteristics								
Female (γ_{10})	.699***	.703***	.706***	.700***	.703***	.704***	.697***	.000*
	(−4.491)	(−4.412)	(−4.364)	(−4.456)	(−4.403)	(−4.402)	(−4.526)	(−2.910)
Age (γ_{20})	.993	.993	.993	.993	.993	.993	.993	.994
	(−1.452)	(−1.320)	(−1.279)	(−1.326)	(−1.303)	(−1.327)	(−1.243)	(−1.254)
Years of Education (γ_{30})	.968	.968	.968	.968	.968	.968	.968	.968
	(−1.797)	(−1.817)	(−1.761)	(−1.793)	(−1.797)	(−1.816)	(−1.768)	(−1.761)
Partnered (γ_{40})	.795*	.795*	.793*	.798*	.795*	.795*	.784*	.780*
	(−2.394)	(−2.350)	(−2.375)	(−2.324)	(−2.367)	(−2.351)	(−2.521)	(−2.503)
Job Characteristics								
Full-Time (γ_{50})	.248***	.243***	.244***	.242***	.242***	.243***	.240***	.238***
	(−7.909)	(−8.277)	(−8.310)	(−8.312)	(−8.324)	(−8.280)	(−8.325)	(−8.406)
Self-Employment (γ_{60})	1.446**	1.444**	1.438**	1.435**	1.438**	1.443**	1.450**	1.451**
	(3.331)	(3.356)	(3.326)	(3.288)	(3.316)	(3.347)	(3.393)	(3.460)
High Earnings (γ_{70})	.861**	.868*	.868*	.867*	.868*	.868*	.869*	.866*
	(−2.921)	(−2.837)	(−2.771)	(−2.861)	(−2.801)	(−2.830)	(−2.802)	(−2.848)
High Opportunity for Advancement (γ_{80})	1.040	1.038	1.038	1.038	1.038	1.038	1.042	1.043
	(1.069)	(1.009)	(1.019)	(1.021)	(1.011)	(1.009)	(1.130)	(1.166)
Country-Level Fixed Effects								
Intercept x GDP per Capita (γ_{01})		.934***	.937***	.959*	.943*	.933***	.921***	.923***
		(−5.566)	(−5.821)	(−2.562)	(−2.615)	(−5.481)	(−6.001)	(−6.193)
Intercept x Social Expenditure (γ_{02})			.949*					
			(−2.748)					
Intercept x Women's Labor Force Participation Rate (γ_{02})				.975*				
				(−2.102)				
Intercept x Service Sector (γ_{02})					.356			
					(−.552)			
Intercept x Union Coverage (γ_{02})						.946		
						(−.104)		

(continued)

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Table 4. *(continued)*

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Intercept x Weekly Hours Policy (γ_{02})							.883 (−1.381)	.951 (−.598)
Intercept x Paid Leave Policy (γ_{03})							.955* (−2.838)	.967* (−2.158)
Female Slope x Gross Domestic Product per Capita (γ_{11})								1.003 (.348)
Female Slope x Weekly Hours Policy (γ_{12})								1.201* (2.738)
Female Slope x Paid Leave Policy (γ_{13})								1.027* (2.348)
Intercept Random Effect (μ_0)	.628***	.392***	.320***	.344***	.398***	.402***	.351***	.345***
Female Slope Random Effect (μ_1)	.036							.024

Note: Entries are odds ratios (and *t*-ratios) from unit-specific models. $N = 21$ countries. GDP = gross domestic product. Gross domestic product per capita was measured in thousands.

*$p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

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to the three types of control over working time differ by gender, we conducted additional micro analyses with main effects for gender and the seven micro characteristics, as well as interactions of gender with each characteristic. We found little evidence that relationships differ by gender (results not shown here). None of the gender interactions predicting hours excess or hours deficit are significant. For schedule control, however, there is one notable exception: the gender by education interaction. Examination of separate level-l models for each gender reveals that, although education has a significant positive relationship to schedule control for both genders, the relationship is somewhat stronger for men than for women, indicating that men reported slightly more schedule control for each additional year of education than did women.[3]

Social class comparisons. A final set of exploratory analyses examined whether the three types of control differ depending on worker social class, based on a self-reported measure of social class that was available for only 19 countries; data were missing for the United Kingdom and Hungary. (These exploratory analyses, which rely on subjective assessments of class, supplement our findings reported above, based on three other indicators that capture facets of class [i.e., education and jobs with high earnings or advancement opportunities]). Because the social class measure had different response options across countries, we aggregated responses into three categories: below middle class, middle class, and above middle class, and created two dichotomous variables: (1) lower class (1 = below middle class, 0 = middle class or above) and (2) upper class (1 = above middle class, 0 = middle class or below). We conducted level-1 analyses that included the two social class variables, controlling for the other eight micro characteristics (not shown).

We found a significant negative relationship between the measure of lower class and schedule control; lower class workers reported less schedule control than did workers from middle or upper classes, and the nonsignificant random

effect suggests that the relationship is invariant across the 19 countries.[4] Consistent with finding that lower class workers have less schedule control, the other class-related indicators (education, high earnings, and advancement opportunities) all have positive relationships to schedule control. The lower class measure is also positively related to an hours deficit, indicating that lower class workers were more likely to report this type of hours mismatch than were middle- or upper-class workers. Among the other class indicators, only high earnings has a significant negative relationship to hours deficit. The lower social class measure is not related to hours excess, and two other class indicators have inconsistent relationships, with a positive relationship for education and a negative relationship for advancement opportunities. The upper-class measure is not significantly related to any of the three control measures, suggesting that, after controlling for the eight individual-level worker and job characteristics, control over schedule and working time do not differ between upper- and middle-class workers.

Multilevel Analyses: Consequences of Worker Control over Working Time

In the next set of analyses, we test the consequences of worker control by examining micro-level relationships of each type of worker control to the three outcome variables, controlling for the eight worker and job characteristics (see Table 5). We used HLM analyses to test these relationships, and to determine whether the relationships hold across countries.

Worker schedule control is positively related to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Moreover, the nonsignificant random effects for these two relationships suggest a lack of meaningful cross-national variation. Schedule control is not significantly related to strain-based WFC for the total sample but, as we will discuss later, the relationship is significant for female workers.

Hours excess has significant relationships to all three outcomes, with a positive relationship to strain-based WFC, and negative relationships to job satisfaction and organizational

Table 5. Multilevel Analyses Predicting Strain-Based Work-Family Conflict, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment with Control over Schedule, Hours Excess, and Hours Deficit

Variable	(1) Strain-Based WFC	(2) Job Satisfaction	(3) Organizational Commitment
Fixed Effect			
Control over Schedule (γ_{90})	−.032	.122***	.125***
	(.021)	(.016)	(.016)
Hours Excess (γ_{90})	.233***	−.284***	−.156***
	(.019)	(.030)	(.025)
Hours Deficit (γ_{90})	−.074*	−.028	.140**
	(.031)	(.040)	(.037)
Random Effect			
Control over Schedule (μ_9)	.005**	.003	.001
Hours Excess (μ_9)	.001	.009*	.007**
Hours Deficit (μ_9)	.008*	.013	.017**

Note: Entries are unstandardized coefficients; standard errors are in parentheses. $N = 21$ countries. All three models control for individual-level effects of worker characteristics (gender, age, education, and partner) and job characteristics (full-time status, self-employed, high earnings, and advancement opportunities), but these coefficients are not shown.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

commitment. The nonsignificant random effect suggests that the relationship to strain-based WFC does not vary across countries. Hours deficit has a negative relationship with strain-based WFC and a positive relationship to organizational commitment, but is not significantly related to job satisfaction.

Tests of gender differences. To see if these relationships differ by gender, we repeated these analyses and included interactions of gender with each type of worker control (not shown). Seven of the nine interactions are statistically significant; we examined separate models by gender to clarify the findings. Of particular note are our findings that, for women, control over work schedule has a significant negative relationship to strain-based WFC, but this is not the case for men. Women with more control over their work schedules thus reported less WFC, whereas for men it made no difference. We also found that actual weekly work hours were related to schedule control for men but not for women (not shown); this raises the possibility that schedule control is negatively

related to strain-based WFC for women but not men because men with schedule control are working longer hours, as has been seen in the United States.[5] However, adding a control for weekly work hours does not change our pattern of gender results; schedule control still has a significant negative relationship to strain-based WFC for women, and a nonsignificant relationship for men (not shown).

Among the three types of control, only hours excess shows a consistent pattern of gender differences across all three outcome measures, with stronger relationships for women than for men. For women, hours excess has a stronger positive relationship to strain-based WFC and stronger negative relationships to job satisfaction and organizational commitment than is the case for men. The other significant gender interactions reflect small gender differences in effect sizes of relationships, but the directions of these relationships are consistent with (i.e., in the same direction as) results based on the total sample (see Table 5).

Social class comparisons. We also conducted exploratory micro analyses that

included interactions of the two social class measures with each type of worker control to see if social class moderates relationships with the three worker consequences (not shown). None of these interaction terms are statistically significant, suggesting that the relationships of control to worker consequences do not differ according to workers' social class.

DISCUSSION

Country-Level Influences and Worker Control over Working Time

Our study considerably extends prior research to document the importance of country context in understanding workers' control over work schedules and hours, independent of the more often studied effects of individual characteristics and job features. Our multilevel, multivariate analyses enable us to look inside the black box of country to begin to understand which country-level features affect control. For example, Nordic countries stand out as having, on average, the highest per capita GDP, public social expenditure, and women's labor force participation rates, and a comparatively large service sector, a relatively high union coverage rate, and relatively short standard work weeks—and, in general, more favorable outcomes with respect to workers' control over their working time. In contrast, Eastern European countries have quite different macroeconomic and labor market features (including comparatively long standard work weeks) and, overall, less favorable worker control outcomes.

Two intriguing findings emerge with regard to country-level influences. Factors that we typically interpret as indicators of affluence and economic independence for workers are associated, as we predicted, with greater control over starting and stopping times (i.e., schedule control). Paradoxically, these same factors are also associated with a greater likelihood of workers' reporting an hours excess, which we, in common with other researchers, have argued is a form of

mismatch and signals workers' having lower levels of control. Higher per capita GDP, higher rates of women's labor force participation, and a larger service sector are all associated with more widespread preferences for fewer hours, as are higher public social expenditures and more generous annual leave policies. All of these features are indicators of various types of economic security for workers and their families, through greater household income or more widespread public benefits and services that provide alternatives to earned income, thus making shorter work hours more economically feasible. Here our findings support Reynolds (2004:94), who noted that generous social policy "softens the consequences of cutting back on one's work hours," and Stier and Lewin-Epstein (2003:320) who concluded that "in countries with a high rate of decommodification, working men and women prefer to reduce their hours of work." With regard to schedule control, our results also support and extend those of Berg and colleagues (2004) by empirically documenting unions' significant role in helping workers gain control over their work schedules, although not, we find, in addressing hours mismatch.

Although generous welfare regimes may indeed soften the economic consequences of cutting back on hours, our findings of a link between excess hours and negative worker consequences raise questions about the ability of even generous welfare regimes to offset the time bind of long-hour jobs, many of which are in service, managerial, and professional occupations that make up a growing share of employment in the countries studied. The micro-level association of more educated workers and features of good jobs (advancement opportunities) with schedule control and hours excess highlights the emergence of a global pattern whereby workers, especially more elite workers, appear to have gained control over *when* they work at the expense of *how long* they work. This has negative consequences for these workers in the form of increased strain-based work-family conflict and less job satisfaction, as well as for their

employers in the form of less organizational commitment. This pattern of findings provides additional support for what Schieman and colleagues (2009:970) identify in the United States as the "stress of higher status" hypothesis, in which high status, long-hour jobs increase work-family border permeability, making it harder, not easier, for workers to manage work and family. Our results suggest this phenomenon is widespread throughout upper-income industrialized countries.

The effects of working time policies are somewhat surprising but might help explain the foregoing paradox. The indicator that we expected would have the stronger effect, the length of the standard work week, is not significantly associated with any of the three control measures, including the two that concern lack of control as reflected in hours mismatch. This unexpected finding is probably due to the limited variation on this indicator; the observed values across these 21 countries ranged only from 37 to 40 hours. In contrast, the generosity of paid leave policy is associated with more schedule control, more hours excess, and less hours deficit. The effects of paid leave policy could operate in a number of ways. Although we see no direct link to daily starting and stopping times, having more paid days off might contribute to a perception of having more control, because paid leave days are largely discretionary (workers can choose when to take them). The association between more generous leave policy (which reduces hours spent at the workplace over the course of the year) and hours excess (i.e., a preference for fewer hours) may arise partly due to a "social multiplier effect" (Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote 2005:4), such that workers will want more leisure time when family, friends, and colleagues have more leisure time or because time away from paid work is less stigmatized. Finally, more generous leave policies might be part of a larger package of more progressive gender policies, as in the Nordic countries. Although our analysis cannot identify the specific policy mechanisms involved, the invariant nature of the link between control

and favorable employee/employer outcomes underscores the benefits of policies, both public and private, that foster greater employee control.

Gender and Control over Working Time

A key contribution of our research is the examination of the consequences of workers having control over their time, which previous cross-national studies have not investigated. Understanding these consequences gives us insight into whether increased worker control lives up to the claims made for it. Our answer is a qualified yes. We found that across all countries, control over one's work schedule is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment for both women and men, but it has a significant relationship to strain-based WFC only for women, for whom greater control results in reduced levels of WFC. Although workers' reported hours deficit (underwork) shows mixed outcomes, their reported hours excess (an expression of overwork) is consistently linked to negative outcomes: lower job satisfaction, less organizational commitment, and more strain-based WFC. Importantly, we generally found across countries that hours excess (overwork) is linked more strongly for women than men to all three of the micro-level consequences, suggesting that lack of control over work hours has greater negative consequences for women, both in terms of the impact of work on their lives outside of work and their attitudes about their jobs and organizations.

Our results, which are consistent with findings of gender differences in WFC from limited prior comparative research (e.g., Moen and Forest 1990; Ruppanner 2011), make clear that gender plays a significant role in workers' capacity to gain control over working time in industrialized economies—and to women's disadvantage. In juggling work and family, not only do women have less control than men over their starting and stopping times, they are more likely to report overwork, that is, they want to work fewer hours. We also

find that working part-time, other things being equal, is associated with a desire for *more* hours, suggesting that women, who are more likely to work part-time, fall back on less desirable part-time jobs to gain flexibility and an hours fit consonant with their personal and family demands (Bardasi and Gornick 2008; Crompton 1997; Stone 2007).

Men, in contrast, have greater flexibility with respect to their starting and stopping times and a lower likelihood of wanting fewer hours, that is, they are less likely to be working longer hours than desired. Although men may be increasingly using these advantages to shoulder more family responsibilities, our results also show that they are more likely than women to desire more hours than they have, presumably to fulfill the traditional male breadwinner role. Moreover, in countries with higher rates of female labor force participation, workers (both women and men) desire fewer hours, suggesting that in these countries workers are trying to relieve the family time bind—and that men may be shouldering more family responsibilities (Jacobs and Gerson 2004). In the process, men may be changing cultural attitudes by making shorter work hours more socially acceptable in their countries, complementing the social multiplier effect discussed earlier.

We thus discern three striking gender gaps with regard to control over working time. The first is a schedule control gap such that women, who presumably need it more, have less control than men over their work schedules. The second is an hours preference gap, reflecting a neo-traditional household division of labor, which finds women unable to realize their preference for fewer hours and men unable to realize their preference for more. These gaps, in turn, are associated with, and help create a third gap, that we call a work and family well-being gap, whereby women are less likely than men to experience the favorable outcomes—enhanced job satisfaction and organizational commitment and less strain-based WFC—associated with the ability to control working time.

Were women able to gain more schedule control, our analysis suggests they would realize attendant attitudinal and organizational benefits for themselves, their employers, and their families. Our results also indicate that public policies can moderate some gender effects, and thus might hasten the closing of some work-related gender gaps. In fact, after the time period covered in this study, several of these countries enacted policies that explicitly grant workers more control over their work schedules or work hours (Hegewisch and Gornick 2008). Assessing the impact of these policies, including their effects on gendered divisions of labor in paid and unpaid work, should be a priority in future research.

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Notes

1. We also tested the possibility that these relationships reflect effects of current work hours, with additional level-1 analyses (not shown) using weekly hours worked in place of employment status (i.e., full-time versus part-time). These two variables are related, $r = .59$, $p < .001$, but the work hours variable was available only for 20 countries (New Zealand was missing). Consistent with the positive relationship to full-time work, we found a positive relationship between weekly hours worked and hours excess, odds ratio = 1.05, indicating that holding other predictors and the random effect constant, for each one-hour increase in weekly work hours, the expected odds that a worker would report hours excess increases by about 5 percent. Controlling for hours worked, relationships of other variables to hours excess are similar to those based on full-time work (see Table 3, Model 1). We thus conducted the remaining analyses using the full-time employment variable based on 21 countries and the larger sample.

2. Based on the subset of respondents with data for weekly work hours, we also examined these relationships in a level-1 model that controlled for weekly hours worked in place of full-time employment

status. The micro predictors all have similar relationships to hours deficit (not shown) as in the model with full-time employment. We conducted the remaining analyses using the full-time employment status variable and data from 21 countries.

3. Based on the 18 countries with data about children, we conducted additional analyses with parental status added to level-1 models estimated separately by gender. We found that living with children is not significantly related to any of the three types of control over working time for either women or men (not shown).

4. Research in the United States reports that workers' access to workplace benefits and rights, including flexible work arrangements, is positively correlated with social class (see, e.g., Heymann 2001; Heymann et al. 2002; Williams and Boushey 2010). Our findings are largely consistent with that claim, especially when we assess the impact of being less than middle class, according to self-report.

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