Alberta Families' Selection of Child Care Arrangements:
A Descriptive Study

by

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ABSTRACT

Alberta families' preferences for and use of child care arrangements for a designated target child in the family between the ages of zero and five years were investigated. Constraints to use of preferred care arrangements were also examined. Use and preference of child care arrangements and constraints were determined through a survey where respondents selected specific care types. The results indicate that most families use (in descending order of frequency): care in someone else's home by a non-relative, group care, spousal care and Interviewed Parent care. Most families prefer (in descending order of preference): spouse or partner care, care in a day care centre, care by another relative and care by a non-relative in another home. The majority of Alberta families use their preferred care arrangement. Families who did not use their preferred care arrangement identified care methods availability, cost, work and transportation as the most frequent constraints to their use. These findings support the findings of other Canadian provincial and regional survey studies and add to the growing awareness and understanding of child care needs in Alberta.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Significant changes have occurred in Canadian families during the latter part of the twentieth century. Movement away from the traditional division of sex roles, that is, husband as breadwinner and wife as homemaker and child nurturer, toward a fuller and more equal integration of women into the economic system has accelerated in the last few decades. This influx of women into the labour force combined with fundamental changes to the structure of Canadian families have resulted in an increased need for child care services.

The integration of women into the economic system is evident in the educational and occupational profiles of women (Romanuic, 1984). In 1950, 22% of university students at the undergraduate level were female. Ten years later, this figure was only slightly higher at 25%. However by 1981 almost half (47%) the student population was female, with a further increase of 6% in this figure by 1988 (Statistics Canada, 1990, Cat. 81-229 Annual). Although female students were heavily represented in the arts and sciences, there were also increasing numbers in traditionally male dominated fields as well (Statistics Canada, 1990, Cat. 89-503E).

Similarly, women's participation rates in male-dominated professions over the past 10-15 years has increased. The number of women in all professions rose 42% between 1981 and 1986. In many cases women's participation accounted for a majority of the total growth in a profession. For example, women were responsible

for all the employment growth among veterinarians between 1981 and 1986 as the number of women in the profession increased about one and a half times.

Overall, participation rates of women employed outside the home rose from 24% in 1951 to 30% in 1961, 41% in 1971, and 53% in 1981 (Romaniuc, 1984, p. 65). The recession in the early eighties caused a slight drop in the number of women participating in the labour force, however overall the percentage of women in the labour force did not decline even then. This general trend of increase continued and in 1988 the participation rate was 57.4% (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Annual Averages, 1981-88, Cat. 71-529).

As increased numbers of women enter the labour force, more and more children lived in families where their mother works. In 1988, 58% of children under the age of three had mothers who worked compared to 32% in 1975. These figures are higher for children three to five years at 65% in 1988 and 40% in 1970, and for children six to 15 years of age the figures were 73% in 1988 and 48% in 1975 (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Annual Averages, 1975&81-88, Cat. 71-529).

Changes in Canadian families caused by shifts in sex roles and subsequent divisions of labour are augmented by changes to its structure. There is a decline in formal marriages as more people opt for less formal arrangements. Census figures for 1981 to 1986 show a drop from 83.1% to 80.1% in the percentage of formally married women (Statistics Canada, 1986, Census: Families Part I, Cat. 93-106,

p. 70). However, between 1981 and 1986, the number of common-law unions increased by 36.5% (Statistics Canada, 1986, Census: Families Part I, Cat. 93-106, p.v).

In addition to an overall increase in different forms of unions, severing of formal marriages rose. In 1961 the average divorce rate was less than 200 per 100,000 married women. By 1986 this number had jumped from 200 to 1250, six times that of the early sixties. Approximately one half of these divorces involved families with children. In 1985 there were 32,000 divorces with approximately 56,000 dependent children involved in petitions for custody. Of the total number of divorces 22% involved one child, 22% two children and 7% involved three or more children (Avard & Harvey, 1989, p. 9).

Divorce rates, for the most part, have also resulted in a significant increase in the number of lone parent families. Although fewer in number than husband-wife families, lone parent families have increased much more rapidly. From 1981-1986, lone parent numbers increased by 19.6% compared to a 4.8% increase for husband-wife families. In 1981, lone parent families represented 11.3% of all families, a number which increased to 12.7% in 1986. Of these lone parent families close to 400,000 were headed by women while approximately 70,000 were headed by men (CICH, 1989, p. 7). Most female headed lone parent families contained children with mothers working outside the home.

The increased number of women entering the labour force, combined with basic changes to the structure of Canadian families, have resulted in greater need for child care services. The need for services is reflected in the number of children found in unlicensed care. Health and Welfare Canada (1988) figures indicate that of the 1,277,637 preschoolers (that is, children between the ages of zero and six years of age) with mothers in the labour force in 1988, 179,089 were cared for in licensed day care centres and 26,530 in licensed family day care. Approximately 83.9% of all Canadian preschool children requiring care were not found in licensed facilities.

The need for child care services necessitates a proportionate level of growth in child care programs, and government policies supportive of such development. In an attempt to overcome the current lack of services, Canadian child day care literature suggests that innovative policy recommendations are necessary to accommodate the diversity of emerging family structures.

Although child care specific federal legislation is non-existent, child care policy has become an issue of increasing economic and political import especially in the past twenty years. In the last eight years, The Task Force on Child Care, the Special Parliamentary Committee on Child Care, the Interdepartmental Interprovincial Working Group on Child Care and the federal government's Child Care Strategy have brought forth a number of proposals for national policy development and reform. Moreover, Bill C-144, better known

as the Child Care Act and part of the Progressive Conservative's Child Care Strategy, died in Senate when the federal election was called in October, 1988. The introduction of this bill was the first step towards Canadians having federal child care legislation.

Since the mid-sixties, a majority of provincial governments, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador have undertaken major reviews or planning approaches which address the growing demand for child care programs (Lero, Pence, Goelman & Brockman, 1987). The cultivation of supportive, innovative policies and practices necessitates "sound information about Canadian families' need for child care, current use patterns and the effects that current policies and practices have on children and their parents," all of which are lacking in Canadian research (Lero et al., 1987, p.2).

Griffin (1986) adds to this theme by stating that:

> in any policy decision which will affect the direction of day care services, it must be determined if the direction is one which parents can (and will) support, i.e., will they access the model of care supported in policy? Successful delivery of any services is dependent on the consumer and in day care parents are the consumers (p.41).

Likewise Molnar (1982) asserts that "if we are to successfully meet the needs of the parents who desire child care, then we must know what's important to them, ... "(p. 10). From an economic viewpoint parental support of future child care policy will depend on the policy's ability to reflect parents' preference of services.

Parental preference, and ultimately choice, is determined by numerous variables. Lero's (1981) examination of Kitchener parents' choice of child care services is represented in a parental decision-making model which features groups of interacting variables. Some of the variables found to influence parents' decision-making include: 1) background variables, (that is, parents' education and occupation, family income, marital status, ethnic/cultural background, and child rearing attitudes and practices); 2) reality constraints, (that is, availability of relatives, restrictions on family home day care and day care centres, location of centres, available spaces in centres and cost of specific arrangements); 3) attitudes related to child care; 4) perceived availability; 5) preferred care type; 6) age of child, and 7) information, knowledge and opinions about child care. Likewise, other regional (i.e. specific areas found within provinces) and provincial surveys, such as those from Ontario (Johnson, 1977), Saskatchewan, (Saskatchewan Department of Social Services, 1978) Prince Edward Island (Rochon, 1983), Manitoba (Stevens, 1984), Newfoundland and Labrador (Lacey, 1989) examined similar variables impacting on parental decision-making. No formal studies of parents' decision-making have been conducted in Alberta. To satisfy that need, the primary purpose of this study is to describe Alberta parents' use of and preference for child care services.

Inherent to this purpose are the following questions:

1. What child care arrangements are Alberta families using for their children? with what frequency?

2. What child care arrangements do Alberta families prefer? with what frequency?

3. What proportion of families use their preferred mode of care? What proportion of families do not use their preferred care arrangement?

4. What constraints to use of their preferred child care arrangement do Alberta families identify? with what frequency?

Definition of Terms

The following terms in this study are derived from the 1988 Statistics Canada publication, The 1988 National Child Care Survey Information Manual.

Reference Week - the reference week is the full week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to the date of interview with the Designated Adult (DA). For this survey, reference weeks were between September 11 to October 29, 1988. Questions relating to the reference week include A to Q of the questionnaire.

Child Care - the custodial or supervisory care of children under the age of 13 by persons other than the designated adult. A designated adult refers to the individual most responsible for making the child care arrangements in the economic family unit. Care is classified by the method of care, for example, day care centre, informal babysitter, by location, for example, school, own home and by the relationship of the child to the caregiver, for example, aunt, grandparent

Interviewed Parent (IP) - the adult in the economic family who is most responsible for making child care arrangements. If there are two parents and they make the child care

arrangements jointly and equally, the female parent was interviewed.

Spouse - the family member who is married to or living in common-law with the IP. Ex-spouses of partners not living in the household are not considered to be spouses for this survey

Demographics - includes selected parental and familial socio-demographic variables. They include:

(i) parental socio-demographics: IP's marital status, sex, age, income and years of education; spouse's sex, age, income and years of education, and

(ii) familial demographics: single parent family, dual parent family, number and age of children in the family, income of IP and spouse

Preference - is parents' stated preferred type of care arrangement given their current work schedule and income, for example, care in a nursery school program, care by a non-relative

Constraints - are those factors perceived to be preventing the use of the preferred care arrangement. They include: care method not available, quality, transportation, child's special needs, work schedule and other.

Type of Care Used - is the main method of care parents used for their child to allow them to work or study, for example, care in a day care centre, care in someone else's home by a relative.

Target Child - a child randomly selected from the economic family in respect to whom questions on main method of care, number and types of care methods used, and problems with care arrangements were asked for the reference year.

Dual Parent Family - one in which the economic family consists of a IP and spouse and at least one child 12 years of age or younger.

Single Parent Family - one in which the IP is single, widowed, divorced, or separated, and is not living with an opposite-sexed adult in the family home, and there is at least one child 12 years of age or younger in the economic family. A married or common-law IP who does not reside with his/her spouse is considered to be a single parent, even though she/he is still legally married.

Economic Family - all household members related by blood, marriage or adoption are members of the same economic family. The family includes spouses (including common-law), children (natural, adopted, step or foster), sons/daughters-in-law, grandchildren, parents, parent-in-law, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

The economic family does not include roomers, boarders, friends, and other people who usually reside in the dwelling but who are not related by blood, marriage (including common-law) or adoption to any other members of the household who are identified to from a particular family group. These persons form separate family groups. A foster child of 18 years of age or older forms a separate family group.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Child day care research literature, focussing on parents and their use of child care, can be divided into two reasonably distinct categories. The first category is made up of descriptive studies which originated as a result of the parental need for child care. This group of survey studies are the most numerous and were designed to describe care types and their characteristics. Calculation of percentages was the most frequent form of data analysis employed in these studies. These statistics appropriately described the 'lay of the land'. The descriptive studies provided policy-makers with initial empirical information about Canadian families and their need for child care.

The second category of studies moves beyond description to focus on specific variables related to parents' choice of child care arrangements. The majority of studies in this category are characterized by their examination of the association between two related variables, for example, cost of care and use of a day care centre while a smaller number of studies seek to explain 'why' parents choose certain types of child care arrangements. These studies utilize statistical procedures such as correlational statistics to determine the existence of a relationship or more advanced statistical procedures (for example, modelling) to explain why a situation or behaviour occurs. The research discussed in this second category are primarily U.S.-based, due to the lack of Canadian-based

studies. The following review of Canadian and U.S. child day care research describes and examines the aforementioned two categories of studies.

Descriptive Studies

The descriptive survey studies are subdivided into two groups: 1) national studies, and 2) provincial and regional studies. Also included in this group is a set of studies that focuses on specific child care settings. Demographic, preference and constraint variables are discussed individually.

The primary mode of inquiry for Canadian child day care descriptive studies is national, provincial and regional surveys and needs assessments. These empirical studies seek to determine parents' child care needs, preferences, and use patterns. However, they do not provide consistent definition, examination and analysis of key determinants.

National Studies

Several Canadian surveys have attempted to develop an information base about Canadian child care. For the most part, these surveys have been undertaken by Statistics Canada in conjunction with their Labour Force Surveys. The primary focus of the Labour Force surveys is on employment issues -- only occasional secondary emphasis has been given to child care. As a result, these surveys generally reflect employment trends rather than the child care uses and preferences of Canadian families. For example, eligibility for the 1973 Labour Force Survey (a Statistics Canada survey), required

women to have current employment as well as continuing employment in the prior calendar year. These requirements omitted those Canadian families who wanted or needed child care but did not meet labour force survey participation criteria.

In 1983, at a workshop held at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. organized by Dr. Hillel Goelman and Dr. Alan Pence, a group of researchers interested in child day care research met and identified the need for a national child day care study. To that end the National Day Care Research Network was formed and in 1985 a subgroup of the Network conducted a pilot study for the Federal Task Force on Child Care that considered Canadian parents' need for, and use of child care arrangements (Lero, Pence, Charlesworth, Canning, Esbensen, Morrison, & Goelman, 1985). This study of 336 Canadian Families sought to:

> examine and assess the need for child care services and paid parental leave in Canada as well as the adequacy of the current system in meeting this need including ... affordability and availability to parents at different levels of income in various regions of the country of child care services which are consistent with their needs and preferences (Lero et al., 1985, p.1).

This investigation also acted as a pilot study for the Canadian National Child Care Study (CNCCS) funded in 1988 (Lero, Pence, Goelman, & Brockman, 1987). The CNCCS, currently underway, has gone far beyond the 1985 pilot in its attempt to provide reliable descriptive information at both the national and provincial level on the exact nature of child care needs, use patterns, costs, and parental

preferences, concerns and opinions -- factors affecting child care and effects of child care experiences on children and families. This survey is also unique amongst Canadian research by providing a consistent nation-wide data base for the first time and by representing one of the few national studies in Canada to focus on child day care. The information derived from this study will be especially useful for policy development both for child day care and for families as they struggle to balance work and family responsibilities. Furthermore, CNCCS results will provide other researchers with a contextual backdrop for the interpretation of future child care studies.

Provincial and Regional Studies

The provincial and regional studies parallel the national studies on a smaller scale. Despite the disparity in size the provincial and regional studies provided a more focussed and sophisticated look at child day care than did national studies prior to the CNCCS. Direct comparisons between the provincial studies is difficult given the diversity that exists in definition and classification of variables, and methods of examination and analysis. Nonetheless, they do provide a description of factors influencing parents' choice of child care arrangements.

Demographics

Most studies examine the relationship of certain demographic variables to parents' choice of child care. In the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study (1978) use and preference are

exclusively correlated with parental and familial demographic characteristics. By comparison, other studies (Johnson, 1977; Lero, 1981; Rochon, 1983; Stevens, 1984; & Lacey, 1989) examine the interaction of preference and reality constraints relative to parents' choices. Steven's (1984) Winnipeg study identifies parents' perception of 'best' quality of care for children of different age groups, while Rochon's (1983) Prince Edward Island study asked parents to rank eight constraints influencing their choice of child care program. Likewise, Lacey's (1989) investigation of child care arrangements in Newfoundland asked parents to rank a list of child care factors affecting their use and choice of child care arrangements. The Kitchener study, conducted by Lero (1981), elaborates further on influences affecting parental choice. She divides influences into sets of interacting variables which include: information about child care, perceived availability, child care history, knowledge and opinions, attitudes related to child care, and search and decision-making behaviors.

While there are differences in the examination of variables, there are also some similarities in findings. All of the aforementioned provincial and regional surveys (Johnson, 1977; Saskatchewan Department of Social Services, 1978; Lero, 1981; Rochon, 1983; Stevens, 1984; & Lacey, 1989) report age of child as a significant factor in parents' choice of child care arrangements. Johnson (1977), Saskatchewan Department of Social Services (1978), and Stevens (1984) found the majority of parents to generally prefer

and use some form of home care arrangement for children under three years of age, while center care arrangements were preferred for children three to five years of age. Lero (1981) also recognizes the significance of age in her Schematic Model of the Child Care Selection Process (1981). This model incorporates several sets of interacting variables as determiners of child care choice with the exception of age which stands on its own.

Johnson (1977), Saskatchewan Department of Social Services (1978), Lero (1981), Rochon (1983), and Lacey (1989) also found the number of children under 15 years and number of parents in the family to have a significant impact on parental choice of child care arrangements. Johnson (1977) found a significant difference between the number of parents using informal home care and using centre care. Her results reveal 9.0% of centre care users are dual parent families, while 72.0% of informal care users (e.g. parents using unpaid relative care) are single parents. By contrast Lero's Kitchener-based data indicates 80-90% of the families using both centre care and informal home care are two parent families. The anomaly here is likely due to availability of care arrangements and regional differences that exist between the two studies.

Johnson (1977), Saskatchewan Department of Social Services (1978), and Lero (1981) note a significant correlation between parents' choice of child care, family income and socio-economic status. These investigators found day care centres used primarily by upper and middle class parents, while home care in formal and

informal arrangements are associated with lower family incomes and status. In the related variable, mother's mean income, Johnson (1977) finds mothers who use relative care earn approximately $2,000.00 per year less than mothers who use sitter or centre care.

Ethnicity, another family background variable, also impacts on parents' selection of child care. Both Lero (1981) and Johnson (1977) find it to be significant. Johnson's study (1977) indicates that families that are non-Canadian born utilize less centre care and less sitter care compared to Canadian-born or English-speaking families. Likewise, Lero (1981) finds families of British origin primarily utilize family day home care and non-profit day care centres, while persons of German and Western European origin are more likely to use private day care centres.

Parents' home language is an element of the broader ethnic category. Steven's Winnipeg study (1984) compares user groups with parents' home language and finds, for example, that parents speaking a language other than French or English have 46.8% of children in non-market care, that is, care free of charge, while English and French parents have 15.8% of children in this type of care.

Three studies (Johnson, 1977; Saskatchewan Department of Social Services, 1978; Lero, 1981) indicate that parents' residency within a specific neighborhood is related to their choice of child care. Johnson explored such variables as specific neighborhood and duration of residency while the Saskatchewan Department of Social

Services study only investigated duration of residency. Unlike these studies, Lero views aspects of 'neighborhood' from four sources of information that parents consulted during their search for child care. Neighborhood was not directly linked to child care choice as in the other studies, but is seen as part of a group of interacting variables influencing choice.

Related to residency in a specific area are Lacey's (1989) categories of urban and rural used in her Newfoundland study. She finds that people in rural settings use different models of care from their urban counterparts. Urban users frequently use privately-arranged care by a non-relative in the parent's home, while rural users used privately arranged care in their home by relative. She attributes these results to the lack of care models available in rural settings.

Parents' level of education is another important demographic variable. Johnson's 1981 Ontario data supports the assertion that highly educated parents use centre care, whereas the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services (1978) data does not find education of parents significant. However, they do report "near significance" on this variable. The Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study used broader more general categories than Johnson did. Therefore, it is conceivable that Johnson found significance because fewer care types were considered.

Lero (1981), on the other hand, determined that father's education is highly correlated with centre care, while mother's

education is more related to attitudes and evaluative criteria than to a specific care type. Of those children attending day care centres 48.0% of their fathers have grade 12 or 13 and university or post-graduate education, while 14.7% of fathers with similar education have children in informal care, and 5.9% in family home day care. Even if the two non-day care categories were collapsed there would still be a 2.5 to 1 difference between the two choices of care.

Two other demographic influences found in the provincial and regional reports are respondent's age and occupation. However, only the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study (1978) reported these variables as significantly impacting on parents' choice of child care arrangements.

Insert Figure 2.1 about here

Preference

Preference, according to the previously discussed provincial and regional surveys, may be defined as a simple statement of desire, or alternatively, the result of complex interactions between numerous variables. Either perception affects researchers' investigations and discussions of parents' child care decisions. As a result, discussion of preference and resultant findings, like demographics, differs amongst the provincial and regional studies.

Johnson (1977) elicited a statement of preference and finds the majority of respondents (49%) preferred centre care followed by paid sitter unrelated to the family, and care by a relative. Johnson

found location to be the key determiner of preference and use for study respondents.

Lero's survey (1981) of Kitchener families reveals 43% of respondents preferred centre care, a finding similar to Johnson's. Respondents' scores on the Attitude Toward Day Care Centre Care (DAYCATTS) scale also supported her findings by indicating widespread acceptance and support for centre care. Lero (1981) examined sets of interacting variables, she identified as 'evaluative criteria and attitudes' to determine parental preference and use of child care services. Most respondents in her study designated reliability as a minimum criteria for their preference.

The Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study (1978) was similar to Johnson's (1977) in its elicitation of ideal preference stated by the respondent. They differed, however, in their presentation of the analyzed findings; the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study presents its findings relative to selected demographic variables while Johnson reports her conclusions in frequency tables.

The Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study (1978) finds age of child, school attendance, respondents' education and number of children in the family, significantly associated with parents' identified preference. A substantial number of parents, 31.72%, prefer care by mother. However, 43.6% of respondents regard paid care (including day care centres, family day care homes, private nursery schools and paid sitter in home) as the desirable

form. Unpaid forms of care are preferred by 14.3% of parents. These findings are qualified by a statement recognizing that these are general and tentative conclusions only, based on cross-tabulations. The size of the sample must be equally considered given that it is much more likely for a variable to be significant in a large sample than in a small.

Respondents in Lacey's Newfoundland study (1989) were presented with a number of preference options to choose from. Of the 136 parents surveyed, 30 preferred group child care centre, 42 selected licensed family day care, and 50 chose private arrangements. Lacey (1989) also notes a list of selection criteria influencing Newfoundland parents' choice or preference of care type. However, she does not associate these influences with specific care types. The rank order question reveals safety, personal character of caregiver, nutrition, appropriate discipline, programming, availability and social time with children as ranking between one and seven respectively for Newfoundland parents.

Parents surveyed in the Winnipeg study (1984) were asked to identify the type of care they perceived as providing the 'best' quality of care for children in specific age groups. The selection criteria Stevens ascribes to preference are similar to Lero's 'evaluative criteria and attitudes'. Those responding for the under three age group perceived sitter care and care in a day care home as 'best', followed by care in a day care centre. Parents of this age group believe individual attention in a home-like atmosphere and

caregiver trustworthiness are best provided by sitter care and day care homes. For the three to five age group, the majority of parents perceived day care centres as the 'best' form of care. Their reasons are similar to those stated by the parents of the under three year olds group except that an educational and social environment takes precedence over individual attention in a homey atmosphere. Those parents who chose a form of home care for three to five year olds also gave a similar rationale to the parents of the under three group, describing individual attention and familiarity of the caregiver as most important.

The Prince Edward Island study (1983) supports Lero's findings and also reports similar criteria associated with choice or preference of care type. Parents naming centre and non-centre care did so on the basis of caregiver personality and child rearing attitudes with a variation in the criteria between the two based on educationally stimulating environment and parents' occupation respectively.

Insert Figure 2.2 about here

Constraints.

A third factor influencing parental choice of child care arrangements is identified constraints, that is, those factors that disallow the use of a preferred mode of child care. Only one study (Lero, 1981) identifies and measures constraints per se. Lero finds availability of relatives, restriction on family day care and day care centres, and cost of care to be significant influences on parents'

choice. Although not termed a 'constraint' variable, cost is also identified as playing a significant role for most studies (Johnson, 1977; Saskatchewan Department of Social Services, 1978; Rochon, 1983; Stevens, 1984; Lacey, 1989). Lacey found cost ranked fourth behind quality, caregiver turnover and hours available, respectively, for Newfoundland parents.

Clearly these provincial and regional studies reveal different findings. The diverse methods used to define and examine variables contributes to this difference. Lero's (1981) study exemplifies this diversity. All of the previously mentioned studies consider demographic variables as directly influencing parental choice while Lero views their influences as both direct and indirect. This is not surprising, given that Lero's model deviates from a linear conceptualization of variables influencing child care choice to an interactive view of primary and intermediary variables determining choice. Her study marks the beginning in Canadian survey research of a more complex examination of the relationships that exist between groups of interacting variables influencing parents' consideration and use of child care options.

Provincial and Regional Studies Emphasizing Specific Settings

In addition to the aforementioned studies there exists a small number of provincial and regional studies emphasizing specific settings, such as, home care, rural care, or workplace care. Although these studies share the same purpose as the provincial and regional studies, they are situationally sensitive in specific areas, an aspect

often masked in larger surveys. The PMA Consulting Group (1983) surveyed parents who used private-home day care in Ontario. Their results support those of Lero (1981) and Johnson's (1977) parental and familial demographics as well as Stevens (1984) 'best' care for children.

Abramovitch (1989) investigated rural child care needs and preferences in southern Ontario by accumulating a number of smaller surveys and reports. She determined that attitudes and values of rural residents are key factors in rural day care. For example, a common 'stressor' among rural residents is the element of 'togetherness', that is, the ability of the family to work together. The success of the farm is often dependent on the families ability to do this. Abramovitch finds that togetherness becomes a stressor when the family begins to feel they are together too much. Lero's Kitchener study (1981) corroborates these findings. Abramovitch asserts that child care services must be sensitive to the unique needs and values of rural parents.

A study by Friendly, Cleveland and Willis (1989), focuses on the provision of child care for Ontario families with needs not easily met by ordinary child care services. Their findings indicate that few child care services exist which assist families with atypical child care needs. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of information on the provision of flexible child care services. In conclusion, Friendly et al. purpose that more flexible child care services would allow Canadian

families a better choice of ways to integrate the needs of family and working life.

In addition to Project Child Care, Johnson (1986) has more recently been involved in a study examining the workplace as a support for families. Although the primary focus of the study is alternative work arrangements, the parents' views of their needs and how they fit into their work schedule lend considerable light to the assessment of child care needs.

Limitations to the Provincial and Regional Survey Studies

Out of the provincial and regional studies emerges a varying picture of child care needs and uses across Canada. The differences between these pictures are in part due to: study specific terminology and classification systems, geographic disparity, varying methodologies and analyses, and basic conceptual differences. Each study is unique and as such has unique properties and limitations.

Johnson's Toronto-based study (1977), one of the first large-scale community-based studies of Canadian day care, is quoted frequently. However, Kyle (1980) points out several limitations to this study. One of these limitations involves Johnson's report of centre care as most frequently cited, with care by sitter at home as the second most frequent response from one third of the respondents. Yet, Kyle finds that reframing the data, that is, taking the three categories of home-type care and combining them, shows that over 50% of parents prefer some form of home-based care. This is notably different from the impression given by the study.

Unlike Johnson's study (1977) with its analytical and interpretation limitations, drawbacks in the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services' study (1978) are more conceptual; the study attempts to establish parental need of child care services solely on the basis of demographic data. Even though the Saskatchewan research employs discriminate analysis, a more sophisticated statistical procedure, it is limited by its theoretical linearity, that is, by excluding all variables except demographic data.

Rochon's (1983) Prince Edward Island study presents another kind of limitation. Only two types of licensed child care are examined. This eliminates families that did not have children enrolled in centre care or kindergarten. Furthermore, it does not contain the breadth of demographic data considered in the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study (1978), nor does it consider the variety of influences on parental decision-making that other studies do (Johnson, 1977 & Lero, 1981).

Lacey's Newfoundland study (1989) is limited to assessing availability and accessibility. The study takes into account several family demographics such as primary caregiver in the family, number of children, labour force activity, urban/rural residency, along with specific child care factors directly relating to use, such as cost availability, safety, and proximity to work. The study also examined different types of child care and combinations of types. However, the findings of this study are limited to cross-tabs and frequency tables whose cells sizes are too small to be sufficiently

reliable to generalize to the population of the province. The study does provide a picture of a specific group of Newfoundland families' views on availability and accessibility of child care.

Stevens' (1984) Winnipeg study employs one of the most sophisticated statistical procedures of all the provincial and regional studies. Regression techniques are used to predict future child care needs. However, this study is limited by the conceptualization of the information used to predict future trends. Even though Stevens' statistical manipulations are more sophisticated than most provincial and regional studies, Stevens bases his predictions primarily on a 'surface level' indicator rather than exploring the underlying structure of that indicator. For example, number of hours per week is regressed on type of care even though it appears to be mediated by numerous other variables.

Lero's study (1981), by contrast, clearly illustrates the complexity and interrelationship of variables that need to be considered when examining parents' choice of child care. Her Schematic Model of the Child Care Selection Process posits numerous sets of interacting variables that influence parents' selection of child care arrangements. While being ecological in its consideration of such influence, the practicality of applying such a model is questionable. For example, in speculations on numbers of possible cells, the combinations become endless and impossible to manage in a practical setting.

Despite the disparity amongst the descriptive studies they establish a recognition of a 'need' for child care services - a need which is empirically supported through the examination of parents' need, preference and use patterns. Baseline studies such as these serve not only to raise pubic awareness and inform policy, but also to highlight and provide impetus for examination of why differences exist between need, preference and use.

Beyond Description

The second category of child day care research literature examined in this thesis contains studies that focus on specific variables or groups of variables that are seen to be associated with or explain parents' selection of child care arrangements. This category is therefore divided into two groups: 1) specific variable studies and 2) explanatory studies. Due to the lack of Canadian studies in either group the majority of investigations are U.S.-based. Studies in this category differ from the previously discussed Canadian descriptive studies by: one, attempting to examine the relationships between parents' selection of care type and specific variables, and two, establishing cause for such selection.

Specific Variable Studies

Of the U.S. studies, Hock et al. (1987), Molnar (1982) and Alexander and Markowitz (1982) examined parents' attitudes, while Rutman and Chomie (1973), Lehrer (1983), Hill-Scott (1981) and Moore (1980) explore the effects of demographic and economic influences on parental decision-making.

Hock et al. (1987) and Molnar (1982) suggest maternal employment preference is an important variable for understanding both mothers' responses to the maternal role and how mothers perceive their role as ultimately affecting their choice of child care arrangements. Hock's study examined maternal separation anxiety as it related to the balance between motherhood and employment. One of the most significant variables is women's positive or negative attitude toward work. Many mothers with infants who returned to the paid labour force reported that they do so in a climate of criticism and doubt. Molnar investigated mothers who chose family home care. These mothers identify a home-like setting as the most important criteria for them in selecting child care. This criterion corresponds to their desire to be at home caring for their child.

Alexander and Markowitz (1982) investigated the attitudes of mothers of preschool children toward the government's role in day care. They found parents' attitude toward government's role in day care affected their choice of child care. Alexander and Markowitz emphasize mother's attitudes toward child care providers and child care settings. Fewer mothers using out of home or family day care supported the licensing of child care providers than mothers using in home or centre-based care.

Moore's study (1980) differs from Hock et al. (1987), Molnar (1982) and Alexander and Markowitz's (1982) work by focussing on the effects of parental and familial demographic variables on parents choice of child care arrangement. His study is most comparable to

the large-scale survey studies which share the same purpose. This slant is not surprising given that data for Moore's study was derived from an American national survey, the National Child Care Consumer Study (1975). Moore finds cost and age of child when considered in combination with parents' employment are highly related to the amount and type of care chosen. Conversely, no relationship is established between family income and household structure, and use of care. Parents who select home care place most emphasis on the child care provider. Similar results are reported in Canadian studies by Johnson (1977), Lero (1981) and Pence & Goelman (1985).

Rutman and Chomie (1973) examine comparable parental and familial demographics. However, the user groups in their study are different from Moore's (1980). Their investigation of parents using commercial and subsidized services reveals that parents using commercial day nursery services are more negative about the staff and programs, but are positive about their children learning discipline and manners. Parents using subsidized day nursery services are positive about the social skills their children learn.

Like Moore's (1980) exploration, Lehrer's study was a secondary analysis using the National Survey of Family Growth (1973) as her data source. Lehrer (1983) considers demographics and economic determinants in her examination of child care mode choice in two-earner households. She finds husband's income, wife's wage, number of hours that she works, and age of the children are

associated with parents' selection of child care. The descriptive studies yield similar conclusions.

Hill-Scott (1981) sought to assess the impact of child care subsidy on family functioning, that is, did subsidy support or not support family life? She found subsidization to have less of an impact than its opponents or advocates alleged. For low income black parents with preschool children the provision of child care subsidies enable families to move toward self-sufficiency. For example, subsidies provide support to parents by enabling them to attain child care which in turn allows them to be employed. Hill-Scott notes the need for expanded supply of child care spaces and categorical subsidy.

Seeking Explanation

A smaller group of studies contained in the second category seek to explain why parents select specific child care arrangements. Lero (1981), Pence and Goelman (1985) and Cleveland (1990) among the Canadian studies and Molnar (1982) U.S.-based, examine parental and familial demographic and attitudinal influences in order to discern overt and subtle differences between users of contrasting care types. According to Molnar (1982) "if we are to successfully meet the needs of parents who desire child care, then we must know what's important to them, that is, what personal needs do they bring to the child care decision-making process" (p.10). She found that "mothers choosing one type of care over another have different sets of priorities regarding what is important in the child care

arrangement" (abstract). Furthermore, mothers' reasons for choosing day care or family day care correspond with their attitude toward work. Most mothers using family day care do so because of the home-like qualities; this response is congruent with their desire to be at home rather than working. By contrast, centre care users chose day care for reasons related to the centre itself, such as educational activities for children. Mothers who used day care centres were generally more positive about work.

In the Victoria Day Care Research Project "user groups are less distinguishable by socioeconomic factors than by caregiving philosophies and values" (Pence & Goelman, 1985, p.37). Pence and Goelman (1985) found that parents roughly divide on "program" versus "characteristics of caregivers". These findings although not identical in their examination of specific variables to Molnar's support the notion of the importance of personal and attitudinal influences on parents' selection and use of child care arrangements. Additional corroboration for Molnar's and Pence and Goelman's findings is found in Lero's (1981) and Hock et al.'s (1987) investigations.

The studies by Lero (1981), Molnar (1982), and Pence and Goelman (1985) examine user group characteristics in order to determine similarities and differences between them, thereby ascertaining the degree to which specific variables influence parents' choice of care. The discovery of these specific or underlying variables (e.g., attitudes) move toward explaining 'why' relationships

exist between specific variables and types of care. The fourth study discussed in this section does indeed claim to have explanatory power although it does not focus on the attitudinal issues that the other three studies found in this section do. Instead it approaches the selection of child care arrangements from an econometric perspective.

Cleveland's work (1990) represents the first Canadian econometric study of selection of child care arrangements. His secondary analysis of Johnson's (1977) Project Child Care data set employed advanced modelling statistical techniques to explain and thereby predict parents' child care selection behaviors.

Cleveland (1990) hypothesized that four key groups of variables (attributes of each care type including price and proximity to the child's home, number and ages of children in the family, characteristics of the mother's work hours, and socio-economic variables) significantly influence parents' choice of child care arrangements. His findings reveal price and convenience variables to be important predictors along with ages and number of children in a family. He also found mothers working long hours are less likely to use care by relative, unless they work evening or week-ends, and the higher the mother's educational level, the more likely she will use a day care centre. Non-English immigrant families appear reluctant to have their children cared for outside the home. However, unlike the majority of conclusions reached by the provincial and regional studies, family income and single versus dual

families were found to have no independent influence on parental selection of child care arrangements. It is more likely that a group of interacting variables influence parental decision-making.

The first group of studies discussed in this category found specific attitudinal, demographic and economic variables related to parents' selection of child care arrangements. The second group of studies reveals even further considerations in understanding how parents select child care arrangements. Most of these studies found attitudes towards work, personal needs, and caregiver philosophies exemplified user groups more than singular demographic variables such family income or cost of care. The exception to this is found in Cleveland's (1990) econometric study where price and convenience variables and the ages and numbers of children in the family are important predictors of parents' selection and use of child care arrangements. Personal or attitudinal factors were not examined by the original study, as a result their significance in Cleveland's study could not be determined. These studies do however indicate the wide range of personal and contextual variables that may influence Alberta parents' selection and use of child care arrangements. The need for further study of parental decision-making influences is likewise evident.

Rationale

The relatively recent recognition given to child care by policy makers has sparked an increase in policy discussions both at the provincial and federal levels of government. Policy based on an

informed context can result in child care policies that more accurately reflect the needs of Canadian parents as they struggle to balance work and family commitments. Canadian child day care research has attempted to determine the need for child care services by investigating parents' preferences and use patterns. Studies have sought to not only describe what exists but to discern specific variables that influence parental decision-making and how those variables impact on parental selection of child care arrangements.

Descriptive studies provide empirical evidence of Canadian parents' need for and use of child care. They also act as an impetus for future research while at the same time providing a context for studies seeking to examine why differences exist between parents' preference for and use of child care arrangements.

As indicated by the literature review, there have been several studies conducted on various aspects of child care in Canada. The research, however, does not include any specific studies of Alberta parents' preference for and use of child care nor are existing studies generalizable to Alberta. Alberta is uniquely different from other Canadian provinces. For example, Alberta is the only province with at least 80% of its child care services being privately delivered. Child care legislation in the province supports this way of delivery. Relating child care policy or service delivery from another province to Alberta would create an inaccurate picture of what is really occurring. In fact the Canadian child care research literature contains little detail that could be inferred to child care in Alberta.

As Alberta has not been the site of any studies of parental selection and use of child care arrangements, the collection of data for the CNCCS represents a significant opportunity for an analysis of parents' use of and preference for child care arrangements in Alberta. The research literature reviewed above establishes a context and a goal for this study. Beginning with the earliest studies of the Canadian Labour Force through to the CNCCS we see a body of research growing that serves to inform the research community about parental selection and use of child care arrangements. While the CNCCS is the largest study of child care and its use to date in Canada, even with its considerable size and scope, some aspects of parental use, preference and perceived constraints to use cannot be fully examined due to restrictions in cell sizes. This thesis will explore the phenomena of parental preference for and use of child care arrangements.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Procedure

The empirical analysis for this study is based on the National Child Care Survey data set collected in the fall of 1988. The Canadian National Child Care Study (CNCCS) is a collaborative, multi-year project currently being conducted by four Canadian researchers from four different universities: Dr. Donna Lero (University of Guelph), Dr. Alan Pence (University of Victoria), Dr. Hillel Goelman (University of British Columbia), and Dr. Lois Brockman (University of Manitoba). The information presented in this chapter includes a description of CNCCS Survey procedures along with specific adaptations for this study.

Population and Sample

The Canadian National Child Care Study (1988) is a comprehensive study of Canadian's child care needs, uses and preferences. Along with accurate and reliable estimates of Canada as a whole, the study also includes various subgroups as they exist proportionately in the population. These subgroups encompass, for example: families with at least one infant, one preschooler or one school age child; lone parent and two parent families; families that vary in work status of both parents; families located in large cities, suburban centres, small towns, and farming areas; families with different levels of economic resources.

The population for this study differs from the CNCCS population by using only that portion of the data that represent Alberta families with Interviewed Parents (IP) who either worked at a job or were studying during the reference week. Of these families only those with a designated 'target child' between the ages of zero and five years were selected. Approximately 800 Alberta families' children have these characteristics.

The following information describes Sampling Design, Instrumentation, and Data Collection (including Interviewing, Supervision and Control Procedures) for the 1988 National Child Care Survey. All information is taken from The 1988 National Child Care Survey Information Manual (Sept., 1988). Only those parts that most relate to this study are included. For a more complete description of these topics see the Appendix.

Sampling Design

> In order to fulfill the requirements for a sample that was large enough and diverse enough to accommodate the national and subgroup needs, The National Child Care Survey (NCCS) was administered as a supplement to the monthly Labor Force Survey (LFS) in September 1988. The LFS is a monthly household survey whose sample of individuals is representative of the civilian, non-institutionalized population in Canada's 10 provinces. Residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories, persons living on Indian Reserves, and inmates of institutions are not included in the survey.
>
> The sample design for the LFS is based upon a stratified, multi-stage design employing probability sampling at all stages of the design. Design principles were the same for each province.

Labor Force Survey information is obtained from all persons who are 15 years or older, while demographic information is obtained for all persons residing in a selected dwelling.

Instrumentation

The National Child Care Survey used three separate questionnaires to collect the requisite information from the respondents. They included:

1) The Household Record Docket Questionnaire (Form 03)- This questionnaire was given to all household members. It was designed to collect demographic information about each member, for example, sex, marital status, educational attainment and relationship to head of the economic family. Form 03 also collected the month and year of birth of all children listed as under 13 years old, along with identifying an Interviewed Parent in each economic family to serve as the primary information source.

2) The Labour Force Questionnaire (Form 05)- The Labour Force Questionnaire was used to collect information on the current or most recent labour force market activity of all household members 15 years of age or older in those households with children under the age of 13. This form includes questions on hours of work, job tenure, type of work, reason for hours lost or absence, job search undertaken, availability for work and school attendance.

06 The National Child Care Survey (Form 06) - The National Child Care Survey was administered in each Economic Family to the parent who described her/himself as most responsible for child care arrangements. Some parts of the interview focussed on the Interviewed Parent, or her/his spouse or partner, while other parts focussed on child care used in the reference week for each child in the family younger than 13 years of age.

The National Child Care Survey (Form 06) was organized in 23 sections. They are:

Section A: Interviewed Parent's Work / Study
Section B: Spouse's Work / Study
Section C: Disability
Section D: Unusual Circumstances
Section E: School Attendance
Section F: Kindergarten / Nursery School
Section G: Care in a Before or After School Program
Section H: Care in a Daycare Centre
Section I: Care by a Relative / Non Relative
Section J: Care by Interviewed Parent While Working
Section K: Care by Spouse While Working
Section L: Care in Own Home by Spouse
Section M: Care in Own Home by Older Brother or Sister
Section N: Child in Own Care
Section O: Preferred Care Arrangements - provides detail on preferred type of child care arrangement and factors preventing use, if applicable.
Section P: Child Care Tension Issues
Section Q: Main Method Evaluation - These questions were asked of the IP about the main method of care used in the reference week for one randomly selected target child in the family that allowed her/him to work or study during the reference week. Questions included items on options considered, reasons for not considering or deciding to use a particular method, information sources used during the search, difficulties encountered in search, factors considered, and satisfaction.
Section R: Tension Issues for Non-Working Interviewed Parents -
Section S: 12 Month Work Study Program
Section T: 12 Month Care Arrangements
Section U: Evaluation of Past Child Care Arrangements
Section V: Neighborhood Support
Section W: Demographics - collects demographic information not available from the Household Record Docket (Form 03).

Selected questions from the Household Record Docket (Form 03) and from sections O (Preferred Child Care Arrangements), Q (Main Method Evaluation) and W (Demographics) of the NCCS (Form

06) are included in the thesis. Specific questions from the survey questionnaire include:

O 10. Given your current work schedule and your present income, which type of arrangement would you most prefer to use for .... while you are working?;

O 11. Are you currently using this arrangement (these arrangements) for ....?;

O 12. What factors are preventing you from using this (these types) of care for .....?

Q 2. (Not counting any time spent at school), which of the methods of child care you told me about for ..... do you consider to be the main method of care you used for him/her the week of (reference week) to allow you to work or study?

W 2. For 1987, what was your annual income from the following sources?

W 9. For 1987, what was the annual income of your spouse/partner from the following sources?

Other demographic information pertaining to the IP and her/his spouse or partner includes age, sex, and educational levels is based on data from the Household Record Docket Questionnaire (Form 03).

Data Collection

The data collection methodology of the NCCS is closely tied to that of the LFS. Listed below is the interviewing, supervision and control procedures for the LFS followed by the adaptations that were made specifically for the NCCS.

Interviewing

Data collection for the LFS is carried out during the week following the LFS reference week, usually the third week of the month. Statistics Canada interviewers contact each of the sampled dwellings, approximately 70 dwellings per month, to obtain the required LFS information.

Supervision and Control

All LFS interviewers are under the supervision of a staff of senior interviewers who are responsible for ensuring that interviewers are familiar with the concepts and procedures of the LFS and its many supplementary surveys and also for periodically monitoring their interviewers and reviewing their completed documents. Senior interviewers are in turn under the supervision of the LFS program supervisors.

Data Collection Modifications for the NCCS

Several modifications to the LFS collection strategy were effected. Some of those include:

1) Child care data was collected from an interviewed parent rather than from a proxy interview with one knowledgeable and responsible member.

2) NCCS interviewed parents were given the option of responding over the telephone or in person. The form 06 took over an hour to complete.

The following information on Estimation, Sampling Error, and Non-Sampling Error are taken from the 1992 Canadian National Child Care Study Introductory Report. Only those parts that most relate to this study are included. For a more complete description see the Appendix.

Estimation

The National Child Care Study was administered to a sample of Canadian economic families with children under the age of 13. Approximately one in every 90 Canadian households was included in the NCCS sample. Data collected from families in selected households were used to represent similar households not in the sample. In practice, different areas of the country were sampled at different rates, in part based on the size of the population for which estimates were desired (e.g., a province, Canada as a whole etc.).

The number of families or children that each family or child represents is called its weight. There are three components that make up the weight. They are: the sampling rate, the non-response adjustment, and the family weighting adjustment. The weight is used to produce estimates from the NCCS sample. The final weight inflates the sample of 24,155 economic families to 2,724,300 families and the sample of 42,131 children to 4,658,500 children. This represents a final average weight of approximately 110 for each interviewed family and child. However, target children have a weight of 190.

Sampling Error

The National Child Care Survey produces population estimates based on information collected from a and about a sample of families and children. The difference between a population estimate derived from a sample survey and the result obtained from a census taken under similar conditions is sampling error. Coefficient of variation (cv) tables have been produced for estimates based on families, IPs, spouses, children, and target children in order to determine sampling error.

Statistics Canada's release guidelines allow for the unrestricted release of any estimate that has a cv equal to or less than 16.5%. Estimates with a cv between 16.5% and 25.0% are released accompanied with a warning about the high sampling variability. Estimates with a cv greater that 25.0% are not released. In this and other publications, estimates with a cv in the range of 16.5% to 25.0% will be accompanied by the letter "q". The "q" will serve as a warning to users that these estimates should be used with caution. Estimates that are not releasable will be replaced with "...".

Non-sampling Error

Errors which are not related to sampling may occur at almost any phase of the survey operation. Interviewers may misunderstand instructions, respondents may make errors answering questions, the answers may be incorrectly entered

on the questionnaire, and errors may occur in the coding, processing and tabulation of the data. These are all examples of non-sampling errors. Considerable time and effort has been invested to reduce non-sampling errors in the National Child care Survey through careful design of the questionnaire, proper training and supervision of interviewers, and meticulous control of and attention to coding, data entry, and data preparation.

Another potential source of non-sampling error is the effect of non-response on the survey results. The magnitude of the bias introduced by non-response depends both on the extent of non-response, and the degree to which responders and non-responders differ from each other.

Statistical Design

The CROSSTABS function of SPSS-X, (3rd. edition), was used to generate frequency distributions and cross-tabulation tables for the analysis of the data.

Limitations

This study assumes that the questions asked in the survey generated the data needed to answer the research questions. It also assumes that data collection was consistent between surveyers and that the data gathered is accurate and without bias.

One limitation to this study is cell size when cross-tabulation statistical procedures are applied to the data. Statistics Canada has provided set guidelines around reportability of data based on reliability. As a result when the original subsample used in this study is further divided the frequency of responses may become so low as to become unreportable (see page 42 regarding sampling error and coefficient of variation).

A second limitation is the slight difference in categorization of care types between sections O and Q of the survey. This inconsistency makes direct comparisons between the two sections challenging but do-able.

Likewise the basis for selection of IPs must be taken into consideration for both Sections O and Q. Different IP criteria is used in each section. In section O questions were asked of the IPs based on their current work schedule. Therefore IPs who were at study during the reference week were excluded. However this is not the case for IPs responding to section Q; in section Q IPs who worked and studied were surveyed.

The descriptive nature of this study while fulfilling that purpose and employing the appropriate statistical procedure does not consider the complexity nor contextual nature of families' child care use and preference patterns. It does not confirm a relationship between variables nor does it explain why certain patterns exist.

Other possible limitations include those mentioned in the preceding description of Estimation, Sampling Error and Non-sampling Error.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The information presented in this chapter represents a "CNCCS snapshot" of Alberta families and their child care arrangements, the experiences of one week in the lives of interviewed families. Alberta families use of and preference for child care arrangements will be described. The results are presented in two sections: Alberta families current use patterns and Alberta families preferred care arrangements.

I. Alberta Families' Current Use Patterns - The information on Alberta families' current use patterns presented in this section is derived from Section Q - Main Method Evaluation of the CNCCS. Section Q questions were asked of families whose Interviewed Parent (IP) either worked or studied during the reference week. The main method of care used during the reference week for a designated target child was identified by the IP. This thesis focuses primarily on those target children between the ages of zero and five years.

The selected socio-demographic characteristics of the user families presented in this section are derived from the Household Record Docket, one of the three instruments used to gather information from respondents for the CNCCS. The Household Record Docket was used to collect basic demographic information from household members such as sex, marital status, educational attainment, age, and relationship to the head of the economic family.

II. Alberta Parents Preferred Child Care Arrangements - This section provides information on the type of child care arrangement most preferred by Alberta families for the target child, given the IP's current work schedule and family income. The data for this section is derived from Section O - Preferred Child Care Arrangements of the CNCCS. Unlike Section Q questions, which were asked of families whose IP either worked or studied during the reference week, Section O questions were asked only of IPs who worked during the reference week.

This section also presents information on families' identified constraints to use of their preferred care arrangement including selected socio-demographic characteristics for both user and non-user groups.

I. Alberta Families' Current Use Patterns and Selected Socio-Demographic Characteristics

A. Use Patterns

In Alberta there are approximately 268,000 families with children between the ages of zero and 12 years. Of those 268,000 families, 110,800 have a designated target child between the ages of zero and five years. Table 4.1 represents the main method of care used by those 110,800 Alberta families.

Insert Table 4.1 about here

Table 4.1 indicates that care in someone else's home by a non-relative(21.7%), group care (18.9%), spousal care (18.8%), and care

by the IP (16.8%) are the most frequently used care types for approximately three-quarters of the Alberta children aged zero to five years represented in the data. The remaining categories including: care in someone else's home by a relative (9.9%), care in own home by a non-relative (6.7%), and care by other relative (6.2%), combined these three forms of care account for less than 25% of target children's care needs.

B. Socio-Demographic Characteristics

In Table 4.1 Alberta families' use of care types for target children aged zero through five years is described. The remaining tables in this section describe selected socio-demographic characteristics of families in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of families and their use of child care. The selected socio-demographic characteristics include: marital status of the IP, number and ages of the IP's children, combined parental income, age and educational attainment of the IP and spouse, and location of residency.

1. Family Composition

a. Martial Status

The martial status of an individual can affect his/her choice and use of child care arrangements in many ways. Single parent families are generally at an economic disadvantage compared with dual parent families. As a result cost and convenience may become major considerations in their choice of child care arrangements.

Of the 110,800 families surveyed approximately 100,800

(90.9%) were dual parent families, approximately 10,000 (9.1%) were single parent families.

Table 4.2 provides information about main method care type use by single and dual parent families. One of the key characteristics that emerges from Table 4.2 is the frequency with which single parent families use group care, 37.5% compared to 17.1% of dual parent families. Single parent families are also proportionately higher than dual parent families for use of care by a non-relative in someone else's home or care in own home by non-relative. On the other hand, use of spousal care and IP care were higher for dual parent families than for single parent families.

Insert Table 4.2 about here

b. Number of Children in the Family

It seems reasonable to assume that composition of the family, in this case the number of children in the family, can effect parents' choice and use of child care arrangements. If there are other siblings, particularly siblings also requiring care, choice of child care arrangements may be effected by economics resulting from increased cost. Convenience may also be a factor as parent(s) juggle work and/or study with family life.

The data in the following table indicates the number of Alberta families surveyed who had child(ren) between the ages of zero and 12 years of age. In some families this may include siblings between the ages of zero and 12 years in addition to the target child aged zero to five years. For example, Table 4.3 reveals that almost half (48.4%)

of the 110,800 families surveyed have two children in the family between the age of zero and 12 years one of which would be designated as the target child. The data also indicates that 27.0% of families have one child between the ages of zero and 12 years (which in this case would have to be between age zero and five years by definition of the sample) while 24.6% of families have three or more children between zero and 12 years.

Insert Table 4.3 about here

When the number of children per family is examined by care type used, the most notable feature to emerge from Table 4.4 are the differences between care type use and the number of children in the family. For example, families with one child tend to use group care (30.6%) and care in someone else's home by a non-relative (29.0%) most frequently, while families with two children tend to use care in someone else's home by a non-relative (23.4%) and spousal care (20.0%) most frequently. For families with three or more children spousal care (26.7%) and IP care (25.6%) are the most frequently used arrangements.

Insert Table 4.4 about here

When the number of children per family is examined relative to single and dual parent families there is a noticeable difference. The majority (50.6%) of single parent families have one child. Two children are found in 32.4% of single parent families. By contrast, only 24.7% of dual parent families have one child while 50% have

two children. Dual parent families are also more likely to have three or more children (25.3%) than one parent families (17.0%).

Insert Table 4.5 about here

2. Combined Parental Income

As noted earlier, family economics can affect families choice and use of child care arrangements. Table 4.6 indicates that 15.7% (17,400) of all families had a combined parental income of less than $20,000. Parents earning $20,001 to $30,000 made up 12.8% (14,200) of families and parents earning $30,001 to $40,000 represented 19.0% (21,000). Combined parental incomes of $40,001 to $50,000 were the most frequent, comprising 21.8% (24,000) of total families. Those parents earning $50,001 to $60,000 represented 13.4% (14,800) while parental incomes of more than $60,000 accounted for 17.0% (19,000) of Alberta families.

Insert Table 4.6 about here

When combined parental income is examined relative to care type, group care, IP care and spousal care all appear to play a role in fulfilling a care need for families regardless of income. As Table 4.7 indicates, families with a combined parental income of $30,000 or less most frequently used IP care (20.5%), spousal care (19.4%) and group care (19.7%), whereas families with a combined parental income between $30,001 and $60,000 used care in someone else's home by a non-relative (26.0%), spousal care (20.1%) and group care (18.0%). For families with a combined parental income of over

$60,000, care in someone else's home by a non-relative is most frequently used (24.0%), followed by group care (20.6%) and care in own home by non-relative (16.5%).

Insert Table 4.7 about here

As was noted earlier, families with two wage earners have a definite economic advantage over single parent wage earners seeking child care. Ninety nine and one-half percent of all single parent families earn less than $50,000 per year. Approximately three-quarters (77.4%) of single parent families within that income group earn less than $30,000 per year. By contrast, only 23.7% of dual parent families earn less than $30,000. The majority of dual parent families (57.3%) earn between $30,000 and $60,000 per year.

Insert Table 4.8 about here

3. Parent Characteristics

Other family characteristics that can affect choice and use of child care arrangements are the ages and educational attainments of IPs and spouses. The following tables present information about these characteristics for Alberta families. Of the parents interviewed in the survey the great majority were female. As a result tables examining IP and spouse characteristics reflect this difference in their total n. This discrepancy also reflects the inclusion of one-parent families.

a. Age of Interviewed Parents and Spouses

Parents of Alberta families were found to be of similar age. For example, most IPs and spouses were between the ages of 30 and 34.

The lowest proportion of IPs and spouses were found in the youngest categories.

Insert Table 4.9 about here

Insert Table 4.10 about here

b. Educational Attainment of Interviewed Parents and Spouses

Like parents' ages, educational attainment level is similar for IPs and spouses. Table 4.11 indicates that a higher proportion of IPs and spouses had 12 to 13 years of schooling. On the other hand, some post-secondary education accounted for the lowest proportion of IPs and spouses.

Insert Table 4.11 about here

Insert Table 4.12 about here

4. Location of Residency

Interviewed parents' were surveyed to determine what level of urbanicity they resided in. Residency was categorized as urban or rural. Urban areas consist of two categories: areas with 15,001 to 100,000 families and areas with greater than 100,000 families. The rural category represents those areas with 15,000 or fewer families. Approximately 65.5% of families surveyed lived in urban settings while 34.5% lived in rural areas.

Insert Table 4.13 about here

II. Alberta Parents' Preferred Child Care Arrangements

Section O - Preferred Child Care Arrangements of the CNCCS. Unlike Section Q - Main Method Evaluation which includes IPs of families who worked or studied during the reference week, Section O surveyed only IPs who worked during the reference week. The sample for this study was selected from Section Q respondents. As a result, when preferred child care arrangements are studied there is a shift in the total cases examined resulting in a shift in the population estimate from 110,800 to 109,200 in subsequent tables.

A second difference between Sections Q and O is the structuring of the actual questions. In the original questionnaire IPs were asked to respond to 11 preferred care categories in Section O compared to 13 use categories found in Section Q. Even when collapsed the categories differ.

A. Preferred Care Arrangements

The data found in this section describes Alberta parents' preferred method of care for the target child. Parents' use and non-use of their preferred care arrangement is also described including socio-demographic characteristics of families using or not using their preferred care arrangement and identified constraints to preference use.

Alberta families appear to be relatively consistent in their preference for care by a spouse/partner (19.3%), care in a day care centre (18.4%), and care by another relative (18.0%). Care by a non-relative in another home was preferred by 14.6% of families. When

these categories are combined into relative versus non-relative care, care by a relative is somewhat more preferred (37.3%) than care by non-relatives (32.0%).

Insert Table 4.14 about here

A total of 71,000 Alberta families (65.0%) used their preferred child care arrangement, while 30,700 (28.2%) did not use their preferred choice. There were some parents who either did not state their preference, had no need for care, or for whom data was missing.

Insert Table 4.15 about here

Table 4.16 examines families' use or non-use of their preferred care arrangement by care type. The number of missing cases and no need for care responses are not included in the table but are noted below it.

Of those families using their preferred care arrangement, most preferred care by a relative: either an immediate family member, spouse/partner/brother/sister (31.1%), or other relative (22.2%). By comparison, families not using their preferred care arrangement prefer care by non-relative in their home (38.8%) or care in a day care centre (24.7%). Care by a non-relative in another home was preferred by a similar proportion of families using their preferred care arrangement (16.9%) and those not (14.4%).

Insert Table 4.16 about here

B. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Families Who Are Using or Not Using Their Preferred Care Arrangement

The following set of tables examines socio-demographic characteristics of those families using their preferred care arrangement and those who are not. The selected socio-demographic characteristics are the same as those used earlier in this chapter to describe families and their current use patterns.

1. Family Composition

a. Marital Status

Table 4.17 indicates that 92.3% of Alberta families using their preferred care arrangement were dual parent families while 7.7% were single parent families. By comparison, 88.8% of families not using their preferred care arrangement had two parents compared to 11.2% one parent families.

When only two parent families are examined 66.0% used their preferred care arrangement, 27.5% did not. For one parent families the differences between users and non-users of preferred care arrangements is greater. The majority, 54.9% of one parent families used their preferred care arrangement, 34.5% did not.

Insert Table 4.17 about here

b. Number of Children in the Family

When preference is examined by number of children in the family an almost equal number of families with two children used (47.6%) and did not use (47.5%) their preferred care arrangement.

More families with one child were not using their preferred care arrangement (32.6%) compared to 25.8% who were. The opposite is true for families with three or more children. More of these families used (26.6%) their preferred care arrangement than those who did not (19.9%).

Insert Table 4.18 about here

2. Combined Parental Income

Table 4.19 indicates that over half (51.7%) of families using their preferred care arrangement earned between $30,001 and $60,000. By comparison, a higher proportion (61.4%) of families not using their preferred care arrangement were in this income bracket. A greater proportion of families earning less that $30,000 (31.0%) used their preferred care arrangement than those who did not (21.8%). The same pattern is true for families in the $60,000+ income range; 17.2% used their preferred arrangement, 16.7% did not.

Insert Table 4.19 about here

3. Parents' Characteristics

a. Age of Interviewed Parents and Spouses

When examining the data for age of IPs and spouses using their preferred care arrangement, most IPs (39.6%) were aged 30 to 34 years while most spouses (36.0%) were 34 years or older. Most IPs and spouses not using their preferred care arrangement were aged 30 to 34 years with IPs at 40.9% and spouses 39.7%.

Insert Table 4.20 about here

Insert Table 4.21 about here

b. Educational Attainment of Interviewed Parents and Spouses

Most IPs (38.1%) and spouses (33.0%) who used their preferred care arrangement had 12 to 13 years of schooling. Likewise, 37.3% of IPs not using their preferred care arrangement had 12 to 13 years of schooling. However for spouses the most frequent education level attained was a post-secondary college diploma (29.2%).

Insert Table 4.22 about here

Insert Table 4.23 about here

C. Interviewed Parents' Identified Constraints to Use of Their Preferred Care Arrangement

Table 4.24 focuses on those families who did not use their preferred care arrangement. Of the 30,700 families in this category over half (51.4%) identified care method not available as a constraint to their preferred child care arrangement. Cost, work schedule and transportation were identified relatively consistently at 10.7%, 10.6% and 9.2%, respectively. The other category accounted for 14.6% of the respondents and represents individually identified constraints to their preference.

Insert Table 4.24 about here

Summary

This chapter has described Alberta families' use of and preference for child care arrangements including socio-demographic information on families and parents. Most Alberta families used care

in someone else's home most frequently, however they most often preferred care by a spouse or partner.

Descriptions of parental and family traits and their relationship to specific use or preference care types indicates that:

1) The majority of Alberta families (90.9%) contain two parents and are likely to use IP and spousal care more frequently than single parent families. By contrast one parent families use group care and care by non-relative either in their own home or another home more frequently.

2) The majority of single parent families (50.6%) have one child and most often use group care or care by a non-relative in someone else's home. Half of the dual parent families (50.0%) have two children and most often use care by a non-relative in someone else's home or spousal care. More families with three or more children have two parents (25.3%) and use spousal and IP care most often. The shift from non-relative care to care by an immediate family member appears to begin changing for families with two children.

3) Most families (40.8%) earn between $30,000 and $50,000 per year. The majority (57.3%) of two parent families earn between $30,000 and $60,000 per year compared to a majority of one parent families (62.1%) earning less than $20,000 per year.

Families earning less than $30,000 used IP, spousal and group care most frequently compared to families with income between $30,000 and $60,000 who used care in someone else's home

by a non-relative, spousal care and group care. This latter pattern of use is true for families earning more than $60,000 as well.

4) Most Interviewed Parents (40.0%) were between the ages of 30 and 34 years of age. The same was true for spouses (35.3%). Educational attainment of Interviewed Parents (37.7%) was most frequently at 12 to 13 years, likewise for spouses (30.7%).

5) The majority of Alberta families (65.0%) used their preferred care arrangement. Most families (19.3%) preferred care by a spouse or partner followed by care in a day care centre (18.4%), care by another relative (18.0%) and care by a non-relative (14.6%).

Of those families who used their preferred care arrangement,the majority 92.3% were dual parent families; only 7.7% were single parent families. The majority of Alberta families (47.6%) had two children. Families with one child represented 25.8% of all families and families with three or more children 26.6%. Over half of the families (57.7%) using their preferred care arrangement earned between $30,001 and $60,000 while 31.0% earn less than $30,000 and 17.2% earn more than $60,000. As for education most IPs (38.1%) and spouses (33.0%) have 12 to 13 years of schooling. The average age for both IPs and spouses is 30 to 34 years.

Of the Alberta families (28.2%) not using their preferred care arrangement 88.8% were two parent families and 11.2% one parent families. Most of these families (47.5%) had two children whereas 32.6% had one child and 19.9% had three or more children in the family. More than half of the families (61.4%) earn $30,001 to

$60,000 while 21.8% earn less than $30,000 and 16.7% earn more than $60,000. Of the parents interviewed, most (37.3%) had 12 to 13 years of schooling while most spouses (29.2%) had post secondary college diplomas. The average age for both IPs and spouses is 30 to 34 years.

Based on the descriptive findings of this study it appears that no single reason is directly related to Alberta families use of and preference for specific care types. While it appears that family socio-demographics such as single versus dual parent families and family income play a role in families use of and preference for specific care arrangements, when asked why they were not using their preferred care arrangement the majority of families (51.4%) identified availability of care method as the constraint rather than cost or a cost related factor. It appears that while some parental and family socio-demographics play a role in parents use of and preference for care arrangements no singular factor can be attributed as the 'cause' or reason 'why', rather the process of selection is complex and composed of several contributing variables. The descriptions in this study reinforce this idea while at the same time providing a 'snapshot' of that complexity.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Alberta families' child care preference and use patterns are complex and diverse. The results indicate that the majority (76.2%) of children between the ages of zero and five years were cared for in one of four care types for the reference week in which the IP either worked or studied. The care types included: in someone else's home by a non-relative, in group care, by a spouse or by an IP. Of these four care types two represent care by non-relatives and two represent care by relatives.

Most Alberta families (65.0%) used their preferred care arrangements. They preferred care by a spouse or partner (19.3%), followed by care in a day care centre (18.4%), care by another relative (18.0%) and care by a non-relative (14.6%) respectively. With the exception of the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services study (1978) which found care by mother as parents' most frequent preferred care arrangement, the provincial and regional descriptive studies found most families preferred centre care. However most studies did not include maternal care as one of the care categories in their surveys

Families not using their preferred care arrangement identified care by a non-relative in their home (38.8%), and care in a day care centre (24.7%) as their most frequently preferred care arrangements. The majority (51.4%) of these families also indicated that the

primary constraint to use of their preferred care arrangement was availability. The provincial and regional studies differ from this finding by consistently identifying cost as having a key role in parents' selection of care arrangements.

Like the provincial and regional descriptive studies reviewed, this thesis also examines parental and familial demographics and the frequency with which they occur for specific care arrangements. Differences between these user or preference groups indicates the existence of various demographic familial and parental characteristics. The specific parental and familial demographic variables examined in this study are similar to some of those found in the provincial and regional studies. They include: marital status of the IP, number of the IP's children, combined parental income, location of residency, and age and educational attainment of the IP and spouse.

The Saskatchewan Department of Social Services' (1978), Johnson's (1977), Lero's (1981), Rochon's (1983) and Lacey's (1989) studies suggest the existence of a relationship between number of parents in the family and selection of care types. Likewise, most Alberta families contain two parents and are likely to use spousal or IP care. However, one parent families are more likely to use group care and care by non-relative in someone else's home.

Number of children in the family is also found by all the provincial and regional studies to impact upon parents' choice and use of child care arrangements. The findings in this study appear to

support that conclusion. Alberta families with one child most frequently use group care and care in someone else's home by a non-relative, while families with two or more children are most likely to use spousal and IP care and care in someone else's home by a non-relative.

The provincial and regional studies also examined the relationship between the specific age of the child and care arrangements. All these studies found age to influence parents' use of care arrangements. However this study only examines care arrangements for children between the ages of zero and five years. When specific ages within that group are explored the frequency of numbers within the cross-tab cells are either non-existent or unreliable.

With the exception of Rochon's (1983), Steven's (1984) and Lacey's (1989) studies the provincial and regional studies found family income to influence families' choice of child care arrangements. Similarly the frequency of families using specific care types in this study appears to confirm the role of income in families' use of care arrangements. Most Alberta families with an income of $30,000 or less use group care, IP care and spousal care with greater frequency than families who earn more than $30,000. These families use care in someone else's home by a non-relative, group care, spousal care and care in own home by a non-relative. When group care and care by non-relative users are examined, the highest frequency of users occur in the $30,001 - $60,000 income range for

both care types compared to a greater frequency of relative care users earning $30,000 or less.

Only one provincial and regional study examined location of residency as urban or rural. Lacey (1989) found urban users to most frequently use privately arranged care by a non-relative in a parents' home while rural users used privately arranged care in their home by a relative. This study finds the majority of families residing in urban areas of greater than 15,000 families. However it was not possible to examine the distribution of Alberta families residency by care type because the number of unreportable cell sizes in the cross-tabulation table made the information not usable.

Of the provincial and regional studies, three, Department of Social Services (1978), Johnson (1981) and Lero (1981), found the education and age of parents to influence parents' selection of care arrangements. Like residency when parents' education and age were examined by care type the resulting number of unreportable cross-tabulation cells made the information unusable. However, frequency tables in this study indicate that most parents have 12 to 13 years of schooling and are between the ages of 30 and 34 years.

In addition to describing Alberta families' use patterns this study also examines their preferred care arrangements. These preference patterns are described at the beginning of this chapter. Unlike the provincial and regional studies this study also focuses on familial and parental demographic characteristics of families not using their preferred care arrangement and their identified

constraints to use of preferred arrangements. Families not using their preferred care arrangement may be briefly described according to specific demographic characteristics. Of the 28.2% of families that comprise this category: 88.8% are two parent families, 11.2% are one parent families; 32.6% have one child, 47.5% have two children, 19.9% have three or more children; 61.4% earn between $30,001 and $60,000, 21.8% earn less than $30,000 and 16.7% earn more than $60,000; most parents have 12 to 13 years of schooling and are between the ages of 30 and 34 years.

Only one provincial and regional study examined constraints to preference per se although the others describe, in a variety of ways, factors that play a role in families' determination of preference. Lero (1981) found availability to be a primary factor in determining whether parents used or did not use their preferred care arrangement. Likewise the majority of Alberta families (51.4%) identified availability as a constraint to use of their preferred arrangement. Other provincial and regional studies identified age of child, location, reliability of caregiver and safety as some of the most frequently identified criteria influencing parents' selection of preferred care arrangement.

As discussed earlier, most of the findings presented in this study either directly or indirectly support and expand those of other provincial and regional studies. The families' child care preference and use patterns described in this study provide a background context and hopefully will act as a catalyst for future research and

examination of Alberta families' child care needs. This study accomplishes its primary objective by contributing to the growing awareness and understanding of those needs.

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APPENDIX

The following information on Sampling Design, Instrumentation, Interviewing, Supervision and Control Procedures is taken from The 1988 National Child Care Survey Information Manual (Sept., 1988).

Sampling Design

In order to fulfill the requirements for a sample that was large enough and diverse enough to accommodate the national and subgroup needs, The National Child Care Survey (NCCS) was administered as a supplement to the monthly Labor Force Survey (LFS) in September 1988. Some revisions to the basic LFS design were made and will be discussed in the latter part of this section. However, it is necessary to first understand the LFS procedures.

The LFS is a monthly household survey whose sample of individuals is representative of the civilian, non-institutionalized population in Canada's 10 provinces. Residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories. Persons living on Indian Reserves, and inmates of institutions are not included in the survey.

The sample design for the LFS is based upon a stratified, multi-stage design employing probability sampling at all stages of the design. Design principles were the same for each province.

Provinces were first stratified into economic regions - geographic areas of more or less homogeneous economic structure formed on the basis of federal-provincial agreements and which are relatively stable over time. These economic regions became the primary strata.

The economic regions or primary strata were further divided into three categories: self-representing units (SRU's), non-self-representing units (NSRU's), and special areas. SRU's are urban areas whose population as of the 1981 census exceeds 15,000 persons or whose unique labor force characteristics demand a separate SRU. All SRU's are included

in the survey for each economic region. NSRU's are the areas lying outside the SRU's and consist primarily of small urban centres and rural areas. Each economic region contains one NSRU.

Special areas are found in remote areas not easily accessible to LFS interviewers. For this reason the sample is selected on a province-wide basis without reference to the stratification used for the SRU and NSRU areas. Included in this category are: individuals found in institutions, for example live-in staff of hospitals or schools, civilian personnel on military bases, and others found in remote areas of the province.

Secondary stratification of the economic regions, SRUs, NSRUs and special areas follows. SRU areas are delineated according to similar sociocultural status as identified by the 1981 Census. The extent of the stratification depends on the size of the SRU.

Where the NSRU population represents a significant proportion of the economic region's population separate rural and urban categories are delineated. The categories are further divided to reflect different labor force characteristics.

Special areas' strata are formed on province-wide basis. They reflect the main types of special groups in the population: military establishments, institutions, and remote areas.

Tertiary stratification of the economic regions delineates contiguous groups of dwellings or clusters, for SRU's. These strata are based on the 1981 Census and are coincident with city blocks or block faces. The selection of a sample of clusters (6 or 12) from the secondary strata represents the first stage of sampling in SRU areas.

The NSRU secondary strata are divided into large geographic areas where each area reflects the sociocultural composition of the stratum within which it is located. Two to four of the these areas, known as primary sampling units (PSU), are selected into the sample. Smaller geographically contiguous groups of dwellings, or clusters, are formed within the PSUs by using well-defined physical features recognizable both on maps and in the field. Selection from these clusters represents the first stage of sampling from the NSRUs.

In special areas, census enumeration areas represents the first stage of selection. Within those selected, if necessary, geographically contiguous groups of dwellings or clusters are formed and the selection of a sample of these represents the second stage of sampling.

For all three types of areas (SRU, NSRU, and special areas) selected clusters were first visited by the enumerators and a list of all private dwellings was prepared. From the list a sample of six dwellings was selected. This selection represents the final stage of sampling. In the SRU's a sample of apartments in large apartment buildings is selected from a separate register so as to ensure better representation of apartment dwellers and to minimize the growth of clusters due to new apartment buildings.

Labor Force Survey information is obtained from all persons who are 15 years or older, while demographic information is obtained for all persons residing in a selected dwelling.

The LFS also employed a panel design whereby the monthly sample of dwellings consists of six panels, or rotation groups, approximately equal in size. Each panel is representative of the entire population. All dwellings remain in the LFS for six months, after which time they are replaced by a new panel of dwellings selected from the Same or similar clusters.

This rotation was adopted to ensure that the sample of dwellings constantly reflects changes in the current housing and to minimize non-response. Rotation also has the advantage of providing a common sample base for the estimation of month-to-month changes in labor force characteristics.

Certain modifications to the sample design were instituted for the NCCS. The sample size for the LFS is determined by the statistical requirements for various estimates of labor force characteristics at the national, provincial and sub-provincial levels. The basic NCCS sample consisted of the five rotation panels in the September 1988 LFS. However, this sample was not large enough for the data requirements specified by the National Day Care Research Network, (NDRN). Therefore, the NCCS re-contacted an additional eight panel groups which had recently rotated out of

the LFS sample. Interviews with each Economic Family having at least one child under age 13 was undertaken for these rotation panels. Approximately 31% of Economic Families had children in this age group. In order to reduce the response rate for those families with more than one child a random selection of one target child was made for several items on the questionnaire.

Instrumentation

03 The Household Record Docket Questionnaire (Form 05)- This questionnaire was given to all household members whose usual place of residence was a selected dwelling. Basic demographic variables collected include sex, marital status, educational attainment and relationship to head of the economic family. In addition Form 03 collected the month and year of birth of all children listed as under 13 years old, thereby allowing for the creation of analytical categories based on children's age and providing interviewers administering the child care survey with a list of households that did have children within the target population. This form was also used to identify a Interviewed Parent in each economic family to serve as the primary information source.

05 The Labour Force Questionnaire (Form 05)- The Labour Force Questionnaire was used to collect information on the current or most recent labour force market activity of all household members 15 years of age or older in those households with children under the age of 13. This form includes questions on hours of work, job tenure, type of work, reason for hours lost or absence, job search undertaken, availability for work and school attendance.

06 The National Child Care Survey (Form 06) - The National Child Care Survey was administered in each Economic Family to the parent who described her/himself as most responsible for child care arrangements. Some parts of the interview focussed on the Interviewed Parent, or her/his spouse or partner, while other parts focussed on child care used in the reference week for each child in the family younger than 13 years of age.

The National Child Care Survey (Form 06) was organized as follows:

Section A: Interviewed Parent's Work / Study - provides detail about the designated adult's work and study schedule not available from the LFS Form 05. Questions include items for IP's on maternity/paternity leave, schedule of hours worked in the reference week, variability and predict of hours worked, distance to work, employer flexibility and support, and study activity.

Section B: Spouse's Work / Study - this section is identical to section A except to disclude the items relating to maternity/paternity leave.

Section C: Disability - identifies the presence of any long-term condition or health problem suffered by any of the children under 13 in the family.

Section D: Unusual Circumstances - identifies events which made the care arrangements in the reference week atypical. This data will allow users to assess the impact of restricting the primary reference period to a reference week.

Section E: School Attendance - detail about school attendance for all children under the age of 13.

Section F: Kindergarten / Nursery School

Section G: Care in a Before or After School Program

Section H: Care in a Daycare Centre

Section I: Care by a Relative / Non Relative

Sections F, G, H and I yielded detailed information for up to seven different types of care used for the four youngest children under the age of 13, where the types of care are defined on the basis of location and where appropriate by the relationship of the caregiver to the child. Items include days on which care was provided during the reference week, total hours of care, cost of arrangement, the presence of subsidies, provision of receipts, main activity of D.A. while care was being provided and an item to identify care situations with which the D.A. is unhappy with the quality of the care provided.

Section J: Care by Interviewed Parent While Working

Section K: Care by Spouse While Working

Section L: Care in Own Home by Spouse

Section M: Care in Own Home by Older Brother or Sister

Section N: Child in Own Care

Sections J, K, L, and N yielded detailed information on five additional types of care used in the reference week, for all children but restricted to care provided while the IP was working at a job or business, studying full-time or studying part-time to improve job opportunities.

Section O: Preferred Care Arrangements - provides detail on preferred type of child care arrangement and factors preventing use, if applicable.

Section P: Child Care Tension Issues - Provides detail on the level of tension induced by juggling work, family and child care responsibilities. Also provides information on factors which help to reduce tension, and preferred work option for IP and spouse.

Section Q: Main Method Evaluation - These questions were asked of the IP about the main method of care used in the reference week for one randomly selected target child in the family that allowed her/him to work or study during the reference week. Questions included items on options considered, reasons for not considering or deciding to use a particular method, information sources used during the search, difficulties encountered in search, factors considered, and satisfaction.

Section R: Tension Issues for Non-Working Interviewed Parents - This section is an abbreviated version of Section P.

Section S: 12 Month Work Study Program

Section T: 12 Month Care Arrangements

Section U: Evaluation of Past Child Care Arrangements

Section S collects information on child care related absences for IPs who worked or studied full-time, at some time during the reference year, while section T asks this group about types and durations of care used for one month or longer, reasons for changing type of care used, main activity of IP an spouse during each arrangement, all the same for the randomly selected target child. Section U asks IP's to enumerate problems experienced with care in the reference year for the target child and to provide information on the impact which child care concerns have had on the labour market participation of the D.A. and spouse during that period.

Section V: Neighborhood Support - collects detail about the extent of neighborhood support available to the IP and his/her spouse during that period.
Section W: Demographics - collects demographic information not available from the Household Record Docket (Form 03).

Data Collection

Interviewing

Data collection for the LFS is carried out during the week following the LFS reference week, usually the third week of the month. Statistics Canada interviewers contact each of the sampled dwellings, approximately 70 dwellings per month, to obtain the required LFS information.

Dwellings new to the sample are contacted through a personal visit. Socio-demographic information for each household member is obtained first followed by labour force information for all eligible members. Subsequent interviews to confirm socio-demographic information given in the first month and gather labour force data for the following months, are conducted by telephone provided there is a telephone, and permission has been granted.

Information is gathered in all households from a knowledgeable household member - usually the person at home when the interviewer calls.

At the conclusion to the LFS monthly interviews , interviewers introduce the supplementary survey, if any, to be administered to some or all household members that month.

If during the course of the six months that a dwelling is in the sample, an entire household moves out and is replaced by a new household, information is obtained about the new household for the remainder of the six-month period.

Supervision and Control

All LFS interviewers are under the supervision of a staff of senior interviewers who are responsible for ensuring that interviewers are familiar with the concepts and procedures of the LFS and its many supplementary surveys and also for periodically monitoring their interviewers and reviewing their

completed documents. Senior interviewers are in turn under the supervision of the LFS program supervisors.

Data Collection Modifications for the NCCS

Several modifications to the LFS collection strategy were effected:

1) The data collection period was changed form the usual one week period to four weeks.

2) Child care data was collected from an interviewed parent rather than from a proxy interview with one knowledgeable and responsible member.

3) NCCS interviewed parents were given the option of responding over the telephone or in person. The form 06 took over an hour to complete.

4) NCCS interviews were not conducted in dwellings in the 'active' LFS sample that had experienced a complete turnover in household membership since the previous month.

5) NCCS interviews were not conducted in dwellings in the 'rotates-out' part of the sample in household which had refused to participate in the LFS in the month on which they were rotated out of the LFS sample.

The following information on Estimation, Sampling Error, and Non-Sampling Error are taken from the 1992 Canadian National Child Care Study Introductory Report.

Estimation

The National Child Care Study was administered to a sample of Canadian economic families with children under the age of 13. The starting point was the household. Approximately one in every 90 Canadian households was included in the NCCS sample. Data collected from families in selected households were used to represent similar households not in the sample. In practice, different areas of the country were sampled at different rates, in part based on the size of the population for which estimates were desired (e.g., a province, Canada as a whole etc.).

The number of families or children that each family or child represents is called its weight. Assuming for the moment that there is no non-response, then the weight is equal to the inverse of the sampling rate. However, non-response occurs in most sample surveys and the NCCS was no exception. Non-response occurred at the household level and therefore the weights of responding households had to be increased to represent the non-responding households. Once economic families with children were identified for the purpose of conducting child care interviews, non-response occurred if the interview was not conducted. Weighting factors applied to the economic families with children that responded to the survey were increased to represent those that did not. In both cases, the weight adjustment was made by multiplying the original weight by a factor that compensates for non-response. the factor is computed by dividing the number of households (or families with children) by the number of households (or families with children) responding.

At this stage, the weight is comprised of two components: The inverse of the sampling rate and the non-response adjustment. A third component, the family weighting adjustment described below, was then added to improve accuracy even more.

Independent estimates are available monthly for various age and sex groups, by province. These estimates are based on Canadian Census data, records of births and deaths, and estimates of migration. A procedure was used to adjust weights to force agreement with these independent estimates, thus improving the accuracy and reliability of estimates that could be produced by the NCCS. In fact, estimates of children by single years of age by sex produced from the NCCS will agree exactly with estimates based on theses external sources.

The weighting procedure that was used to make this final adjustment is referred to as the family weighting procedure. At the same time as ensuring consistency with external Census counts, the procedures ensure that every member of the economic family is assigned the same weight. This is important to ensure consistency of estimates and to produce accurate estimates at the economic family level.

The three factors that have been discussed -- namely, the inverse of the sampling rat, the non-response adjustment, and the family weighting adjustment -- are the main components used to produce the respondents' weights. The final weight that incorporates all these factors is the one used to produce estimates from the NCCS sample. The final weight inflates the sample of 24,155 economic families to 2,724,300 families and the sample of 42,131 children to 4,658,500 children. This represents a final average weight of approximately 110 for each interviewed family and child.

The NCCS involved one further stage of selection -- the selection of the target child in families with more than one child younger than 13 years of age. A weight adjustment had to be made taking the particular selection scheme that was utilized into consideration.

Adjustments were then made to ensure consistency by single years of age with the dependent Census estimates. The average weight for target children is approximately 190. Any estimates produced from information based on questions referring to the target child use this target child weight. It should be noted that if the same tabulations are made based on all children in the sample (42,131) and then based only on the target children (24,155), slightly different results will occur because of sampling error. This is the case for all variables other than province, sex and age, for which the weighting procedure has been used to ensure consistency.

Sampling Error

The National Child Care Survey produces population estimates based on information collected from a and about a sample of families and children. The estimates may have been slightly different if, instead, a census (complete population survey) has been conducted using the same questionnaires, interviewers, supervisors, quality assurance procedures, processing methods, and tabulation routines. The difference between a population estimate derived from a sample survey and the result obtained from a census taken under similar conditions is sampling error. One measure of sampling error is called the standard error of the estimate.

If repeated samples of the same type were used to produce NCCS estimates, then it would be expected that in about 68 of 100 samples, the difference between a sample estimate and its corresponding census (population) figure would be less than two standard errors, and in about 99 out of 100 samples the difference would be less than 2.5 standard errors.

A wide range of estimates related to economic families with children younger that 13 years of age, the children of these families, and the types of care used for these children can be produced from the National Child Care Survey. Since sampling error is not the same for all estimates, the standard error of the estimate is usually expressed relative to the estimate to which it pertains. the resulting measure, known as the coefficient of variation (cv), is obtained by dividing the standard error by the estimate itself, and is expressed as a percentage of the estimate.

Generating actual estimates of sampling variability is a very a costly procedure, so the coefficients of variation for estimates used in this and all other NCCS publications have been obtained from a set of generalized tables computed for the National Child Care Survey. These general tables take into account the size of the estimate, the sample size or number of records used to produce that estimate, and a factor that accounts for the stratified, multi-stage design of the LFS, on which the National Child Care Survey sample is based. This last factor is taken into consideration by the incorporation of what is known as a design effect, which, in essence, is the penalty paid for using a clustered sample as opposed to a simple random sample. Coefficient of variation (cv) tables have been produced for estimates based on families, IPs, spouses, children, and target children.

Statistics Canada's release guidelines allow for the unrestricted release of any estimate that has a cv equal to or less than 16.5%. Estimates with a cv between 16.5% and 25.0% are released accompanied with a warning about the high sampling variability. Estimates with a cv greater that 25.0% are not released. In this and other publications, estimates with a cv in the range of 16.5% to 25.0% will be accompanied by the letter "q". The "q" will serve as a warning to users that these

estimates should be used with caution. Estimates that are not releasable will be replaced with "...".

Non-sampling Error

Errors which are not related to sampling may occur at almost any phase of the survey operation. Interviewers may misunderstand instructions, respondents may make errors answering questions, the answers may be incorrectly entered on the questionnaire, and errors may occur in the coding, processing and tabulation of the data. These are all examples of non-sampling errors. Over a large number of observations, randomly occurring errors will have little effect on estimates derived from the survey; systematically occurring errors, however, will introduce biases in the survey estimates. Considerable time and effort has been invested to reduce non-sampling errors in the National Child care Survey through careful design of the questionnaire, proper training and supervision of interviewers, and meticulous control of and attention to coding, data entry, and data preparation. Procedures to ensure that data capture errors were minimized included coding and edit quality checks to verify processing logic. Despite these efforts, non-sampling error is bound to have some impact on NCCS estimates. In general, items in the National Child Care Survey interview that required detail (e.g., total income various sources in the previous calendar year) were more susceptible to errors.

Another potential source of non-sampling error is the effect on non-response on the survey results. The magnitude of the bias introduced by non-response depends both on the extent of non-response, and the degree to which responders and non-responders differ from each other. The extent of non-response will vary from partial non-response (failure to answer just one or some questions) to total non-response. total non-response was handled by adjusting the weights of households and economic families that responded to the survey to compensate for those that did not respond.

In most cases, partial non-response to the National Child Care Survey occurred when the respondent misinterpreted a question, could not recall the requested information, or in some

cases when a mistake was made in question sequences involving a skip pattern.

Table 4.1

Distribution of Alberta Families' Use of Main Method Child Care Arrangements

Care Arrangement	Frequency	Percentage
1. Group Care	20,000	18.9%
2. Someone else's home by a non-relative	24,000	21.7%
3. Someone else's home by a relative	10,000	9.9%
4. Own home by a relative	7,400	6.7%
5. Spousal care	20,800	18.8%
6. Interviewed parent care	18,600	16.8%
7. Care by other relative	6,800	6.2%
8. No need for care	...	...
Total	110,800	100.0%

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Table 4.2

Distribution of Dual Parent and Single Parent Families by Main Method Care Type

Column Percentages

Care Type	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Row Total
Group care	17,200	3,700q	20,900
	17.1%	37.5%q	18.9%
Someone else's home by a non-relative	21,200	...	24,000
	21.0%	...	21.7%
Someone else's home by a relative	10,000	...	11,000
	9.8%	...	9.9%
Own home by a non-relative	6,400	...	7,400
	6.3%	...	6.7%
Spousal care	20,800	_	20,800
	20.7%	_	18.3%
Interviewed parent care	18,400	...	18,600
	18.2%	...	16.8%
Care by other relative	5,800	...	6,800
	5.8%	...	6.2%
No need for care	...	...	...
	...	...	...
Column Total	100,800	10,000	110,800
	91.0%	9.0%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution
... - Amount too small to be expressed
_ - Nil or zero

Table 4.3

Distribution of Children under Age 13 Including the 'Target Child' in the Economic Family

Number of Children	Frequency	Percentage
1	29,900	27.0%
2	53,600	48.4%
3	20,500	18.5%
4+	6,700	6.1%
Total	110,800	100.0%

Table 4.4

Distribution of Children Under the Age of 13 Including the 'Target Child' in the Family by Care Type

Column Percentages

Care Type	Number of Children			Row
	1	2	3 or more	Total
Group care	9,200	8,600	3,200q	21,000
	30.6%	16.0%	30.4%q	18.9%
Someone else's home by a non-relative	8,700	12,500	...	24,000
	29.0%	23.4%	...	21.7%
Someone else's home by a relative	4,100	4,300	...	11,000
	13.6%	8.1%	...	9.9%
Own home by a non-relative	...	4,200	...	7,400
	...	7.9%	...	6.7%
Spousal care	...	10,700	7,300	20,800
Interviewed parent care	3,200q	8,400	7,000	20,800
	10.7%q	15.8%	25.6%	16.8%
Care by other relative	...	3,900q	...	6,800
	...	7.2%q	...	6.2%
No need for care	_	...	...	...
	_	...	...	...
Column Total	29,900	53,600	27,200	110,800
	27.0%	48.4%	24.6%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount to small to be expressed

_ - Nil or zero

Table 4.5

Distribution of Children Under 13 Years of Age Including the 'Target Child' by Dual and Single Parent Families

Row Percentages

Family Type	Number of Children			Row Total
	1	2	3	Column %s
Dual	24,900	50,400	25,500	100,800
	24.7%	50.0%	25.3%	91.0%
Single	5,100	3,200q	...	10,000
	50.6%	32.4%q	...	9.0%
Column Total	29,900	53,600	27,200	110,800
	27.0%	48.4%	24.6%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Table 4.6

Distribution of Alberta Families Across Selected Income Ranges Based on 1987 Combined Parental Income

Combined Parental Income	Frequency	Percentage
less than $20,000	17,400	15.7%
$20,001 - $30,000	14,200	12.8%
$30,001 - $40,000	21,000	19.0%
$40,001 - $50,000	24,100	21.8%
$50,001 - $60,000	14,800	13.4%
More than $60,000	19,200	17.3%
Total	110,800	100.0%

Table 4.7

Distribution of Combined Parental Income by Care Type

Column Percentages

Care Type	Combined Parental Income			Row
	$00001-$30000	$30001-$60000	$60000+	Total
Group care	6,200	10,800	3,900q	21,000
	19.7%	18.0%	20.6%q	18.9%
Someone else's home by a non-relative	3,800q	15,600	4,600	24,000
	12.0%q	26.0%	24.0%	21.7%
Someone else's home by a relative	4,400	5,500	...	11,000
	13.9%	9.2%	...	9.9%
Own home by a non-relative	...	...	3,200q	7,400
	...	...	16.5%q	6.6%
Spousal care	6,100	12,100	...	20,800
	19.4%	20.1%	...	18.8%
Interviewed parent care	6,500	9,600	...	18,600
	20.5%	15.9%	...	16.8%
Care by other relative	...	3,300q	...	6,800
	...	5.4%q	...	6.1%
No need for care	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...
Column Total	31,600	53,600	27,200	110,800
	28.5%	54.2%	17.3%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Table 4.8

Distribution of Combined Parental Income by Dual and Single Parent Families

Column Percentages

Combined Parental Income	Dual Parent	Single Parent	Row Total
less than $20,000	11,200 11.1%	6,200 62.1%	17,400 15.7%
$20,001 - $30,000	12,700 12.6%	... ...	14,200 12.8%
$30,001 - $40,000	19,200 19.1%	... ...	21,000 19.0%
$40,001 - $50,000	23,700 23.5%	... ...	24,100 21.8%
$50,001 - $60,000	14,800 14.7%	_ _	14,800 13.4%
More than $60,000	19,100 19.0%	... ...	19,200 17.3%
Column Total	100,800 91.0%	10,000 9.0%	110,800 100.0%

... - Amount too small to be expressed
_ - Nil or zero

Table 4.9

Distribution of IP's Age by Selected Age Ranges

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
17 - 24 yrs.	10,200	9.2%
25 - 29 yrs.	36,800	33.2%
30 - 34 yrs.	44,300	40.0%
More than 34 yrs.	19,500	17.4%
Total	110,800	100.0%

Table 4.10

Distribution of Spouse's Age by Selected Age Ranges

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
20 - 24 yrs.	3,700q	3.7%q
25 - 29 yrs.	26,500	26.3%
30 - 34 yrs.	35,000	35.3%
More than 34 yrs.	35,000	34.7%
Total	100,800	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution

Table 4.11

Distribution of IP's Educational Level by Selected Education Ranges

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
1 to 11 yrs. of schooling	14,100	12.8%
12 to 13 yrs. of schooling	41,900	37.7%
some post-secondary	11,000	9.9%
post-secondary college	23,500	21.2%
university degree	20,200	18.3%
Total	110,800	100.0%

Table 4.12
Distribution of Spouse's Educational Level by Selected Education Ranges

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
1 to 11 yrs. of schooling	15,000	15.2%
12 to 13 yrs. of schooling	30,500	30.7%
Some post-secondary	11,700	11.8%
Post-secondary college	24,500	24.6%
University degree	17,600	17.7%
Total	99,300	100%

Table 4.13

Distribution of Alberta Families Residency by Area Size

Number of Families Area of Residence	Frequency	Percentage
>100,000	60,100	54.3%
15,000 - 100,000	12,400	11.2%
Rural areas of <15,000	38,300	34.5%
Total	110,800	100.0%

Table 4.14

Distribution of Alberta Families' Preferred Care Arrangements

Care Type	Frequency	Percentage
Day care centre	17,800	18.4%
Nursery school	...	...
Non-relative at home	16,800	17.4%
Non-relative in another home	14,100	14.6%
Spouse/Partner	18,600	19.3%
Brother/Sister	...	...
Other relative	17,400	18.0%
No need for care	...	...
Not stated	7,500	7.8%
Missing cases	14,400	13.0%
Total	110,800	100.0%

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: The category of missing cases includes families who were engaged study during the reference week

Table 4.15

Distribution of Alberta Families' Currently Using or Not Using Their Preferred Care Arrangement

Current Use of Preferred Care Arrangement	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	71,000	64.2%
No	30,800	27.8%
Not Stated	7,500	6.7%
Missing cases	...	...
Total	110,800	100.0%

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: The missing category includes families who were engaged in study during the reference week

Table 4.16

Distribution of Alberta Families' Currently Using Their Preferred Care Arrangement by Care Type

Column Percentages

Type of Care	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total
Day care centre	10,500	7,200	N/A	17,800
	18.0%	24.7%		18.7%
Nursery school	...	...	N/A	...
	...	...		...
Non-relative at home	5,500	11,300	N/A	16,800
	9.3%	38.8%		17.7%
Non-relative in another home	9,900	4,200	N/A	14,100
	16.9%	14.4%		14.9%
Spouse/Partner	17,200	...	N/A	18,600
	29.5%	...		19.6%
Brother/Sister	...	N/A	N/A	...
	...			...
Other relative	12,900	4,500	N/A	17,400
	22.2%	15.3%		18.3%
Not stated	N/A	N/A	7,500	7,500
			100.0%	7.9%
Column	58,300	29,200	7,500	94,900
Total	61.4%	30.7%	7.9%	100.0%

... - Amount too small to be expressed
N/A - Information not available or not applicable
Note: Number of missing observations and no need for care responses - 15,900

Table 4.17

Distribution of Families Currently Using Their Preferred Care Arrangement by Number of Parents

Column Percentages
Row Percentages

Number of Parents	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total Column %s
2	65,500	27,300	6,400	99,300
	66.0%	27.5%	6.5%	90.9%
	92.3%	88.8%	65.9%	
1	5,500	3,500q	...	10,000
	54.9%	34.5%q	...	9.1%
	7.7%	11.2%q	...	
Column Total	71,000	30,800	7,500	109,300
	65.0%	28.2%	6.8%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution
... - Amount too small to be expressed
Note: Number of missing observation - 1,500

Table 4.18

Distribution of Alberta Families' Currently Using Their Preferred Care by Number of Children Under 13 Years in the Economic Family

Column Percentages

Number of Children	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total
1	18,300	10,000	...	29,800
	25.8%	32.6%	...	27.3%
2	33,400	14,600	4,700	53,200
	47.6%	47.5%	63.3%	49.7%
3-5	18,900	6,100	...	26,300
	26.6%	19.9%	...	24.0%
Column Total	71,000	30,800	7,500	109,300
	65.0%	28.2%	6.8%	100.0%

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: Number of missing observations - 1,500

Table 4.19

Distribution of Families Currently Using Their Preferred Care Arrangement by Combined Parental Income

Column Percentages

Income	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total
$000001-$010000	3,100q	...	...	5,400
$010001-$020000	8,300	...	...	11,900
	11.7%	...	...	10.9%
$020001-$030000	10,700	...	...	14,200
	15.0%	...	...	13.0%
$030001-$040000	13,200	5,900	...	21,000
	19.3%	19.2%	...	19.2%
$040001-$050000	13,600	8,800	...	23,600
	19.1%	28.4%	...	21.6%
$050001-$060000	9,400	4,200	...	14,500
	13.3%	13.8%	...	13.3%
$060001+	12,200	5,200	...	18,600
	7.2%	16.7%	...	17.0%
Column	71,000	30,800	7,500	109,300
Total	65.0%	28.2%	6.8%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: Number of missing observations - 1,500

Table 4.20

Distribution of Families Currently Using Their Preferred Care Arrangement by IP's Age

Column Percentages

Age	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total
17-24	5,800	3,800q	...	10,200
	8.2%	12.3%q	...	9.3%
25-29	24,800	9,100	...	36,400
	35.0%	29.6%	...	33.3%
30-34	28,100	12,600	...	43,600
	39.6%	40.9%	...	39.9%
More than 34 years	12,200	5,300	...	19,100
	17.2%	16.7%	...	17.4%
Column Total	71,000	30,800	7,500	109,300
	65.0%	28.2%	6.8%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: Number of missing observations - 1,500

Table 4.21

Distribution of Families Currently Using Their Preferred Care Arrangement by Spouse's Age

Column Percentages

Age	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total
20-24	...	...	...	3,700q
	...	...	...	3.7%q
25-29	18,800	5,900	...	26,500
	28.6%	21.6%	...	26.7%
30-34	21,400	10,800	...	35,000
	32.6%	39.7%	...	35.2%
More than 34 years	23,600	8,800	...	34,100
	35.8%	32.2%	...	17.4%
Column Total	71,000	30,800	7,500	99,300
	66.0%	27.5%	6.5%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: Number of missing observations - 11,500

Table 4.22

Distribution of IP's Educational Level by Selected Education Ranges

Column Percentages

Educational	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total
1-11 years	9,400	3,600q	...	14,100
	13.2%	11.6%q	...	12.8%
12-13 years	27,100	11,500	...	41,200
	38.1%	37.3%	...	43.5%
Some post-secondary	8,200	...	...	11,000
	11.5%	...	...	39.9%
Post-secondary/ College	13,900	8,000	...	23,200
	19.6%	26.1%	...	21.2%
University degree	12,300	5,300	...	19,800
	17.5%	17.2%	...	18.1%
Column Total	71,000	30,800	7,500	109,300
	65.0%	28.2%	6.8%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: Number of missing observations - 1,500

Table 4.23

Distribution of Spouse's Educational Level by Selected Education Ranges

Column Percentages

Educational	Yes	No	Not Stated	Row Total
1-11 years	9,400	4,600	...	15,000
	14.4%	16.8%	...	15.2%
12-13 years	21,700	6,100	...	30,500
	33.0%	22.3%	...	30.7%
Some post-secondary	7,700	3,400q	...	11,700
	11.8%	12.4%q	...	11.8%
Post-secondary/ College	15,500	8,000	...	24,500
	23.7%	29.2%	...	24.6%
University degree	11,200	5,300	...	17,600
	17.0%	19.3%	...	17.7%
Column Total	65,500	27,300	6,400	99,300
	66.0%	27.5%	6.5%	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high sampling variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Note: Number of missing observations - 11,500

Table 4.24

Distribution of Identified Constraints to Families Use of Preferred Care Arrangements

Identified Constraint	Number	Percentage
Care method not available	15,800	51.4%
Cost	3,300q	10.7%q
Work schedule	3,300q	10.6%q
Transportation	...	...
Quality	...	...
Child's special needs	...	...
Other	4,500	14.6%
Not stated	...	...
Total	30,800	100.0%

q - Estimate is subject to high variability and should be used with caution

... - Amount too small to be expressed

Figure 2.1

Demographic Characteristics Found to Influence Parents' Selection of Child Care Arrangements

Characteristic	Study						
	Sask.	Toronto Ontario	Kitchener Ontario	Prince Edward Island	Winnipeg Manitoba	Newfoundland	Alberta
Age of child	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Children under 3 yrs home care	X	X			X		
Children 3-5 centre care	X	X			X		
Number of children under 15 yrs	X	X	X	X		X	X
Number of parents in family	X	X	X	X		X	X
Family income	X	X	X			X	X
SES	X	X	X				
Ethnicity		X	X		X		
Location and duration of residency	X	X	X			X	X
Parents' education	X	X	X				X
Respondents' age	X						X
Occupation	X						

Figure 2.2
Families' Preference of Child Care Arrangements

Study	Method of Data Collection	Most Preferred Care Arrangement	Primary Criteria for Selecting Preference
Saskatchewan	•Elicited statement of preference	1) paid care includes - day care - family day home - nursery schools - paid sitter 2) unpaid care	• age of child • school attendance • respondent's education • number of children in the family
Toronto, ON	•Parent questionnaires	1) day care centre 2) paid sitter unrelated to the family 3) care by relative	• location • age of child
Kitchener, ON	•Parent questionnaires	1) day care centre	• reliability • caregiver personality • child rearing attitudes • educationally stimulating environment • age of child
Prince Edward Island	•Elicit statement of preference	1) day care centre/ kindergarten	• reliability • caregiver personality • child rearing attitudes • parents' occupation • age of child
Winnipeg, MB	•Parent questionnaires	1) day care centre for 3-5 year olds 2) day care home/ sitter for under 3's	• caregiver trustworthiness • child rearing attitudes • educationally stimulating environment • age of child
Newfoundland	•Rank order of presented options	1) group child care centre 2) licensed family day care 3) private arrangements	• safety • personal character of caregiver • nutrition • appropriateness of discipline • programming • availability • social time with children

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