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Family was viewed as an informal driving force for the social change; one simple reason was that the changes in the family system would proceed in time and help to bring about changes in other aspects of the social culture also. However, the determination of whether changes in the family produce changes in the larger society should be derived from the examination of the data itself. Some people including the social anthropologists and sociologists can also be subjective about the family. But, the family has most often been conceived to be a passive agent of social change- to adapt changes in other areas of society rather than to cause changes in other areas (Geraldine, 1975). While most of the social anthropologists see changes in the family as both cause and effect of changes in other institutions.

There have been a few attempts to formulate theoretical understanding of the family during the early 1990s. Most of them were based on the comprehensive interpretations of the relations between the family and other social institutions. Two major theories that came up at that time are Cyclical Theory and Progressive Theory which were propounded by Carle C. Zimmerman and William F. Ogburn respectively.

Zimmerman (1947) in his book Family and Civilization has analyzed the family through ages of civilizations starting from preliterate societies to contemporary societies of early twentieth century and through the globe from American to Australian through Mediterranean and Asian region. He finds that throughout the western history there have been three major family types- the trustee family, the domestic family and the atomistic family, which were defined according to the amount of power vested in the family and social control which it exercises. He says that social change follows a deterministic pattern which takes into account the mutual cause-effect interaction of family and level of civilization. This cycle repeats itself with the changes in civilization.
On the other hand, Ogburn (1938) talks about the seven functions of family before modern times\(^1\). They are economic, status giving, educational, religious, recreational, protective and affectional. Member of a family were tied together by these functions and were source of power and prestige of the family. Confining his analysis of family to America only, he viewed family as a passive agent adopting changes from the outside in the larger society. Ogburn says that modern families are losing their traditional functions but at the same time they are also taking up certain personality functions at two levels, one in the relationship between spouses and another between the parents and children. According to him, modern family has lesser functions today but they are performing them in a better way than they use to do in the past.

Zimmerman was criticized for inadequacy and unreliability of data as well; he never collected data from existing preliterate societies of his time. Although his cyclical analysis was provocative, it found few adherences. While Ogburn’s Progressivists theory, besides analytical strength, is found to be lacking behind in its theoretical part, the charges has been made that his concept is normative containing hidden value judgments and temporocentric in nature (Goode, 1963).

The major difficulty that was faced at that time was to develop an accepted definition of family. In 1949, G.P. Murdock, on the basis of his study of more than 250 societies, came up with a definition i.e. “The family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adult of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabitating adults.” This definition headed off a debate for around half of the decade regarding the definition of family i.e. what one means when one says ‘family’. This prompted thought process in sociologists and social anthropologists to develop family theories on new lines of pattern.

As a result, soon after post Second World War scenario, family theories expanded in three different dimensions i.e Structural-functional theory, Developmental theory and Family stress theory. Structural-functional theory takes a macro view of the family within culture, on the other hand, developmental theory sees family from psychological

\(^1\) Here, before modern times mean the time prior to the industrial revolution of American society which Ogburn studied.
lens and applies basic stage theory to family studies while family stress theory tries to find out the ways through which a family as a system deals with challenging situations or events.

2.1. Family as a Concept

Plenty of publications have explained family in their research findings in their own way. Anthropologists and sociologists have argued for decades about how to define it. Sociologists have arrived to an agreement by considering family as a social unit comprising of father, mother and children in general. However, anthropologists tend to reserve the term family for reference to a set of cultural rules, expectations and values or ideas which define a particular type of kin and prescribe the behavior of kin to one another including economic, sexual, matrimonial, juridical, moral and affective aspects.

W.J. Goode (1987) has identified following features of a family; 1) at least two adult persons of opposite sex reside together; 2) some kind of division of labour exists between the two; 3) many types of social and economic exchanges involve between the two; 4) sharing of many common things such as food, sex, residence, goods and social activities; 5) the adults share paternal relations with their children and have some authority over them while children share filial relations with them; 6) there are sibling relations among children themselves and share a range of obligations like protection and help. When all these conditions exist, few people would deny that the unit is a family.

G.P. Murdock (1949) refers family to a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes at least two adults of both the sexes who maintain a socially approved sexual relationship and one or more children born or adopted of the sexually cohabiting couple. This definition was based on the study of around two fifty societies of the world and had its own implications. It fostered the debate about the universal presence of the institution called family. However, in M.E. Spiro’s (1965) work on Kibbutz of Israel, issue of fatherhood among black families living in America and ‘Tarawad’ of Nayar families of Malabar (Gough, 1954) questioned the universality of the family but functional universality of the institution is accepted by both anthropologists and sociologists.
In anthropology, the study of family has its own ups and downs. Being intertwined with marriage and kinship, the institution called family that structures rules and behaviours regarding relationship both by descent and alliance, gained predominance (Uberoi, 1993). These principles and rules are routinely acted out in the family and the household. Somehow this dimension of family happened to be glossed over, despite Fortes’ (1958) view that the domestic group is the workshop for kinship and marriage. It is worth serious consideration that the family is, to use Goffman’s (1958) dramaturgical notion both the backstage and the front stage of a very substantial part of people’s behaviour. The family as an omnipresent institution, witnesses the drama of life as it unfolds throughout people’s life. Such an approach to the family is less likely to fall under the clearly chartable principles of kinship that anthropology has found it more fascinating to study. Anthropology has dealt largely with neater categories than the existential messiness offered by the family (Simpson, 1994).

2.2. Family Studies in India

In India, Family studies have gone through a long way of debates and subjective explanations since 1950s. During 1960s and 1970s the major focus of the scholars of family has been about its nature and structure. This was the time when India was also witnessing the challenges of industrialization and the whole country was struggling for stable economy. These events influenced the scholars of that time and majority of the studies were carried out to find out the effect of the process of industrialization on family and to predict the future of the study. This endeavour gave rise to a number of discussions and concepts which were substantiated with the empirical studies and census data. Is the family right social unit to study or is it household which should be studied, typology of family and households and ingredients of family were some of the major concerns which were addressed. However, during 1980s and 1990s, family got somewhat less attention in comparison to the previous decades. This is also true of the papers on family published in Sociological Bulletin, 29 which were published by the mid-1970s, while 2 each were published in the 1980s and 1990s (Patel, 2005).

India occupies a special place in the comparative sociology of the family as a textbook case of the working of a ‘joint family system’ (Goode, 1963). Indian joint family has
long been integrated and amalgamated with the value aspects of Indian culture and
tradition. Kapadia (1955) has identified three social institutions that characterize
traditional Indian society i.e. the caste system, the village community and the joint
family. Of the three, it is the family which has been viewed most positively in public,
sociological and anthropological discourses (Beteille, 1991).

Historically, joint family in India has been viewed as a typical and traditional form of
family organization in relation with the integration of British colonial administration
with indigenous system of kinship and marriage as reflected through the Hindu sacred
texts and the Dharamshastras (Kane, 1930). This approach is called as ‘Indological’
approach of family study (Shah, 1973) which was fostered by Henry S. Maine, law
member of the Council of the Governor-General in India from 1862-69. Relying on
the classical textual sources of Hindu law along with the contemporary ethnographic
writings, Maine (1972) projected the Indian joint family as a living example of the
earliest or ancient form of the human family and termed this type of family as
‘patriarchal family’. He explained the ‘patriarchal family’ as an eternal existing
corporation based on the principle of status whose living members were co-sharers in a
joint property. In fact, early indologists regarded the joint family as a unifying
civilizational ideal that had been ‘very widely held by all Hindus- the rich as well as the
poor, the learned as well as the lay, the city men as well as the village folk’ (Prabhu,
1955).

However, G.S. Ghurye (1955) claimed the ancestry of Indian joint family from Indo-
European pedigree. In this regard, in order to counter balance the heterogeneity with
reference to the origin of joint family among the various kinship organizations of India,
Irawati Karve (1953) proposed three unifying factors of the social organization in India
i.e. caste system, Sanskritic heritage and patrilineal or matrilineal joint family which she
defined as ‘a group of people who generally live under the same roof, who eat food
cooked at one hearth,… hold property in common and …participate in common worship
and (who) are related to each other as some particular type of kin’ (Karve, 1953).

From Indological explanations one should not understand that these were only based on
the ‘armchair’ studies. In this time, Sir Henry Maine had extensively relied on
administrators’ accounts, while Ghurye and his many students had pioneered empirical surveys and ethnographic reports on family and kinship in a number of different Indian communities (Pillai, 1997). However, in order to develop the model of the traditional Indian family, they all referred the classical textual sources, on that basis contemporary family patterns were described as either variants or modern transformations. That is, the Indian family was for all purposes assumed to be synonymous with the Hindu joint family of classical, sanskritic usages (Uboerii, 1993). Though, Kapadia (1955) questioned this perspective of claiming universal family type of the Indian subcontinent with regard to the interpretation of the kinship practices among non-Hindus, of non-patrilineal communities, of the communities of Dravidian kinship (Karve, 1953) and of the lower castes.

Post World War II, theorists and social science scholars of ‘modernization’ started focusing on the conjugal relationships of the family and identified Anglo-American nuclear family as the family type best adapted to the requirements of the modern industrial society. Early British census on the empirical grounds also supported the fact that joint family was not much prevalent and persistent (Shah, 1973).

American Sociologist Talcott Parsons’ (1959) theory of family socialization and interaction in his broader theoretical framework of society and social change influenced the family studies at a larger level. He analyzed family in the context of America’s changing social situation in post-world war II period when divorce rate was rising and called these changes as indicative of the stresses of the period of transition and not signs of a trend of dysfunction and disorganization per se (Parsons and Beals, 1955). According to Parsons, nuclear family in modern time is losing its functions but complementing to the trend, parental and conjugal bonds are being emphasized. He further argued that in its elementary structure, family comprised of four basic roles differentiated along the two axes of generation and of sex- father, mother, male child, female child- the differentiation of generation amounting to a differentiation in terms of power, and the differentiation of sex to a differentiation between instrumental and expressive functions (Parsons and Beals, 1955). Parsons’ functional analysis of American nuclear family was well taken by development literature of the 1950s and 1960s, notably through the very influential writings of William J. Goode (Uboerii, 1993).
Not withstanding with the Parsons, W. J. Goode (1963) on the basis of his comparative survey of modern changes in the family in five different areas of the world, concluded that “at the present time a somewhat similar set of influences is affecting all world cultures. All of them are moving toward industrialization, although at varying speeds and from different points. Their family systems are also approaching some variant of conjugal system.” He termed the new variant as ‘conjugal family’ forms different from the previously considered nuclear family forms.

Here, one should note the two major aspects of Goode’s interpretation of Indian data. Firstly, in India changes in ideological aspects of family goes at a much higher rate than the changes in behavioural aspects and secondly, changes in traditional Indian family patterns are not just due to the impact of industrialization but are expressions of the delaying process of India’s social development (Goode, 1963).

Milton Singer (1968), in his empirical study of Madras industrialists countered Goode’s argument and found intergenerational changes in the family functionally associated with urbanization and industrial entrepreneurship. He also noted an intergenerational persistence of joint family living in many cases and the continuity of the family occupation despite living in nuclear family. His findings indicated the potential of ‘structured adaptation’ of Indian joint family to the modern industry and enterprise. Though Singer’s interpretation was criticized on the basis of not defining the concept of ‘nuclear’ and ‘joint’ family and household precisely, his analysis and understanding on continuity and change in the context of Indian family was well appreciated.

Milton Singer and other earlier anthropologists’ and sociologists’ work were not being proving to be sufficient in arriving at a uniform operational definition of ‘joint’ and ‘nuclear’ family. Meanwhile, in his writings, A.M.Shah (1973) recommended that the proper object of the study should be what he called the ‘household dimension’ of the family, the household being defined as the strictly commensal and so-resident group.²

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² W.J.Goode compared family changes in the five regions of the world i.e. The Arab world, Sub-Saharan Africa, India, China and Japan in his book World Revolution and Family Patterns (1963) published by Free Press of Glencoe, London.
³ Shah’s definition of household was different from Census and National Sample Survey definitions of household which includes servants and sometimes even visitors in the household.
Shah’s argument shifted the focus of discussion from joint-nuclear family to family-household. The question, ‘Is joint family disintegrating?’ was rephrased as, ‘Is the joint household disintegrating?’ (Uberoi, 1993). It initiated studies which classify household in various types. In this regard, Pauline Kolenda’s (1968) 12 type classificatory scheme of household based on the analysis of post-colonial ethnographies and household census gained the currency.

At this time, many of the empirical researches and census data were statistically analyzed for demographic justification of various types of households. All India figures of 1981 census showed slightly lower proportion of joint household over nuclear households (Chakravorty and Singh, 1991). However, Kolenda (1968) calculated that with 30 percent or more joint families in a population, over 50 percent of persons would reside in joint households (Shah, 1999). In other words, in spite of majority of the households being of nuclear type, majority of persons in a population might still reside in joint or supplemented nuclear families. Many other conclusions were drawn regarding the nuclear and joint households as the average size of household had actually been increasing over the last century and half (Shah, 1999).

On the other hand, anthropologists explained the phenomenon of various types of households as ‘the developmental cycle of the domestic group’ where a household passes through various stages of expansion, fission and replacement (Robertson, 1992). A ‘stem family’ form was speculated as the emerging form of family type in India where parents reside with one of their married child (Vatuk, 1972).

Urban life style and occupation mobility were identified as the main factors for discouraging joint households in urban setting (Shah, 1998) while M.S.Gore’s (1968) study claimed that joint property and business would prefer joint households over nuclear households. Moreover, regional variations in the joint households were also

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5 Fredric Le Play (1806-82) divided the history of family into three stages: patriarchal family, stem family and unstable family. He defined stem family as a three generational structure which functioned to retain its original location by means of dispersing the younger most members, while preserving the main family stem by a principle of single heritance.
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reported as Kolenda (1968)\(^6\) had shown that the joint households were strongest through contiguous belt of north India and weakest in south India.

Since 1970s, dynamics in the demographic aspects of Indian population was observed where there was decline in fertility in some regions which was significantly influencing the traditional family patterns. Probably, that was the time from where scholars of Indian family started their pursuit for methodological rigor through the conceptual understandings of family and household and began reconstructing the concepts. Wadley (1998) called it a shift of focus in Indian family and kinship studies in the 1990s, from ‘structure’ to ‘process’. It, for instance, involved the critical review of American, European and other regions’ family studies (Goode, 1990), re-engagement with the functional and structural-functional approaches, adaptation of ‘cultural’ approach to kinship studies for more getting more insights of family system, exploration of economics of household i.e. consumption aspects (Agarwal, 1997), viewing the family in a broader context of kinship system and interdisciplinary considerations.

Privileging of the concept of household over that of the family has no doubt introduced a welcome precision into scholarly discussion on the Indian family and has enabled more rigorous comparative studies of household across culture over time (Netting et al, 1984). However, since beginning anthropologists have been arguing that family should always be analyzed in the context of system of family, marriage and kinship. For instance, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown (1950) considered family as a basic unit on which kinship system builds. For him, elementary family consists of a man, his wife and their children which comprises three basic relationships i.e. parent-child relations, sibling relations and husband-wife relations. Dumont (1966) has stated that it is the relationship of affinity that ultimately structures the family and kinship. Marriage is considered not just primarily an arrangement between two individuals while it is an alliance between two families or descent groups.

Though the work of Kolenda and Shah successfully puts forth the arguments against the disintegration of the Indian joint households, but in general the perception of Indian family that prevails, among anthropologists, sociologists and general public, is

\[\text{Kolenda’s data in the studies cited (1967, 1968, 1989) derived from ethnographic monographs, surveys and 1961 census of India.}\]
generalized and hegemonic Indo-Aryan/north Indian (Uberto, 1993). This vision goes back with the earlier indologists’ perception of Indian family and returns to the same former discussion.

If we see another aspect of Indian family other than nuclear-joint and household conceptualization, we find that the classical concept of family in India, in general, could be treated as a unique feature of the land when viewed from an integrated perspective of the people of India in the classical period as forming a single culture. This could, thus, be defined as being based on unique modes of social life of the Hindus that involves the notion of consanguinity, real or make-belief, brought up through adaptation (Mahanta, 1994). In this regard, one should understand that the classical concept of family in India essentially involves the connotation of Hindu family by and large. In fact, Hindu notion of family has a sacrament basis; ritual and ethical conceptions provide the essence of cementing bond, the one that is ever enduring and that no amount of superfluous factors or physical separation over space or time can ever shatter. The ethos of Hinduism define family which is united by spiritual, religious and psychological bonds that bind the members of the present generation with one another and with those of succeeding seven generations. Epigrammatically, we can say that as a classical entity, family was the nucleus of socio-religio-cultural life of the people of ancient time.

The whole history of the Hindu family reveals the fact that ever since Vedic times the joint corpus of the family was sought to keep intact by upholding the absolute control of the head of the family over property. The changes brought about by industrialization, urbanization and other modern forces have raised questions in the minds of sociologists and anthropologists and other researchers over the viability of joint or extended family network in India (Roy, 2000). A great number of studies have been made over the years examining the relationship of family types to variables such as ownership of property, caste, education, and type of employment, industrialization, and urbanization in India. An analytical discussion over these studies has already been talked earlier in detail.

New theoretical concepts and perspectives have been applied to the analysis of family in India. G.N.Ramu (1979) talks about two aspects of understanding of family in India.
These are ‘biosocial’ and ‘cultural’. Biosocially, the most crucial functions of family are to reproduce and nurture human beings, inculcating the expected norms and values. On the other hand, as a cultural unit family presents a complex of values, norms and roles. Fortes (1959 & 1963) defines his conception of values and norms in terms of ‘social capital’ where social capital consists of the total body of knowledge and skills, values and beliefs, laws and morals embodied in the customs and institutions of a society. In the same regard, Bernard Farber (1964) starts from the premise that the family should be understood in term of its culture i.e. ‘family culture’ that stipulates the principle according to which wider social process supposedly occurs.

However, during the phase of liberalization post-1990s, the newly emerged corporate environment proved to be altogether a new experience to the Indian work force who was accustomed to non-professional environment of public sector undertakings. The off-shore nature of work gave Indian professionals an exposure to the cross border cultures and this made the ‘cultural management’ as a central feature of contemporary management ideology. The professionals have to go through the cross cultural training programs to meet their working requirements apart from their technical skills. Carol Upadhya and A.R. Vasai (2008)\(^7\) have come up with some of the issues related to this cross-cultural juncture, especially to understand the ways in which outsourced IT work leaves its imprints on the workers and the larger Indian society.

Moreover, Jai B.P. Sinha (2004) also talks about the work culture in small industries of India and identifies their strategies for designing a work-conductive and socially integrated culture. His comparative study of twenty eight public and private sector enterprises is an appreciable attempt towards the study of work culture and its relations with society. But there is a need to look at the dimensions showing the interaction of Indian family with the growing cross-cultural work-culture in the MNCs.

Finally, we can say that family studies in India have gone through a path of functional and conceptual debates over its definition, perception and nature. In the context of historical and cross-cultural context, family is considered as an institution and as a

\(^7\) Carol Upadhya and Vasai has called them as ‘Global Workers’ due to their nature of job to provide services worldwide in their edited work published in 2008 titled ‘In an outpost of the Global Economy: Work and Workers in India’s Information Technology Industry’.
genealogical construct which performs some elementary functions i.e. biological, social and economic. Ethnographies on family in India also substantiate the same. But post 1990s, policies have changed the context rapidly and still changing; in this scenario, to study the changes in the family dynamics take the central position in family studies in India.

2.3. Corporate Culture

An organization’s culture has a crucial impact on its overall performance (Aucamp, 1996). In a subtle, but powerful way, culture determines which behaviors are rewarded, the extent to which people work constructively together, and the ways in which decisions are made. It determines the manner in which the organization processes information, responds to external demands and constraints, and motivates its employees. Consequently, a key task of managers is to understand, monitor and actively manage the culture of the organization. A prerequisite in this regard is senior management’s (since they set the ‘cultural agenda’) access to accurate, reliable and comprehensive information regarding the organization’s culture at any given time (Davies, Philp & Warr, 2000).

From an organisational point of view, culture exists at both the cognitive and emotional level, and is manifested in employee behavior (Schein, 1984). It is deeply rooted within the organizational system and evolves over a long time, which also makes it very difficult to change (Sempane et al., 2002).

It is the cumulative achievement of each individual’s objectives that determine the effectiveness of the strategies of the organization as a whole. Individual objectives should flow from an explicit and coherent cascade from the corporate strategy, and lie at the basis of individual motivation. In return, individual motivation stems in large measure from employees’ sense of the extent to which an organization’s system of beliefs and practices complements their own, i.e. the so-called ‘person-culture fit’ (Davies et al., 2000). A clash of values often results in demotivation and dissatisfaction. From the above, it is clear that a link exists between employee motivation, job satisfaction, corporate culture, and organizational effectiveness.
2.3.1. Definitions of Corporate Culture

Although very similar in content, the large variety of definitions of corporate or organizational culture reflects the scope and depth of research in the field. Corporate culture has been defined as a multi-dimensional construct that exists in the minds of people. It directs their thoughts and shapes their behavior, and as such, represents a tool by which organizational behavior may be managed. Similarly, Killman et al (1985) referred to corporate culture as the ‘unconscious’ of the organization – it is to an organization what personality is to an individual, i.e. it provides direction, meaning and mobility.

The most often encountered view of corporate culture incorporates the idea of shared values, beliefs, norms and behaviours. Alvesson’s (2002) similar and slightly expanded view held that corporate culture includes shared and learned world experiences, meanings, values and understandings which inform people, and which are expressed, reproduced and communicated partly in symbolic form. These views most probably took their lead from Schein’s authoritative work on the subject, which holds that corporate culture, together with situational factors, form the basis for observable behaviour.

Schein (1985) defined corporate culture as “a pattern of shared basic assumptions, invented, discovered or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, is to be taught to new members of the group as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.”

Inherent in Schein’s definition is the notion that different groups or teams form spontaneous subcultures within the larger organization based on their consensus regarding certain organizational issues. These fundamental issues revolve around certain external adaptation and internal integration tasks (Schein, 1985).

2.3.2. The Genesis of Work/Life Balance

*Work/Life Balance: A state of equilibrium in which the demands of both a person’s job and personal lives are equal.* Phrases and words serve as cultural signposts to explain where we are and where we are going. The term “work/life balance” was coined in
1986, although its usage in everyday language was sporadic for a number of years. Interestingly, work/life programs existed as early as the 1930s. Before World War II, the W.K. Kellogg Company created four six-hour shifts to replace the traditional three daily eight-hour shifts, and the new shifts resulted in increased employee morale and efficiency. Rosabeth Moss Kanter’s seminal book (1977), *Work and Family in the United States: A Critical Review and Agenda for Research and Policy*, brought the issue of work/life balance to the forefront of research and organizations. In the 1980s and 1990s, companies began to offer work/life programs. While the first wave of these programs was primarily to support women with children, today’s work/life programs are less gender-specific and recognize other commitments as well as those of the family. Work/life balance initiatives are not only a U.S. phenomenon. Employees in global communities also want flexibility and control over their work and personal lives.

### 2.3.3. Defining Work/Life Balance: A Case Study of American Society

Life is a balancing act, and in American society, it is safe to say that almost everyone is seeking work/life balance. But what exactly is work/life balance? We have all heard the term, and many of us complain that we don’t have enough of it in our lives. Among men and women alike, the frustrating search for work/life balance is a frequent topic of conversation, usually translated into not enough time and/or support to do, to handle, to manage … our work commitments or personal responsibilities.

“Juggling competing demands is tiring if not stressful and brings lower productivity, sickness, and absenteeism, so work/life balance is an issue for all employees and all organizations.”

### 2.3.4. Work/Life Balance: Challenges and Solutions

The meaning of work/life balance has chameleon characteristics. It means different things to different groups, and the meaning often depends on the context of the conversation and the speaker’s viewpoint. The following are working definitions of terms used regarding work/life balance; some definitions overlap and some are continuing to evolve (Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000).
Work/family is a term more frequently used in the past than today. The current trend is to use titles that include the phrase work/life, giving a broader work/life connotation or labeling referring to specific areas of support (e.g., quality of life, flexible work options, life balance, etc.). Work/family conflict is related to the push and pull between work and family responsibilities. Work/life balance from the employee viewpoint deals with the dilemma of managing work obligations and personal/family responsibilities. Work/life balance from the employer viewpoint deals with the challenge of creating a supportive company culture where employees can focus on their jobs while at work. Family-friendly benefits are the benefits that offer employees the latitude to address their personal and family commitments, while at the same time not compromising their work responsibilities.

Work/family culture is the extent to which an organization’s culture acknowledges and respects the family responsibilities and obligations of its employees and encourages management and employees to work together to meet their personal and work needs (Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000).

2.3.5. Personal Lives and Family Values to the Forefront

The American work ethic remains intact, yet in recent years personal and family lives have become critical values that Americans are less willing to put on hold, put aside, or ignore, for the sake of work. Over time, the American workforce has begun to change course from being willing to spend every hour working to learning to manage the complexities of modern living. In addition, the impact of the terrorist attacks of September 11 has led many people to re-evaluate their lives and consider the meaning of work. Consequently, Americans are looking for options that allow for both a personal and family life, and many seek ways to have it all. As a result, the U.S. management philosophy that expects employees to put work first, ahead of personal lives and family commitments, is becoming less accepted. In a 2001 survey conducted by the Radcliffe Public Policy Centre, 82% of men and 85% of women ages 20 to 39 placed family time at the top of their work/life priorities. In a 2001 study by Rutgers University and the University of Connecticut, 90% of working adults said they are concerned that they do not spend enough time with their families.
2.3.6. Changing Face of Family

With the growing diversity of family structures represented in the workforce in the new millennium, it is important that human resource professionals better understand the interface of work and family relationships and the resulting impact in the workplace. Researches by Parasuraman and Greenhaus (2002) documented that segments of the workforce may be subject to unique work/family pressures, yet they often have few sources of support. The under-representation of these groups of individuals with potentially difficult types of work/family pressures represents a major gap in work/family research and employers’ understanding of their needs. Typically, studies have focused on employed men and women who are married or living with a partner or those with children.

Omitted from research are single-earner mothers and fathers, single and childless employees with extensive responsibility for eldercare, blended families with children from both partners’ prior marriages, families with shared custody of children, and grandparents raising their grandchildren.

From the employer and employee viewpoint, the changing nature of what constitutes family is one of the complications of today’s society. As human resource professionals design policies and programs to address employee retention, job satisfaction, employee morale, and productivity, this research warrants serious consideration.

2.3.7. A Pivotal Study

In their highly acclaimed book, *Work and Family—Allies or Enemies*, Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), two leaders in work/life balance, bring forth new evidence to help us understand choices we make as employers and individuals regarding work and family. This pioneering study of more than 800 business professionals considered values, work, and family lives and found that “work and family, the dominant life roles for most employed women and men in contemporary society, can either help or hurt each other.” To handle work/life balance, Friedman and Greenhaus emphasize that working adults learn to build networks of support at home, at work, and in the community. Conflict between work and family has real consequences and significantly affects quality of
family life and career attainment of both men and women. The consequences for women may include serious constraints on career choices, limited opportunity for career advancement and success in their work role, and the need to choose between two apparent opposites—an active and satisfying career or marriage and children. Many men have to trade off personal and career values while they search for ways to make dualcareer families work, often requiring them to embrace family roles that are far different, and more egalitarian, than those they learned as children. This research reveals a compensatory effect between two forms of psychological interference: work-to-family and family-to-work. Specifically, support from two domains (partner and employer) has a significant impact on one another. The impact of partnersupport is greater when business professionals feel their employers are unsupportive of their lives beyond work. Conversely, for employees with relatively unsupportive partners, the employer family-friendliness reduces role conflicts more than partners. Thus, one source of support compensates for the lack of the other.

The picture changes, when we look at behavioral interference of work on family. In this case, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: the combined impact of employer and partner support leads to a greater reduction in conflict than does independent employer or partner support.

2.3.8. Work/Life Balance Trends

The challenge of work/life balance in our society is unlikely to disappear. Identified and discussed as follows are four work/life balance trends. Awareness of these trends will place the human resource professional in a position to better educate management and work closely with employees. The topic of work/life balance is getting a great deal of attention in the academic and corporate worlds and new research is continually being conducted. The following is an example of new research in the growing field of work/life balance. A 2003 study reveals that employees are often preoccupied with work when not working, and when in the company of family and loved ones, experience an inability to be meaningfully engaged in non-work spheres. As researcher Ezzedeen and Swiercz (2002) explains, “modern work has become knowledge based,
fluid, and intellectual; overworked people think about work all of the time. For many people, work has become cognitively intrusive.”

To understand work/life balance, Professor Swiercz and Doctoral Candidate Ezzedeen of The George Washington University developed and tested a cognitive approach, the “Cognitive Intrusion of Work.” In simple terms, this means that work/life balance is not just about finding “physical time” to do all that needs to be done. Instead, and more importantly, it is about the “cognitive space” necessary to process, organize, and respond to the thinking demands of life within a complex society.

Ezzedeen and Swiercz (2002) found that the cognitive intrusion of work results in lower job satisfaction, less happiness, a greater incidence of work/life conflict, and more frequent burnout. Furthermore, their findings challenge long-held assumptions about the role of personality, gender, family status and age with regard to work/life balance. They found that the experience of intrusion transcends demographics and personality and is rooted instead in the design of the job and the organizational culture of the employer. Commenting on the potential impact of this research on organization policies and practices, Professor Swiercz states, “this research not only gives employers a new benchmarking tool, it also provides a new theoretical basis for understanding this important social issue from a research perspective.”