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| **Community and Family Studies** |
| Individuals and Work |
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The Nature of Work:

Work is an important concept that brings:

* Financial independence
* A sense of purpose
* Personal satisfaction
* Self-esteem
* Status
* A sense of belonging
* Socialisation
* Security
* Contributing to society
* ... Or other factors

Definition of Work:

Historical Definition:

* ‘an expenditure of energy, striving, application of effort or exertion to a purpose’

Contemporary Definition:

* ‘persons aged 15 and over who, during the reference week:
* One or more hours for pay,
* one hour or more in without pay in a family business or on a farm,
* Were employees who had jobs but were not at work and were on paid leave, on leave without pay, stood down without pay, on strike or locked out or on workers compensation, receiving wages or salary while undertaking study
* Were employers, self employed persons or unpaid family helpers had a job, business or farm, but not at work

Paid and Unpaid Work:

* Paid: Defined as: ‘the production of goods and services. As such it includes activity for which payment either in money or kind is received’
* Unpaid: Unpaid work is also a valuable and important contributor to our society. It is defined as ‘any activity involving the production of goods or services for which someone could be paid but for which has been performed for no money.’

Value and Status of Work:

* Work contributes to improving the standards of living of our society as a whole. By working, earning an income and paying taxes governments can provide services that contribute to our general well being and to our standard of living.
* Work is also of value to the employee. It provides an income to pay for physical items and may also be enough for luxuries such as holidays.
* Work can also give value to other people. If the work is of high status, then the person doing that work will have his or her self-esteem enhanced by it because it is highly valued.
* Status of work indicates a person’s social or professional ranking in relation to others. Often the more highly paid or the more years of study, contribute status to an occupation. Within each industry, status can be applied to the type of job you have and the amount of power and prestige you hold.

Individual and Group Needs Met Through Work:

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| Needs | How individual needs are met through work | How group needs are met through work |
| Self-Esteem | * Self-esteem needs are higher order needs and can only be satisfied once basic needs are met. * when paid or unpaid work is undertaken that contributes a feeling of satisfaction, self esteem is enhanced. | - the approval of colleagues and the support of other people on a task or as part of a team can enhance the self-esteem of the group and also the individual. |
| Financial | - Payment received from tasks completed provides for needs and wants.  - It contributes towards financial independence, a feeling of security and of self – worth. | - This can include a bonus for reaching a goal, or completing a task on time, a pay rise, a weekend away for families or other benefits.   -Increased productivity, reduced sick leave and an increase in the group’s feeling of self worth and importance in the hierarchy of the workplace may result. |
| Social | - Individuals form new friendships through work and these friends often transfer into their private lives.   - Employment gives people a chance to mix with a wide variety of people they otherwise may not have come in contact with. | - Support networks and friendship groups, develop, which can improve moral, leading to higher productivity and a reduction in sick leave. |
| Status | - The type of job, power wielded and money earned can all contribute to ‘status’ and self esteem.  - These can assist in a person’s feeling of self – worth and self-esteem | - The need for status within a group can be provided by a work-space, car, privileges, promotion and so on |
| Education | - The workplace can offer intellectual stimulation that is missing in one’s personal or social life. Many women spend time at home caring for children and running a home find by returning to work their intellectual needs are satisfied.   - The workplace can provide an opportunity for an individual to update their knowledge and skills. | - Individuals who receive additional training can bring back the skills they have learnt to the rest of the group, which will often encourage others to learn these new skills  - Individuals who train as a group share learning experiences which can assist in cementing collegial groups |
| Lifestyle | - The money earned or the type of job and benefits provide a lifestyle suited to or wanted by the individual | - This type of work undertaken by a group can suit their lifestyle eg. Self determined or flexible hours, outdoors, high flyers, laid back and so on. |
| Career | - A job may be one way of earning money to provide for needs, eg. Work weekends to pay for tuition fees.  - A job may be part of a career path or be the ideal career | - Networking, sharing knowledge, skills and experiences can support the career development of colleagues as well as provide personal satisfaction to the individual |
| Social Conscience | - By working, an individual us able to feel they are making a contribution to their local, regional and national community  - Individuals meet people with other ideas, beliefs etc. that can provide them with a view, not jus of their local area, but of the wider community | - Workplaces can volunteer time, skills or finances to assist in those in need  - By committing to a policy, eg, recycling, individuals in a workplace can feel they are contributing to the betterment of their community |
| Culture | - Through work people can learn to accept other people’s ideas and learn the importance of others needs.  - A workplace provides an environment where individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds can exchange and develop an appreciation of the habits, beliefs and understandings of other cultures | - Provision for holidays or celebration, dress, food storage and/or cooking and so on must be made by the company to accommodates the beliefs of employees and clients of different cultures |

Patterns of Work:

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| Patterns Of Work | Description | Sustainability for different individuals | Analyse ABS statistics to determine trends in Australian workforce. |
| Full-time | Advantages  Worker receives monetary compensation  Usually works for 35 hours/ week  Receives entitlements of 4 weeks paid leave, sick leave, long service, maternity/paternity leave, and superannuation.  Disadvantages  Time spent with family is limited, cost of childcare. | - people in the beginning stage of family life cycle, male members of family, people in contracting stage of family cycle. | - Most common work practice performed, with 60% of total employment involved.  - Increase of participation of women in full-time work from 26.5% in 1978 to 28.5% in 1995  - The number of men in full-time work has decreased from 71% in 1978 to 60% in 1995.  - Between 1986-1994 the number of managers and administrators in full-time employment increased by 13% |
| Part-time | Means reducing their working hours to less than 35 hours per week.  Advantages  More family time while status and socialisation is maintained.  Can be used to “top up” family income and allow for holidays and luxuries, enable parents to have a break from the constant demands of small children, have entitlements on a pro rata basis e.g proportion of holiday or sick pay.  -Permanent part-time workers have job security, good for organisation due to set working hours.  Disadvantage  Reduced income | - People who require less than full time work, parents caring for children, students, retired workers looking for extra income. | - Part-time work has increased in recent years for both women and men however it accounts for only 11.8% of total employment.  - The main growth in part-time work has been with females and in retail and service industry; such as cafes and accommodation.  - Young men and women more likely then 10 years ago.  -Increase in wives part-time employed from 25% in the early 1980s to 35% in 2000. |
| Permanent | A permanent worker is one who will still be in that position next year, and for as long as they continue to perform well.  Advantages  Gives security for a worker. It allows them to develop a career pathway in a company and provide status amongst their colleagues. | Can be full time, part time or casual.  Best for parents as it’s a secure full time or part time job. They may return to their original status. |  |
| Contract | A contractor is a type of owner-operator. They are self-employed and hire out their services to companies for a period of time and/or to complete a particular job. They are only employed for a certain period of time  Examples include trades people, IT specialists.  Advantages  Work for themselves, freedom to move on to another job once one is completed and work with new people. This type of work is advantageous as it focuses or develops a person’s skills and allows them to build their own company based on individual skills and abilities.  Disadvantages  Limited income, no job security, work and income can be unstable. For example, some banks will not give loans to people working on ‘contracts’ because their employment cannot be guaranteed. | People with skills who work for themselves |  |
| Shiftwork | A shift worker is a person who works at different times of the day depending on when they are needed. Common in mining, health and community services, accommodation and cafes and restaurants.  Advantages  Allows parents one parent to always remain at home if the 2 parents stagger their shifts. Days off during the week and penalty rates are advantages.  Disadvantages  It can be very tiring and disruptive, especially developing sleep patterns. It could also have a negative impact on parental relationships due to lack of time together. The individual may also feel isolated and worry about safety to and from work. Services such as education, recreation and transport may be difficult to access as services are generally geared for normal work hours (8 am- 6 pm Mon – Fri) | Best for single people or families with older children. | In November 2004, 14% of employees had worked shiftwork in the previous four weeks. A higher proportion of part-time employees worked shiftwork compared to full-time employees.  - Male employees are more likely to work shiftwork than are female employees. |
| Voluntary | A volunteer worker is a person who donates their time to an organisation. Our society relies heavily on volunteer workers to contribute their time, skills, energy and expertise in areas such as meals on wheels, hospitals, schools and sporting clubs.  Advantages  They can give something back to their community, enhances their social conscience, they gain experience in that area that may otherwise have been difficult to learn about. It can provide people with skills needed to re-enter the paid workforce. | This is best for anyone who wants to be rewarded in assisting people and who have spare time. | - People of all ages volunteer, however 57% of all volunteers are female.  - 1994-1995 19% of Australians aged 15 and over undertook some voluntary work through a group or organisation.  - Those aged 25-44 years represented 28% of all volunteers.  -Over 45000 people donated their time this way to the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000.  - in 1992 both men and women contributed about 20 minutes per day to voluntary work. |
| Self-Employed | Advantages  Control their own work patterns, Flexible working hours  Have total responsibility for the business, Freedom to work unrestricted hours, High degree of control over their lives. Self-employment can lead to a sense of wellbeing with the challenge to be self-reliant and a feeling of satisfaction may be gained as their own ideas are put into practice.  Disadvantages  Often work longer hours, No guaranteed income, No entitlements, Isolation from other people if business is small therefore reduced social interaction | People who wish to be their own boss, people with skills and money to invest. As is known sometimes their can be no jobs and that means no money. |  |
| Job-Share | Involves two workers voluntarily sharing one full time job.  Advantages  Greater flexibility in work, Allows people to continue with their careers while also taking care of family commitments, study leisure or community commitments  Allows work to be arranged around family,  provides opportunities for mutual support and encouragement, Work load is divided  Disadvantages  Less income per week. | People with young children. Couples in the same occupation who both wish to spend time with the family. Popular among parents who want to work around child care arrangements. Older workers who want to slowly ease into retirement. |  |
| Telecommuting | Telecommuting is an offsite work arrangement that permits employees to work in or near their homes for all or part of the working week. The individual commutes by telephone, email etc rather than by car or other transport.  Advantages  Work from home so saving time and costs of travel, allows parent to be near children, flexible hours  Disadvantages  Isolation from other workers unless a combination of home and workplace is used. Work may intrude on family life as the employee is available at all times via technology. An increased workload, combination of work and family and the elimination of socialisation may exacerbate stress levels and cause lack of concentration | Parents with young children, semi-retired people, people with family commitments |  |
| Seasonal | Seasonal work involves people that are employed for a specific period of time, dependant on when work is available. Examples include fruit picking and ski instructors. Individuals are usually paid piece rates based on quantity produced but it may also be on the hours worked.  Advantages  Seasonal work does give a degree of independence and provide opportunities to travel and meet people from different places.  Disadvantages  Seasonal work can often be intensive and physically demanding and there is little opportunity for career development. workers must provide own transport and accommodation and due to itinerant nature – socialising occurs mainly with people in same position. | Students  Backpackers  Retirees  makers  Unemployed  Disabled  Migrants |  |
| Working from home | Self employed people have worked from home for many years, and with the advent of telecommunications other workers are also using the home as an alternate office. Examples of people who may work from home include Writers, journalists and photographers.  Advantages  The benefits to the employee are flexible work practices, less time spent travelling, saving in travelling costs, greater control over schedule, work is often more productive and task completed quickly, domestic obligations can be balanced, people who have disabilities are able to be more independent.  Disadvantages  It can lead to lower security, as the business can only benefit as much as the person is willing to work. Eg professionals such as architects, accountants and lawyers. It can have its downfalls as it can intrude in the family time, it can mean work is not sperate from home so the feeling of relax isn’t distinct. | Ideal for people who do not like the regular routine of office hours, or who find it preferable to work on their own. Best for people with a family or injury, sick and people who like independence. | - The number of people working from home has increased by 11% between 1992-1995  - Approx. 4% of all employees are home workers or telecommuters, and of these 60% are women.  - Not all home workers are employees- over half (52%) are self-employed or unpaid family workers. |
| Others | **Flexitime-** A flexible arrangement where workers can work more or fewer hours in any one day, as long as the total hours worked in a scheduled period add up to the minimum requirement. Requires employees to be available for set hours and then offer the option of when to complete the remaining required number of hours. Gives autonomy to the individual, allowing them to balance work and family commitments.  **Career Break-** Career break schemes allow an employee to negotiate a fixed period of time away from the workplace to undertake study or tend to private commitments, while returning to the job at the end of the period. Allows employers to retain skilled staff who might otherwise have been forced to leave their place of employment.  **Variable year employment-** Requires an employee to take a reduced salary for four years. The money put aside by the employer from the salary loss is then used to fund one year of leave. Used by employees wishing to study, it is also popular with older workers who do not wish to sacrifice some of their long service leave. | | |

Social Factors Leading to Changing Work Patterns:

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| Social Factors | Their influences on work patterns | Analyse the relationship between patterns of work and the various social factors and hypothesise about possible future trends |
| Education/Training | The choices people make at school have a direct impact on the activities they undertake immediately after school. Some university courses require students to complete particular subjects before they can apply. The level of education people attain seems to directly affect their ability to find paid work. For instance the unemployment rate for people who completed a university degree in 1995 was 1.9% the unemployment rate for people who left school before the age of 16 was 14.4%.  A person’s education directly affects the way in which they work. For instance a changed patterns of work may be required to complete 12 yrs of schooling or university, most students involved in casual or part time work. The decision to continue learning also affects work patterns For example a manager who decides to return to university to earn a degree may need to work flexible hours to fulfil the requirements of their contract*.* Emphasis has been placed on students to remain in formal education: Mandatory school certificate, increase in students staying through to year 12 and further studies, women staying in school. | - most students will have access to work ready courses  - Employees will be expected to continue their education through courses to combine work and education.  - Fewer people in the primary industry and a continuing decline in people leaving school in year 10.  - Businesses and industries increase their level of entry requirements as a result increase in post-school education.  - Increases in unemployment in past 20 years has lead to a more competitive labour market. |
| Technology:   * Computers * Automation/Robotics * Research and development | Mankind’s desire to increase efficiency has led to the development of machinery. Technology has affected the way in which people work, and therefore there are fewer positions available for untrained and unskilled individuals. Many older people are being retrenched as they are unskilled and have not completed any training since they left school.  Today, most workers are now responsible for their own data entry and retrieval and employees are expected to get up-to-date with skills and knowledge that will help the company maintain its position in the global market.  Computers  Computers are able to perform a lot of work previously performed by people. In some cases using a computer means that only one person is required where previously several are needed. This can be seen in the banking industry for example, which has resulted in a large increase in shift work for technicians to maintain computer systems 24 hours a day.  Computerization has affected nature of work in most industries as most businesses now have a computer, fax, photocopier and access to internet. Other technology includes desktop video conferencing, desktop application sharing, workflow software, and nomadic computing & telecommunication. Also believed to reduce hours.  Automation/ robotics  There is also an increasing use of robots. Many industries have become highly automated for example modern vehicle assembly lines and ATMs replacing many bank tellers. Machines do not take breaks or get paid and did not take days off. The machines often work much more quickly.  Research and development  Research and development into these areas will decide which of these tasks are safe to perform by robots and as they become more reliable they become more relied on.  Many companies have spent time and money in R&D on new technologies, processes, products and materials which are expensive to develop to remain competitive in a global market. | Possible future trends include:  - Increase in telecommuting and working from home.  - Increase in IT specialists.  - Requirements of computer skills in more occupations.  - Less jobs in the primary industry. - Creation of new jobs.  - More skills and jobs will be made redundant.  - Employees will constantly need to retrain to gain information on latest technology.  - Easier to perform tasks around the house e.g dryer, dishwasher, vacuum.  - Workers may find de-skilling due to technology difficult to see value in and gain satisfaction from work.  - Telecommuting has allowed people to work from hope and gives disabled people more opportunity.  - It is quite possible that before to long a robot may be checking you out at the supermarket, driving your taxi or doing your tax return. |
| Employment/Unemployment | In today’s society you need to be trained, skilled or educated in an area to be successfully employed. Generally, people already in employment will more likely receive an offer for a position over an unemployed person as: they have greater confidence in going to an interview, knows techniques for succeeding in interview (done it before) and they already possesses workplace skills. Full-time employees are more likely to have post-school qualifications than those working part-time. This is due to industries with lower educational requirements such as service and retail offering more PT work.  Because of this the phrase ‘Long-term unemployment has entered the language. In a growing percentage of unemployed people have been in that situation for over twelve months. This can affect their confidence and therefore their ability to perform in job interviews.  Most unemployed have not completed secondary education or post-compulsory qualifications, service industries provide a large proportion of part-time jobs, & many government initiative aims to skill unemployed. | To increase jobs, people have reduced hours and have gone from a full time job to a part time or casual (which enables more people to work). There has been an increase in casual jobs and a decrease in full time workers. More people are using flexible work patterns. Employers like flexible workers as it is cheaper to employ casuals.  - More people may be made redundant  -More furthering their education (leading to increased casual/part time workers)  - An increase in self employment and telecommuting. |
| Perceptions of gender | The traditional views of the male as the breadwinner and the female as the homemaker have now become part of ’s history. However, in some industries the number of women employed is still well-below what would have been expected in the sample of the population. Some occupations are seen to be more suited to women (most nurses and teachers are female).  Many female partners work outside home, women have high participation in part-time employment, & government assistance has encouraged more women to join the workforce. Increase is also due to increase in independence and education. Women are moving into technical jobs and men have moved into traditional female occupations. Women are taking on the role of management. However women are still expected to take time off for children. 65% of people working from home are women.  The most obvious field with gender inequality is politics. Politicians are elected by the people but they are not representative of the population as a whole. In reality, only a very small proportion of politicians are females. | - Changing perceptions of women will result in higher participation in workforce, new legislations will assist women to combine work and family & women continue to be seen as primary carer in family.  - Increase number of women in part-time and volunteer work.  - More paternity leave being taken  - Movement out of the stereotypical gender jobs. |
| Family circumstances including structural change | Circumstances within the family can cause changed practices. For instance if a mother decides to change work patterns to manage family responsibilities while maintaining work currency or by leaving work till their child reaches school age.  Or a sole parent may find they can only work-part time, because young children require them to be at home.  Other changing circumstances, such as separation, divorce or death can have an enormous psychological impact on people that affects their ability to work.  Also, today parents may have to stay in the workplace longer, as children stay at home for an extended period of time due to living expenses being higher than they can afford on a casual/PT job basis. Also, parents may have to take on financial burden of elderly relatives care. | - More flexible work practices provide assistance, & some may choose early retirement & work on part-time basis.  - Children staying home longer may mean they don’t retire as early.  - Reduced number of children in families leading to shorter absence for women in the workforce.  - Less people are having children so more opportunity to work.  - More single parents therefore more people looking for part-time work.  - Casual and job-share become more common |
| Government policy | Legislation assists women in workplace incl. bargaining, Equal opportunity, Childcare cash rebate  New legislation has been introduced to support workers especially females. This has Included equal pay for equal work, EEO and Maternity Leave. Paternity Leave and prohibiting discrimination against workers on the basis of family responsibilities have promoted the sharing of domestic responsibilities between men and women  Changes to industrial practices such as flexible work practices e.g. job sharing, PT work, flexitime and telecommuting has helped families manage their work and family commitments.  Enterprise Agreements have allowed for negotiation of work roles and responsibilities, hours, bonuses and work patterns. | - Legislation to keep up with current trends  - More support for parents with children in care will continue to be an issue. |
| Economics | The state of the economy and the move towards globalization (competition between and overseas companies) have influence on employment relationships.Globalization of economy has led to more demands on employees to be multi skilled, flexible, & efficient.  Wanting a house, car, putting children through private education cannot be achieved by one income. Men as the breadwinners are a thing of the past, it is impossible for men in the family to be the only one working (unless the job pays really well). There is an increase in the unemployment rate with a downturn in the economy. An increase in second jobs due to inflation. Many may be on temporary or contract work in an unstable economy. | has to compete with other products and services from other countries & will cause government initiatives to be developed to support businesses.  -Decrease in small business with globalisation increasing  - flexible conditions being available by the state of the economy. |

Managing Workplace and Family Roles:

Although the definition of the family has changed over time, the physical, social, cultural, spiritual and emotional needs of the family members are still the same. To fulfil these needs money is usually requires, and in most cases this means that at least one member of the family needs to be in paid work.

*- Changing circumstances for parents*

At any time the number of children in the family could change, either through childbirth, adoption or even multiple births or through children leaving home.

**Number of children (age differences, multiple births, sex)**

Age

- May be more difficult to manage roles if children are close together in age. The mother can feel overwhelmed by the many roles she has to play e.g. mother, wife, entertainer and food-provider.

* Having children further apart can have different changes to families. For example, the first child may have started school and thus the mother may have returned to work and her and her partner are enjoying more time together. A new baby makes them adjust again which may cause resentment. This time mother may expect the father to become the primary carer whilst she continues her career. The first child could be expected to take on additional duties around the home.
* If an older child decides to continue their stay at home the parents may have to continue full-time work for longer to provide for them.

Multiple births

* If there are already older children in the family, the father may be expected to take on extra responsibilities in relation to their care, schooling and activities

- Resources are available for the support of parents with multiple births such as the Multiple Births Association and financial assistance from the government.

Sex of the Child

- For example, if the arrival of a boy after a number of girl children can cause bedrooms, clothing etc to be reconsidered. Also, the father may play a larger role in their upbringing and activities.

**Children starting school**

- At home parent may wish to take on duties within the school e.g. Canteen, P&C, reading, clothing pool.

* Mother may decide to begin a TAFE course or do volunteer work

- This can also allow additional time for parents to spend together and with children improving the wellbeing of the family as a whole.

- If a child decides to do schooling at university level the parents may have to continue their full-time work ect. To financially support their child. If their child remains at home during this time this will extend the time they have to support their child which may lead to extended retirement date.

* **Parents changing employment**

- Returning to work – family members will be expected to take on additional responsibilities – has to be negotiated with family members involved.

* May affect working hours, wages or leave conditions – roles may have to be adjusted to accommodate different hours. - Roles would have to be adjusted to accommodate the different hours for which the partner would be at home and the duties the partner would be expected to perform.

- Parents may switch between different work patterns and different roles in terms of the amount of money or time that they supply to the family unit.

Negotiating and Sharing roles within families:

- Traditionally men were the ‘breadwinners’ and females were the ‘homemakers’ who cared for the child and completed most of the household duties, However today with an increasing number of females in employment – there has been a need for negotiation and sharing of roles.

- Must be fair to all concerned and not based on gender or traditions. Instead of being based on gender it is now more based on working hours. For example, the male partner may begin work early and finish earlier and therefore could pick children up from school, and cook dinner. The female’s partners working times could allow her to put the washing out, take the children to school and clean up after dinner. Neither may wish to clean the house so this may be outsourced to a tradesperson.

- Roles must be based on age and ability – easier roles allocated to younger members. Builds up responsibilities and independence, eg making own bed, bring out washing, clean up dinner

- Another change is that young people do not leave home until their mid to late twenties, and perform household tasks and may even contribute to the budget.

Managing resources to meet multiple role expectations:

The desire to fulfil all roles placed upon us as a result of the growing number of commitments that parents are associated with: family, work, leisure, sport, church, community groups. Resources are an important component of effectively managing change and multiple roles. They are used to satisfy needs and wants of individual family members, and the family as a whole. They can be interchanged and substituted

**Time e.g delegation, division of labour**

- The resource that people feel they don’t get enough of, the satisfying use of time can influence the wellbeing of individuals and families, when time is not used effectively it can cause dissatisfaction

- Time can be substituted for money

* Tasks can be delegated to allow more time for other activities

- For example from a young age many Australian children are expected to help out with the simplier tasks around the home.

**Technology e.g labour saving devices, fast food**

- Families also make use of new technology with the computer storing information. Other household devices exist around the house like the microwave, dishwasher, washing machine, as well as fast food outlets.

- Labour Saving Devices such as dishwasher, microwave have assisted in completing chores that a person would have traditionally had to complete thereby providing more time for other activities.

* Advent of takeaway food, pre-prepared meals and frozen meals require little time needed for preparations and clean up.
* For example a family may have a budget that is kept on the home computer. The same computer may bed used to store information about upcoming holidays, insurance, policies or study timetables. These are all ways in which people use technology to save time.

**Support networks (formal and informal)**

- Formal support networks such as pre-schools, allow parents to go to work, knowing that their child is being cared for in an accredited institution or alternatively that their child is receiving skills and abilities that make their transition into school easier.

- Informal support networks such as neighbours and friends are a valuable resource because of the help and support they can give to the family. For the parents neighbours may be available to baby-sit the children so they can attend a function.

Workplace support for individual:

Workers with family responsibilities face a range of difficulties, such as:

-Problems finding child care

-Taking time of for sick children

-Constraints on working time

-As a result of the many pressures on people today, governments, unions and workplaces have put in various supports in place to better enable individuals to manage their multiple roles and overcome these difficulties

-Flexibility in the workplace, changes to workplace culture and a range of regulations and entitlements assist individuals in managing their roles as members of the workplace and of a family.

Flexible work patterns and practices:

These are patterns of work which assist individuals in effectively managing their work and family expectations. Flexible work practices include:

- Flexible working hours

- Part time work

- Job share

- Work from home

- Career break schemes

- Part year employment

- Family leave.

- Telecommuting

- Seasonal work

- Casual work

- Contract work

- Both females and makes are entitled to flexible work practices, it is traditionally females who decide on the work changes due to family circumstances eg caring for child or relative.

- Benefits of flexible work patterns and practices is reduced levels of absenteeism, lateness and stress. Increased productivity, skill levels, motivation and commitment.

- Allows for more women to engage themselves in the workforce.

- Flexible work practices allow more time for people with families to meet their responsibilities within the home.

- The availability of flexible work practices allows the maintaining of a standard of living.

- When an employer allows workers to work as they choose it is called ‘**flexi-time’**. For example. A person may choose to work nine hours a day for four days, and then have a three day weekend. If they prefer shorter days they may choose to work six hour days and only have one day for the weekend

- These work options allow people the flexibility they need to more adequately balance their working lives with their private lives.

Workplace culture including provision of childcare:

-The differing attitudes and standards with a company based on what they value as a work environment. Workplace culture can be influenced by many factors such as management styles, employee wellbeing, personality traits and job demands. The very nature of the workplace can affect an individuals well being. A supportive workplace culture can encourage a positive wellbeing amongst all workers, often resulting in a more productive organisation. A workplace that does not have a supportive culture, however can cause dissatisfaction amongst workers, an increased number of sick days taken by employees and a lack of productivity.

-Changes in workplace culture have allowed for support and services beyond that expected in the past. Child care is one service which many large employers now include for instance by sponsoring places in existing childcare centres. This has allowed more women to enter the workforce. Employer supported childcare measures should reflect the different stresses and needs associated with the various stages of employment. Half of the women who go on maternity leave do not return, there needs to be more maternity leave provisions. A shortage of under two care. With good provision of childcare women can stay in the workforce and manage their responsibilities better. This is only one example of a large shift in workplace culture. The overall trend is towards allowing as many people as possible to be in the workforce, including those who may previously have been excluded.

-Most businesses are now open to the idea of employing people with disabilities. May not be able to perform some tasks, they are still able to perform others and these skills can be utilised. Eg. May be housebound – work from home or telecommute.

Regulations and entitlements:

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| **Carers** | Carers leave is to take care for a family member/relation who is sick. It is paid leave  This leave is available to all employees covered by NSW awards. There are few exceptions and some awards have slightly different entitlements. Many enterprise agreements also provide for these types of leave. An employer can require an employee to establish that a family member is sick and needs care. A medical certificate can do this. |
| **Parental leave**  **Maternity**  **Paternity**  **Adoption**  *NSW Industrial Relations Act 1966* | Full-time, part-time and casual employees who have worked continuously with one employer for 12 months are able to take unpaid leave of 52 weeks. This must be completed before the child’s 1st birthday or anniversary of adoption. |
| **Long service**  *NSW Long service leave Act 1955* | Full-time, Part-time and casual workers in NSW are entitled to be paid long-service leave after working for an unbroken period of ten years with an employer.  A minimum of two months paid leave after 10 years of service with one employer. Paid at an ordinary rate. Can be paid out on termination. This payment during the break helps manage family expectations. |
| **Sick leave**  *Industrial relations Act 1996 (Cth)* | A minimum of five days sick leave each year which can be used when the employee is too ill to work or when it is necessary to look after ill family members. |
| **Annual leave**  *NSW Annual Holidays Act 1944* | All full time and part time employees get a minimum of 4 weeks paid leave. Leave falls due on the anniversary of when employment originally commenced. Casuals are paid an additional 1/12 of their rate in place of the annual leave entitlement. Allows parents to take time off and still be getting paid- especially during school holidays. |
| **Personal carer’s leave or family leave**  *Workplace relations Act 1996 (Cth)* | Entitlements are included in individual awards. Enables employees to take time off to care for and support an immediate relative or household member who is sick. Can access three types of leave: sick leave, leave without pay, annual leave entitlements. |

Rights and Responsibilities in the workplace:

Employers and employees have certain obligations or duties to each other under common law. These obligations are regarded as legal standards of behaviour in the employment relationship. The employer- employee relationship is a reciprocal one; it is a contractual agreement under which the employer agrees to pay the employee a set wage in return for the employee to work. The wellbeing of the employee at work becomes in part the responsibility of the employer. The employee and employer have certain rights and responsibilities towards each other.

* **Employees**

Rights

Employees have certain rights in their workplaces and most of these are enshrined in government legislation. These rights have been legislated to protect workers from exploitation and discrimination.

- Right to feel safe at work

- The rate of pay must be clear, fair and equal for all.

- To feel safe at work, knowing employers have met legislative requirements

- Access safety equipment

- The rate of pay must be clear, fair and equal for all

- Leave entitlements clear

- To training and in-services necessary to complete jobs properly

- Freedom of association- free to join a union if they choose

- If more than 20 employees, the right to access a workplace Safety Committee

- The right to appeal what they consider wrongful dismissal by applying to the state industrial tribunal

- the right to award wages and working conditions

- The right not to be sexually harassed

Responsibilities

- Duty to obey the employer’s lawful, reasonable and safe commands.

- Duty of work with skill and competence and care

- Duty of good faith and confidentiality

- Duty to disclose information relevant to take the employer

- Follow all health and safety instructions

- Report any breaches of regulations and complete set tasks to the best of their ability.

- To be punctual in their arrival at work

- To work the required number of hours

- To do their work with the required level of diligence and expertise

- To obey the instructions of superiors in the workplace

- To be loyal to the company they are working for.

**Employers**

Rights

-Right to expect employees will follow all safety instructions, complete their set tasks and maintain working integrity.

- Does not have right to terminate a worker’s employment without just cause or fair notice.

- Dismiss any worker on the spot in particular situation. These situation usually involve employee misconduct or where the employee has failed to: Obey lawful instruction, Perform duties over a period of time, Perform duties with necessary safety, Meet conditions of the employment contract.

- Negotiate terms and conditions with an employee under a AWA

- Receive information about money obtained in course of employment

- Be provided with any process or product invented by the employee during course of employment

- Have trade processes remain confidential

Responsibilities

- To ensure all the basic rights of the employees are met.

- They have a duty of care to:

- To provide for the health, safety and welfare of their employees and to visitors to their place of business

The obligation (duty) of the employer is to take reasonable care for the safety of their employees by:

- Providing safe equipment

- Providing a safe system of work (procedures)

- Ensuring all employees are trained to work safely

- Warning employees of usual or unexpected risks

- Providing safe access to the work place.

- To have a knowledge of:

- Awards relating to their industries

- EBA

- Minimum workplace conditions

- Part time work agreements

- Discrimination and harassment

- Pay slips and employment records

- Freedom of association

- Workplace safety

- Leave Conditions

- Managing performance of personnel

- Procedures for dismissing an employee.

*Duty to pay the agreed remuneration*

- Employers must pay the correct amount of income set down in the award agreement or contract

- Employers must reimburse the employee if they spend money on behalf of the employer or company

Explain the evolution of rights and responsibilities in the workplace:

There has been much evolution in rights and responsibilities in the workplace. Previously there was very little legislative matter that detailed the duties, obligations and rights of employers and employees in the workplace. In the past the employer took sole responsibility for looking after their well-being. However it is now in part a responsibility of the employer and they are now more clearly stated. The employee and employer have certain rights and responsibilities towards each other. Employees have certain rights in their workplaces and most of these are enshrined in government legislation. These rights have been legislated to protect workers from exploitation and discrimination.

Occupational Health and Safety Act 1983 is one government policy which has contributed to the evolution of rights and responsibilities in the workplace. This act was put in place to develop safe work environments and has changed the rights of employees, employers and their responsibilities. It ensures that the employer meets their responsibilities towards the safety rights of the employee. Employers have a responsibility to put in place information, instructions, training and supervision as may be necessary to ensure the employees’ health and safety at work. However employees have a responsibility to follow these instructions as well as the instructions of superiors in the workplace. They have the responsibility to obey the employer’s lawful, reasonable and safe commands. And similarly the employer has the right to expect employees will follow all safety instructions, complete their set tasks and maintain work integrity.

It is government policy to create and amend awards. These outline the minimum conditions of employment which clearly outline the rights and responsibilities of employees and employers. Employees have the right to award wages and working conditions and employers have a responsibility to uphold these. The negotiation of these conditions was initiated through the Workplace Relation Act **1996**. The contract became more flexible to focus’ on the social, safety and esteem needs of the employee. Job security and fair conduct are ensured through the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) who follow up breaches of awards. Anti-discrimination policies meet the rights of both employers and employees. They deem it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of characteristics such as sex and disability. They meet social, esteem and safety rights by ensuring equality, respect and a sense of belonging in the workplace. The Anti-discrimination Act 1977 prohibits intolerance, prejudice and discrimination. This has led to the evolution of rights and responsibilities of many individuals in the workplace and has ensured their right not to be harassed.

Supportive workplace structures:

It is important to have knowledge of Australian workplace structures. These ensure that needs are met and individuals can deal with situations when rights have been infringed. Such structures include OH&S**,** awards, antidiscrimination policies, grievance procedures, trade unions, employer organisations, workers compensation and work cover,.

* *Safe work environment*
* **Occupational health and safety**

It is a responsibility of both employers and employees to maintain a safe work environment. To assist them the Australian federal government put in place the Occupational Health and Safety Act **1983** (last amended 2001). This Act focuses on prevention, rehabilitation and compensation. OH&S ensures that injured employees are not deprived of financial support necessary for physical needs. Safe environments boost the employee and their family’s esteem, sense of security and confidence.

This includes:

- Ensuring that any premises controlled by the employer where the employees work are safe without risks to health.

- Ensuring that any plant or substance provided for use by the employees at work is safe and without risks to health when properly used.

- Ensuring that systems of work and the working environment of the employees are safe and without risk to health.

- Providing such information, instructions, training and supervision as may be necessary to ensure the employees’ health and safety at work.

- Providing adequate facilities for the welfare of the employees at work.

Supports the OH&S act as it sets out the requirements for workplaces and assists in implementing systems to identify, assess, control and or eliminate health and safety risks.

Some of these systems include:

* Identification of all work hazards
* Assessment of risks arising from those hazards
* Measures to control risks
* Provision of training
* Requirements of certification of operators of equipment
* Notification to Work Cover
* *Work conditions*
* **Awards**

In **1983** the Hawke Labor government promised to create awards to oversee working conditions. These awards outlined minimum conditions of employment. The negotiation of these conditions was initiated through the Workplace Relation Act **1996**. The contract became more flexible to focus’ on the social, safety and esteem needs of the employee. Job security and fair conduct are ensured through the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) who follow up breaches of awards.

* The terms and conditions in an award are enforceable by law and generally include:
* Your minimum wage or salary
* The number or spread of working hours you can work
* The amount of sick leave and annual leave you can have
* Your superannuation entitlements
* The public holidays you can take off work
* How much notice you must give if you wish to leave
* **Anti-discrimination**

Anti-discrimination policiesdeem it unlawful for workplaces to discriminate on the basis of characteristics such as sex and disability. They meet social, esteem and safety needs by ensuring equality, respect and a sense of belonging in the workplace. The Anti-discrimination Act 1977 prohibits intolerance, prejudice and discrimination.

* **Grievance procedures**

Complaints of discrimination are first resolved within the workplace. When issues cannot be resolved grievance procedures are followed. These procedures detail a step-by-step process for dealing with and resolving problems or issues at the workplace. Employees and employers can approach government institutions such as the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board. These procedures assist socially by resolving conflict and enhancing communication. They foster team work and social interaction between staff to ensure a problem free environment.

* *Trade unions and employer organisations*

All employees and employers in Australia have the right to form and be a member of a union or employer organisations. While unions are responsible for many achievements there has been a decrease in union membership (a drop of around 40% in February 1999 ABS). This suggests that unions are not valued as highly in meeting the needs of employees. Despite this Unions and employer organisations aim to meet the esteem, social and safety needs of their members.

* Unions have been responsible for annual leave, paid sick leave, maternity leave, equal pay for women and workers compensation
* There has been a 20% drop in membership to unions in the past 20 years.
* Protecting wages and working conditions of most Australian workers
* Trying to defend workers against redundancy and retrenchment
* Obtaining social justice (equality) through improved wages and conditions for workers and families
* Insuring that worker receive entitlements

- Ensuring a safe and healthy workplace and taking further action if needed.

* *Workers compensation/ WorkCover*

Workers’ compensation and WorkCover ensure protection for those suffering from workplace illness or injury. The workers compensation laws of 2002 mean that help is almost immediate. Assistance may be through payments, counselling, repositioning of the employee to a more appropriate role and adjustment of working conditions. WorkCover can prosecute individuals or companies that fail to meet their workplace responsibilities or defraud the system. Once again this meets worker security and psychological needs.