TRANSITIONS INTO PARENTHOOD: EXAMINING THE COMPLEXITIES OF CHILDREARING

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TRANSITIONS INTO PARENTHOOD: EXAMINING THE COMPLEXITIES OF CHILDREARING

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Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2020

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83909-222-0 (Print)
ISBN: 978-1-83909-221-3 (Online)
ISBN: 978-1-83909-223-7 (Epub)

ISSN: 1530-3535 (Series)

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Maria Siemushyna is a Ph.D. student in Social Sciences at the University of Strasbourg. Her Ph.D. work focuses on the role of languages (heritage language, language of the host country, and other languages) for migrant families in different domains of their lives, and more specifically in the field of parenting. Through this work, while conducting narrative biographical interviews with people of different origins in Strasbourg (France) and Frankfurt-am-Main (Germany), she learned to use qualitative methodology in international, multicultural and multilingual contexts. Alongside her Ph.D., she has carried out additional, complementary work at the University of Strasbourg where she has taught classes in English for Social Sciences Masters students. In addition, Maria has participated in the European Voluntary Service project with children in a child care and protection institution in Strasbourg (ex-Youth in Action, now Erasmus+ program). She is also an active member of the Familangues association in Strasbourg, which strives to promote the recognition and development of children's plurilingual competences and works with families, schools, social, cultural and education centers. She has also given several classes within the "Ouvrir l'école aux parents" (Open our school for parents) government initiative which aims to encourage parents with migrant backgrounds to improve their knowledge of French, to get to know the French school system better, to learn about how the French state functions and discover other aspects of French culture and everyday life. These different experiences enabled Maria Siemushyna to discover different perspectives around her domains of interest: migration, education, families and languages.

Kishani Townshend is an Australian trained, Registered Psychologist with over 15 years counseling experience. Currently she is the Lead Psychologist, managing the training provision for seven remote Family Well-being Services in Far North

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Heidi M. Williams is an Instructor in the Department of Sociology at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. She earned her Doctorate in Applied Sociology from the University of Louisville. Her research focuses on family instability, child well-being, and extended family relationships among disadvantaged families. More specifically, her research longitudinally investigates how nonmarital childbearing influences parental bonds, extended kin involvement, and child well-being. Currently, she is working with undergraduate students on a study that examines the ways in which homelessness is conceptualized among a group of low-income mothers who are participating in a program that offers unilateral support (e.g., housing) to single parents as they pursue baccalaureate degrees. She is also working on two quantitative studies that investigate where mothers and their children reside during partnership transitions and whether residence with maternal kin influences child well-being outcomes. At Virginia Tech, she teaches a variety of courses, including Family and Crime; Sociology of Family; The Sociology of Intimate Relationships; and Systems of Justice.

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Xing Zhang is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Health Disparities Research Program at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in the School of Medicine and Public Health. She is also an affiliate with the Center for Demography and Ecology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She received her Ph.D. in Policy Analysis and Management from Cornell University in 2018. She works in the areas of family demography, race and ethnicity, the transition to adulthood, health, and inequality. She examines how parent–child relationships shape health outcomes in the transition to adulthood, and variation by race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status.

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PREFACE

A common sentiment shared in many cultures around the globe is that parenting is "the hardest job you will ever love." For many, this association is related to the many long, sleepless nights spent attending to the needs of infants. During this time, feeding, bathing, and the seemingly endless diaper changes lead many to assume that their decision to have a child was perhaps a bit premature, as they had not accounted for the tremendous physical demands that childrearing places upon mothers and fathers. However, while the needs of children will change as they age, the truly complex nature of parenthood begins to reveal itself. Around their second birthday, children begin to speak, thus opening up a completely new set of needs, as parents now have to engage their child in conversation. At this point, children can now express not only their physical needs, but also their wide array of emotional and cognitive needs to parents. Later, as children grow and are able to leave the home for school, their needs become ever more complicated, as interactions with peers and the larger society outside the family begin to influence their development. The middle childhood years offer little relief for parents, nor do their often turbulent adolescent years. Simply, there is considerable recognition that parenting is, indeed, a most demanding role for mothers and fathers.

The complex nature of contemporary parenting has its foundations within societal change. Modernization, coupled with the transition of societies through their respective agriculture, industrial, and post-industrial forms have dramatically changed how parents view both their children and their own roles and responsibilities to them. Within agricultural societies, wherein families were dependent upon farming for their livelihoods, children were typically regarded as an economic asset, such that they could provide labor, tending to crops, animals, and other manual labor tasks. In her book, *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children*, Viviana Zelizer (1985) posited that as societies modernized, thus becoming more urbanized, with most adults working in service sector occupations, the relative value of children began to change. Specifically, societal modernization and urbanization led to substantially lower fertility rates, leaving parents with fewer children. Within modernized societies, mandatory education and anti-child labor laws meant that children were effectively left unable to provide labor support to families. As their economic value dissipated, the emotional value of children began to be emphasized. For most parents, children were viewed as objects of affection, someone to whom they could commit their love, time, and money. The emotional and affective value of children has become a driving force in parenthood, itself, thus contributing to its complexity.

Around the globe, mothers and fathers typically have the best of intentions in regard to how their efforts as parents will ultimately affect the development of their children. Obviously, and hopefully, most parents want their children to

grow into adults who are kind, intelligent, creative, and who have the character and personality traits which will allow them to be happy and successful in their respective lives. Achieving these rather straightforward goals, though, can be quite challenging, and many parents struggle with how to best raise their children. In this volume of *Contemporary Perspectives in Family Research*, researchers address the complicated nature of parenting and the roles of mothers and fathers. Within the studies contained in this volume, researchers examine a variety of childrearing issues, and offer considerable insights into the very complex roles of parents. In keeping with the goals of the *CPFR* series, this volume emphasizes a global perspective, with research from around the world. Given the dynamic and ever-changing nature of parenthood, it is absolutely necessary to maintain a sharp focus on childrearing, as it will certainly continue to vary from one culture to another, as well as over time.

Parenting can be quite stressful, as demonstrated by Amira L. Allen, Wendy D. Manning, Monica A. Longmore and Peggy C. Giordano, in "Young Adult Parents' Work–Family Conflict: The Roles of Parenting Stress and Parental Conflict." Their work focuses on factors associated with observed variability in reports about work–family stress and consider the role of child characteristics as well as parenting conflict. Drawing on data from employed young adult parents, the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study, a longitudinal study based on a stratified random sample of adolescents registered in Lucas, County, Ohio, the chapter concludes on the relations between having a child perceived as more difficult and work–family stress, highlighting the importance of providing institutional and informal support to such parents.

"Experiences of Family and Social Support during the Transition to Motherhood among Mothers of Biracial and Monoracial Infants" by Roudi Nazarinia Roy, Yolanda Mitchell, Anthony James, Byron Miller, and Jessica Hutchinson was written in a way to explore the lived experiences of a diverse group of women in biracial and monoracial relationships experiencing the transition to motherhood (e.g., biracial or monoracial motherhood). Informed by the symbolic interaction framework, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to investigate the expectations and experiences of first-time motherhood on a sample of US women. Specifically, this chapter explores a transversal overarching theme of racial/ethnic differences in appropriate infant care, which surfaces during engagement in family and social support interactions.

In "Narratives from Community-based Organization Staff and Black and Coloured Mothers in South Africa: A Qualitative Study on the Impact of Participation in Parenting Programs on Maternal Behaviors," Simone Martin-Howard explores perceptions about the impact of program participation on parenting styles and behavioral changes using observations and in-depth semi-structured interviews with Black and Coloured staff and mothers at a community-based organization in the Western Cape Province in South Africa. The combined results from data analysis collected from staff and mothers come to point the many factors that impact program participation, either from the broader context (e.g., child abandonment and neglect and the abuse of women) or individual (e.g., domestic abuse and personal issues with alcohol and drugs). While the chapter

presents successful outcomes among parent participants, namely improved self-esteem, positive life changes and changes in parenting styles it draws attention to the important role played by community-based parenting programs for low-income and underserved populations, both in South Africa and internationally.

The experiences of parenting are also linked with the relationships between spouses and partners. In "For Us or the Children? Exploring the Association Between Coparenting Trajectories and Parental Commitment," Heidi M. Williams focuses upon coparenting relationships. Situated in commitment theory, the chapter estimates latent growth curve models to determine whether there is an association between coparenting trajectories and parental commitment five years after the birth of focal children. Data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, a study focusing on families in the United States, showed that, net of covariates, coparenting relationships among unmarried parents are strong across the first five years of their children's lives. Overall, results suggested that supportive coparenting among unmarried, cohabiting parents increases the strength of parental relationships over time – substantiating the argument that a "new package deal" exists.

"Mediating Effects of Maternal Gatekeeping on Nonresident Black Fathers' Paternal Stressors" by Katrina A. R. Akande and Claudia J. Heath, introduces the topic of nonresident fathers, who have the task of negotiating childrearing responsibilities while residing away from their children. Parenting stress arises when nonresident fathers perceive childrearing power differentials as maternal gatekeeping behaviors. In this pilot study, a mediation model was tested with a sample of Black fathers from a US southeastern state, who reported coparenting a nonresident child or children with only one mother. Findings explore the power of cooperative coparenting in lessening parental stressors, namely the ones regarding concerns about role functions and concerns about their child's behavior in the presence of controlling maternal gatekeeping behaviors.

Kishani Townshend and Nerina Caltabiano's "A Conceptual and Methodological Exploration of the Cognitive Processes Associated with Mindful Parenting: Reflections on Translating Theory to Practice" brings together mindfulness and parenting. Mindful parenting is a parenting style which has grown in popularity in recent times to support parents during pregnancy, birth and beyond. The current study aims to clarify clinicians' perceptions of cognitive change processes associated with mindful parenting, particularly how theory is translated to practice. In doing so, interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to analyze semi-structured interviews with female Australian clinicians using Mindful Programs. Kishani and Nerina explore both change and cognitive processes pointed out in the interviews, thus contributing to the development of a more comprehensive theoretical model of mindful parenting.

The interaction between parents and children will certainly be affected by their basic form of communication, language. "In Which Language(s) Do You Parent? How Language(s) Used by Migrant Parents Influence the Realization of Parenting Functions?" by Maria Siemushyna and Andrea S. Young analyzes how languages used in families with migrant backgrounds influence the realization of "parental functions," such as everyday communication with their children, the

transmission of knowledge, and the expression of emotions. In fact, in families with migrant backgrounds some parents use only the language of the country of origin with their children, while others use only the language of the host country, and some parents use both of these languages. Based on a thematic analysis of non-directive interviews of parents and children with the members of migrant families in Strasbourg (France) and Frankfurt-am-Main (Germany), the chapter discusses which of these language use situations enables parents to fuller realize their parental functions.

Elaine S. Barry's "Co-sleeping as a Developmental Context and its Role in the Transition to Parenthood" reviews the literature on mother–child co-sleeping (bedsharing) and integrates it within a developmental theoretical approach. The author discusses how rates of co-sleeping in the West are increasing and evaluates the current Western controversy over co-sleeping as an important part of understanding how individuals and families make the transition to parenthood. Specifically, Dr Barry reviews research from anthropology, family studies, medicine, pediatrics, psychology, and public health through the lens of Evolutionary Developmental Theory to place co-sleeping within a developmental, theoretical context for understanding it. Viewing co-sleeping as a family choice and a normative, human developmental context changes how experts may provide advice and support to families choosing co-sleeping, especially in families making the transition to parenthood.

"Mother–Child Relationships and Depressive Symptoms in the Transition to Adulthood: An Examination of Racial and Ethnic Differences," by Xing Zhang, focuses upon depressive symptoms in the transition to adulthood, which according to many studies are higher among racial and ethnic minorities. Given that adolescents spend most of their time at home when they are not at school, it is important to understand how parents may moderate negative experiences at school, and how mother–child relationships may serve as a protective buffer for depressive symptoms in emerging adulthood. The chapter analyses data from the US National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health and explores relations between school disconnectedness in adolescence, depressive symptoms in emerging adulthood, and maternal relationship quality as an important protective factor for mental health in the transition to adulthood.

Of course, parenting often extends across generations, as well as kin networks. In "Parenting in Three-generation Taiwanese Families: The Dynamics of Collaboration and Conflicts," Yi-Ping Shih delineates how a mother in a three-generation family implements her ideal parenting values for her child while being encumbered by the constraints of her parents-in-law and how does this intergenerational dynamic vary with family socioeconomic status. Part of a major study, this chapter purposely focuses on two families in Taipei, Taiwan, to illustrate distinctive approaches toward childrearing. While the paper foregrounds the negotiations that these mothers undertake in defining ideal parenting, and how it varies by social classes it underlines how Asian mothers are moving towards a new parenting culture, given that the cultural ideal of concerted cultivation has become a popular ideology.

Overall, these studies provide a very comprehensive examination of childrearing and its numerous dimensions, providing considerable insight into the complex nature of parenthood. Beyond their empirical findings, the researchers also provide multiple suggestions for future research on parenting and child development, as well as numerous recommendations for both practitioners and policymakers. We offer them our most sincere appreciation for their efforts, and also express our thanks to the members of the editorial board, the external reviewers, and the wonderful staff at Emerald Publishing for their tremendous assistance.

Sampson Lee Blair
Rosalina Pisco Costa
New York, USA/Évora, Portugal

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CHAPTER 1

YOUNG ADULT PARENTS' WORK–FAMILY CONFLICT: THE ROLES OF PARENTING STRESS AND PARENTAL CONFLICT

Amira L. Allen, Wendy D. Manning,
Monica A. Longmore and Peggy C. Giordano

ABSTRACT

*In the US, approximately 70% of mothers and 93% of fathers with children who are under 18 years are in the paid labor force, and studies have documented that employed parents with young children often experience high levels of stress as they attempt to manage or balance the demands of their work and family roles. The current study focused on factors associated with observed variability in reports about work–family stress and considered the roles of parenting stress, child characteristics, as well as conflict with the other parent. Prior research has shown that parenting a more "difficult" child is a source of parenting stress, but such studies have not focused specifically on work–family conflict as a consequential outcome, have tended to be limited to older parents, and often have focused only on mothers. We also investigated the role of partner disagreements about assistance with parenting responsibilities as a further complication to family life that may influence perceived work–family stress among co-residential parents. Drawing on data from employed young adult parents, the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (TARS) (*n*=263), we found that having a child perceived as more difficult was associated with greater work–family stress. Among co-residential parents, stress but not parenting disagreements with the other parent was associated with greater work–family*

Transitions into Parenthood: Examining the Complexities of Childrearing
Contemporary Perspectives in Family Research, Volume 15, 1–16

ISSN: 1530-3535/doi:10.1108/S1530-353520190000015001

stress. The findings highlight the importance of providing institutional and informal support to such parents.

Keywords: Work–family conflict; parent–child relationships; gender; young adults' parenting stress; parenting conflict; co-residential parents; young adult parents

Today, most mothers and fathers in the US are employed. About 70% of mothers and 93% of fathers with children under the age of 18 are in the paid labor force (US Department of Labor, 2016). Conflict between the responsibilities associated with work and those associated with family life and parenthood can lead to a range of detrimental outcomes. Generally referred to as work–family conflict, or work–family stress, occurs when the demands from work and family/parenthood domains are incompatible (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Individuals who have experience high levels of conflict between work and family/parenthood responsibilities tend to report poorer job performance (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002), are more likely to leave their employment (O'Neill et al., 2009), and report poorer psychological well-being (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). Haung (2010) has argued that underling the negative consequences of work–family conflict is stress, that is, feelings of being overwhelmed (Baum, 1990).

Compared to previous decades, there appears to be higher levels of stress associated with balancing the demands of work and family roles. Many parents report feeling stressed about time pressures as they manage work and family responsibilities (Bianchi, 2011; Craig & Mullan, 2010; Coontz, 2005; Cotter, Hermsen, & Vanneman, 2011), and this seems to be especially true for young parents (Winslow, 2005). Often, mothers, compared with fathers, report higher levels of work–family conflict particularly when their children are young (Coontz, 2005; Craig & Mullan 2010; Moen & Yu, 1999; Voydanoff, 2004) or when they have more than one child (Keith & Schafer, 1980). Similarly, researchers have reported that union type, including single parenthood, may influence work–family conflict (Nomaguchi, 2012). Although scholars have examined differences in the prevalence of work–family stress for mothers and fathers, the influence of union or marital status on work–family stress, and ways in which children's ages and family size affect work–family stress, less attention has focused on parenting stress associated with the child's behavior or conflicts with the other parent that increase work–family stress.

In the current study, our aim was to fill this gap in the literature by examining the association between two parenting challenges, parenting stress and fighting with the other parent, and work–family stress, while controlling for other child characteristics and sociodemographic background. Feeling stressed out because a child seems to be difficult to parent, and conflict between parents including having open disagreements about household tasks or the children (Vandewater & Lansford, 1998) may be associated with work–family stress.

Drawing on a population-based sample of men and women as they transitioned from adolescence to young adulthood, the Toledo Adolescent Relationships

Study (TARS) (n = 263) we investigated the correlates of work–family stress with a focus on parenting stress and conflict with the other partner. We first examined the influence of parenting stress associated with the child's behavior on work–family conflict among married, cohabiting, dating, and single parents. Next, among co-residential parents (i.e., married or cohabiting), we examined the influence of both parenting stress and conflict with the other parent on work–family conflict. Given the known correlates of work–family stress, we included child characteristics (number of children, age of focal child), and sociodemographic characteristics (gender, race/ethnicity, age, education, employment status) in the analyses. Building on prior studies that have reported gender differences in parenting responsibilities, we assessed whether the influence of stress associated with the child's behavior and parental conflict on work–family conflict differed for mothers and fathers. Prior work–family literature often has focused on mothers and has ignored fathers; thus, the research findings can contribute new insights into the emotional health and well-being of parents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Role Theory and Work–Family Conflict

Conceptually, much of the literature on work–family conflict draws from a social psychological perspective referred to as role theory. Role theory focuses on consequences associated with individuals' successes and challenges in managing multiple roles in their lives. Often the addition of roles can have positive outcomes, such as enhanced self-esteem and a greater sense of efficaciousness (Barnett & Hyde, 2001, Gecas & Burke, 1990). These kinds of positive outcomes can be expected to the extent that the addition of multiple roles provides individuals with access to resources including additional emotional support (Gecas & Burke, 1990; Nordenmark, 2004). However, when the demands of multiple roles are mutually incompatible, individuals experience role stress, that is, a sense of being overwhelmed, as they struggle to maintain their depleting resources (Haung, 2010). This irreconcilability of demanding, and often competing, roles forms the basis of many of the empirical studies on work–family conflict.

Relevant to our study, work–family conflict occurs when obligations from work interfere with family responsibilities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). In other words, participation in the work role is made more difficult by participation in the family role. Much of the conflict between work and family demands is time-based conflict.

Time-based Conflict

Time-based conflict occurs when multiple roles require more time than individuals' have available. According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), time-based conflict arises when time spent on activities in one role cannot be used to participate in activities in another role. In general, there are two forms of time-based conflict. Greenhaus & Beutell (1985) described "time pressures associated with

membership in one role making it physically impossible to comply with expectations that come from another role; the other form is where pressures may produce a preoccupation with one role while the individual is attempting to meet demands of another role" (p. 78). Work and family roles are associated with both types of conflict.

Mothers and fathers may attempt to deal with time-based conflict by adjusting their hours in the paid labor force, and gender differences in hours of paid work are clear from prior surveys. According to the OECD Family Database (2016), on average, employed fathers in couples with children work more than 45 hours per week. Conversely, mothers' hours in paid work vary with age of the youngest child and, in general, mothers are more likely to work shorter hours. When working full-time, men work longer hours than women, and for adults that work on the weekend (nonstandard work hours), men also work longer hours (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Thus, strictly focusing on hours in the paid labor force, fathers may be more likely than mothers to report work–family conflict, particularly time-based conflict.

Although many studies have focused on time (or scheduling) based demands in the job domain (e.g., Scheiman & Milkie, 2009), time-based demands in the family domain can also influence parents' work–family conflict. Predictors of work–family conflict have included child demands, household demands, and spousal demands. Work demands can contribute to work–family conflict by getting in the way of family responsibilities. Voydanoff (2004) found that women and individuals with children younger than age six reported higher levels of work–family conflict. Mothers often have reported experiencing greater conflict in allocating time between paid work and unpaid work (Craig & Mullan, 2010). Silver (2000) found that mothers had less leisure time than fathers, as they devoted a larger proportion of this time to their children. Long work hours lead to work and family conflict for men and women, yet men's careers are more likely to take priority and women are expected to take primary responsibility for household labor (Cha, 2010). Thus, gender differences in work–family conflict can occur because men and women experience different demands on their time, particularly in the family sphere (McElwain, Korabik, & Rosin, 2005). Perhaps because of these different demands on their time in the family sphere, mothers and fathers may experience home life differently. Hill (2005) found that working fathers reported less work–family conflict and individual stress, as well as greater marital, family, and life satisfaction than working mothers.

To date little to no recent research has examined the association between parenting stress associated with a child's behavior as well as parental conflict on work–family conflict. Shreffler, Meadows, & Davis, for example, (2011) stated: "there are no articles known to the authors linking work–family conflict and satisfaction with parenting or children's behavior" (p. 173).

Difficult Child and Parenting Stress

Previous research that has examined child behavior associated with parenting stress has tended to focus on child hyperactivity (e.g., Mash & Johnston 1983),

behavioral disorders, or cognitive and developmental delays (e.g., Neece, Green, & Baker, 2012). Early on, Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1992) found positive associations between a scale that included a range of parental stressors (e.g., parents' workload, child's behavior), marital stressors (lack of spousal support, and relationship conflict), and family involvement on work–family conflict. From this study, however, it is not possible to distinguish the influence of child behavior and parenting conflict on work–family stress. To date little to no recent research has examined the association between these domains (child behavior and parenting conflict) and work–family stress. Shreffler, Meadows, & Davis (2011), for example, have concluded: "there are no articles known to the authors linking work–family conflict and satisfaction with parenting or children's behavior" (p. 173). Of particular relevance is the degree to which perceiving that a child is difficult leads to feelings of parenting stress. A difficult child refers to a parent's perception that a child or infant is fussy, hard to soothe or elicits negative emotionality from the parent (Bates, Freeland, & Lounsbury, 1979; Lee & Bates, 1985). Important here, Bates and colleagues draw attention to the parent's subjective view that the child is hard to handle, which makes the parent feel angry, irritable, and stressed. Summarizing, children's behavior is an important factor predicting parenting stress, yet is not often examined as a critical correlate of work–family conflict.

Union Status, Child Characteristics, and Sociodemographic Background

Previous research on work–family stress has tended to examine older parents. For example, Grzywacz, Almeida, and McDonald (2002) examined work–family stress among a sample for whom the mean age was 42 years. Further, prior studies often are limited to married parents or have combined individuals who are cohabiting with those who are married (e.g., Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer, 2007). However, as cohabitation is an increasingly more common context in which to have and raise children in the US (Manning, 2015), it is important to expand beyond work–family stress among married individuals to include cohabiting individuals. Union status, including being married or cohabiting, may influence work–family conflict. Moreover, single mothers in comparison to single fathers, and married mothers and fathers, are more likely to feel home to job conflict (Nomaguchi, 2012). Additionally, there are several background factors that this study takes into account in analyzing work–family conflict. These factors include child characteristics (number of children, age of children), and sociodemographic background (gender, race/ethnicity, education, and employment status).

Number of children can influence levels of work–family conflict. Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) found that larger family size contributed to higher levels of work–family conflict for both men and women. Parents of young children were more likely to report constantly feeling pressed for time. For men and women, children of all ages were associated positively with work–family conflict (Voydanoff, 1988).

In addition to gender, we included race/ethnicity because Black parents, compared to non-Black parents, have tended to report lower levels of work–family conflict (Grzywacz et al., 2002). We included education in our models because for women, having at least a college education has been found to contribute to

work–family conflict (Mennino, Rubin, & Brayfield, 2005). Regarding employment status (full-time, part-time), having a full-time job is a predictor of work–family conflict for women (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998).

Hypotheses

Based on prior research about antecedents of work–family conflict, we tested four key hypotheses. First, for the entire sample of parents, we hypothesized that parenting stress associated with a child's behavior would be associated with higher levels of work–family stress. Further, we expected this association to persist after accounting for known correlates of work–family stress including number of children (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998), age of children (Voydanoff, 1988), union status (Nomaguchi, 2012), race (Grzywacz et al., 2002), education (Mennino, Rubin, & Brayfield, 2005), and employment status (part-time versus full- time) (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). Alternatively, child characteristics (age and number of children) may explain the association between child behavior and work–family stress.

Second, among co-residential (married or cohabiting) parents, we hypothesized that greater frequency of parenting conflict would be associated with increased work–family stress. We anticipated that this would persist in models that included child characteristics, union status, and the sociodemographic background characteristics.

Third, among co-residential (married or cohabiting) parents, we hypothesized that both parenting stress and conflict with the other parent would be associated with work–family stress. Alternatively, parenting stress may be associated with high levels of conflict and explain the association between parenting stress and work–family stress.

Finally, for the entire sample of parents, we hypothesized that the association between perception of having a difficult child and work–family stress would be greater for mothers compared with fathers.

DATA AND SAMPLE

The Toledo Adolescent Relationship Study (TARS) is a longitudinal study of adolescents as they transitioned into young adulthood, and that reflects the experiences of a large, contemporary, heterogeneous sample of respondents. TARS is unique because it focused on young adult parents. Finally, the TARS permitted an examination of work–family stress for young adults after the Great Recession of 2007–2009, which disproportionately has affected this cohort. Our study offers a contemporary portrait of millennials in the current economic climate.

We employed the fifth interview (2012) of TARS, a longitudinal study based on a stratified random sample of adolescents registered for the 7th, 9th, and 11th grades in Lucas, County, Ohio during the fall of 2000. Made available through Ohio's Freedom of Information Act, the initial TARS sampling frame, which was developed by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), drew from student rosters from 62 schools across seven different school districts and included

over-samples of Black and Hispanic adolescents. Although the sampling frame of the TARS data was school-based, school attendance was not required for inclusion in the sample. The first interview of TARS occurred in 2001 and the fifth interview in 2012.

Compared with descriptive data from the 2011 American Community Survey (ACS), the TARS sample is demographically similar to young adults living in the US in terms of gender, race, educational attainment, employment status, and union status. The TARS data are well suited for this study because the data provide information on contemporary young adults with respect to work– family stress, parenting conflict, and parenting stress associated with a child's behavior.

The fifth wave of the TARS consisted of 1,021 respondents and is the only wave that has the measure for the dependent variable, work–family conflict, and has the largest number of parents. The average age of respondents for the fifth wave was 25.48 years old. The majority of the original sample self-reported their race/ethnicity as non-Hispanic White (57.79%), non-Hispanic Black (25.86%), and Hispanic (16.35%). There are more women (56%) than men (44%) and the highest educational attainment is some college. Due to small cell size, we excluded respondents who were classified as "other" for race/ethnicity. Initially, we limited the analytic sample to respondents who were parents (n=416). We further limited the sample to respondents who were employed at least 10 hours a week at the time of the fifth interview (n = 263). To evaluate the association between parental conflict among co-residing parents and work–family stress, we limited the analyses to respondents who were married or cohabiting at the time of the interview (n = 171).

MEASURES

Dependent Variable

Work–family conflict, measured with one item, asked respondents: "How much stress do you face in balancing your paid work and family life?" We coded responses as: (1) not at all (2) a little, (3) some, (4) a great deal, and (5) a lot.

Independent Variables

Parenting stress associated with a child's behavior, is the short-form version of Abidin's (1990) parenting stress indicators. We asked respondents to indicate during the past month the frequency of the following experiences: (1) felt your child is [children are] much harder to care for than most; (2) felt your child does [children do] things that really bother you; (3) felt you are giving up more of your life to meet your child's[children's] needs than you expected; and (4) felt angry with your child[children]? Item responses ranged from 1 (none of the time) to 4 (all the time) and were summed (alpha = .81). Higher scores indicated the extent to which parents perceived feelings of stress associated with a child's behavior.

Parenting conflict, measured with one item, asked respondents: "During your relationship, how often have you and [name of partner] fought about doing more to help with the kids?" Responses included: (1) never, (2) hardly ever, (3) sometimes,

(4) often, and (5) very often. We limited this item to respondents who were co-residing at the time of interview.

Control Variables

The multivariate analysis included child characteristics, union status and demographic variables. *Child characteristics* included number of children, and age of youngest child. Given the young age of the sample, few respondents had more than two children, so we coded *number of children* as (0) one child and (1) two or more children. Consistent with findings that have suggested that younger (i.e., not in school) children may be more stressful, we dichotomized *age of child* as (0) 0-5 years and (1) 6 years-12 years. *Union status* included married, cohabiting, dating, and single.

Race/Ethnicity included three categories: (1) non-Hispanic white, (2) non-Hispanic Black, and (3) Hispanic. *Age,* a continuous indicator, ranged from 22 to 29. Respondent's *education* was categorized as (1) less than high school, (2) high school, (3) technical or some college, and (4) college or more. *Employment status* included part-time and full-time.

Analytic Strategy

Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations are used to describe the distribution of the variables for the total sample and by gender (Table 1). Next, we used OLS regressions to estimate correlates of work–family stress (Table 2). The first set of analyses included all young adult working parents. Model 1 is a bivariate model and Model 2 included child characteristics, union status, and demographic variables. Model 3 tested whether the association between parenting stress and work–family stress persisted net of the traditional correlates. We limited the second set of analyses to individuals in co-residential unions (Table 3). We presented the bivariate associations in Models 1 and 2. Model 3 tested whether the association between the parenting stress and work–family stress remained significant net of the traditional correlates. Model 4 tested whether the association between parenting conflict and work–family stress remained net of the traditional correlates. The full model, Model 5, tested whether the association between parenting stress, parenting conflict and work–family stress persisted net of the traditional correlates. Using interaction effects, we tested whether the influence of parenting stress or parental conflict on work–family stress differed for mothers and fathers.

RESULTS

In Table 1, approximately half of the sample (48.56 %) reported some work–family stress. The mean score for work–family stress for fathers was 2.73 ($SD = 1.10$), indicating that fathers tended to report little to some work–family stress. The mean score for work–family stress for mothers was 3.08 ($SD = 0.99$), indicating that women tended to report some work–family stress. Regarding stress associated