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ORGANISATION CARESCAPES:
RESEARCHING ORGANISATIONS, WORK AND CARE

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Organisation Carescapes: Researching Organisations, Work and Care

Key words: care, companies, cultures, lifecourse, organisations, organisation
carescapes, work

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Organisation Carescapes: Researching Organisations, Work and Care

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Abstract

This working paper develops an approach to the analysis of care as it is evident in the policies and practices of employing organisations. We identify how notions of care are incorporated in myriad and multi-faceted ways that may support, survey and control workers, as well as having implications for employers, managers, employees and workers. Aspects of care can be found in a range of statutory duties, policies and related activities, including: health and safety, equality and diversity, parental leave, religious observance, bullying and harassment, personal development, voluntary redundancy, early retirement, employer pension schemes, grievance procedures, and dismissal.

The conceptual framework of *organisation carescapes* is offered as an aid to the analysis of employee policies and services. These policies and services are transformed by shifts in supranational and national policies such as European Union (EU) economic strategies and national legislation on disability rights legislation, age discrimination and flexible working, and changes in labour market competitiveness. In conclusion, we consider how the framework of *organisation carescapes* is informing research design in our and our colleagues' ongoing programme of research.

Key words: care, companies, cultures, employing organisations, lifecourse, organisations, organisation carescapes, work

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Contents

Introduction	3
The care-organisation interface	4
Key definitional and theoretical debates	8
<i>Lifecourse</i>	8
<i>Care</i>	10
<i>Work</i>	11
<i>Theories of practice</i>	14
Carescapes and organisation carescapes	14
Concluding comments	20
Bibliography	22
Appendix: ‘Policies and Practices of Work-Related Well-Being’ Questionnaire	26

Introduction

Care relations and relationships, whether based in altruistic concern for others or instrumental calculations, are part of the currency of working life and workplace exchanges. In this working paper we offer a new conceptual framework aimed at unpacking the concept of ‘care’, as evident in workplace policies, practices and relationships.

So, why should we be concerned about ‘care’ and ‘care relationships’ in workplaces? Firstly, we note that workplaces are sites in which practices associated with care take place. The concept of care is contested. Managers and workers may help out one another, or show concern, support and solidarity for each other in a wide variety of ways. Workers and employers may care about the progress and future of trainees, may offer sympathy and support to a colleague who has been bereaved, experiencing relationship breakdown or is unwell. Workplace friendships are often important for the everyday morale of employees, whilst poor working relations can lead to tensions and anxieties. These are important elements in organisational cultures and affect everyday work experience.

Second, there are changes in the age and gender structuring of work and employment that impact on care. In ‘post-industrial’ societies longevity has increased, as has the participation of women in employment. In this latter respect Finland is somewhat anomalous, with its tradition of women working full-time and without a strong ‘housewife culture’, compared with many Western and Northern European societies. Across the EU women have in the past borne and often continue to bear the brunt of domestic labour and care work, and thus changes in employment structure have brought issues of reconciling paid work, family life and care more to the forefront of politics, popular moral debates and business practices. In many countries such issues are now seen as relatively more significant than previously in relation to employee morale and productivity, retention of skilled women in the labour market, gender equality in the workplace, welfare and education of children, and social equality between women and men.

Thirdly, the shift to an economy dominated by service employment and knowledge industries⁶ has re-emphasised the importance of personal, social and emotional relationships between workers, and between workers and customers, to the functioning of the workplace. In recent years the EU has premised economic strategies on the idea of the ‘knowledge economy’, asserting that this builds upon the strengths of the workforce and industries. This distinguishes the EU from the economies of Asia and the Southern Americas, dominated by manufacturing and low labour costs. Given the higher labour costs associated with the knowledge economy the notion of ‘flexicurity’ is also promoted. A trade off is offered: flexible, trained workers are assured of a minimum level of rights and benefits.

The paper comprises the following main sections:

- An initial outline of the interface of care and organisations.
- A resumé of some debates on definitions and theories in studies of organisations, care and work.
- An introduction of the conceptual framework of ‘*organisation carescapes*’.

We end with some concluding comments on the framework. A questionnaire used to operationalise the framework in a recent research project is appended.

The care-organisation interface

Our primary interest in this working paper is in identifying and theorising the myriad and multi-faceted ways in which care, which is in turn likely to be a major determinant of well-being, is intertwined and embedded in organisational policies and practices. For example, care is incorporated in employers’ policies relating to health and safety, equality and diversity, parental leave, religious observance,

⁶ The term ‘knowledge industries’ here includes: i. Innovation industries; for example, software, biotechnology, and information technology hardware, in which engineers, designers and scientists work, whose major output is research that translates into new products and services, and; ii. Industries that manage, process and distribute information. For example, telecommunications, banking, insurance, education etc. A range of professional and semi-skilled people, work towards the effective handling and managing of information.

bullying and harassment, personal development, voluntary redundancy, early retirement, employer pension schemes, grievance procedures, and dismissal.

The issues raised here relate most directly to employing organisations, and especially business organisations; however, they are also relevant to organisations more generally. Common images or ideas of care in employment practices tend to focus on negotiating flexible working arrangements or time off to undertake familial caring responsibilities and obligations, which typically involve women workers more than men workers. We note too that increased longevity has resulted in recognition of eldercare. To care for a worker, however, can include the surveillance and disciplining of others, as in, tackling bullying or harassment, and may also be informed by ongoing monitoring and evaluation of employees' well-being and aspirations. Moreover, beyond the gaze of management, workers often care for and about each other, which Stephenson and Stewart (2001) term the 'collectivism of everyday life'.

There is a growing body of sociological work on organisations, paid work and working lives (for example, Pettinger et al. 2005) but this runs parallel to, and generally does not overlap with, sociological studies that consider attempts to combine caring obligations outside employment with participation in paid work (Callan 2007). Much of this latter body of work concentrates upon care for dependents, especially children, sick relatives, and older relatives. There remains a dearth of work that offers a broader, theoretical engagement with the care manifest in policies and practices within business and public sector organisations (what we term *employing organisations*).

Employing organisations can be considered as purposive collections of individuals co-ordinated to carry out particular activities which could not be performed as efficiently and effectively alone. These organised systems have defied simple explanation as they incorporate both social and structural characteristics and complex systems of power and control that bind the individuals to the whole and allow purposes to be achieved (Hatch and Cunliff 2006). Indeed the problems of understanding organisations have led to a reliance on metaphor with organisations being described variously as silos, theatres,

machines, organisms, and political systems (Morgan, G. 1996). A long-running preoccupation of writers on organisations has been a focus on organisational culture (Parker 2005).

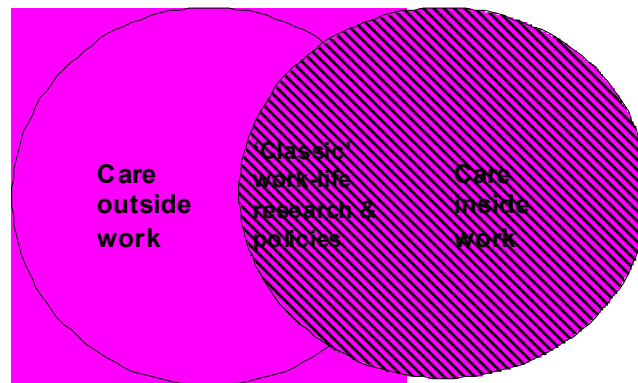
Denison (1996) draws attention to the tendency to use the terms organisational culture and organisational climate interchangeably or at least to refer to the same traits, and questions whether climate and culture represent different phenomena or simply approach the same issue from different perspectives. It may be useful, however, to distinguish between them in conceptual terms as follows. Individuals work within an organisational climate; they do not create it, at least not in an immediate or direct way day-to-day. Culture is created by the individuals, albeit in a context in which the resources to create and enact cultures are impacted by organisational missions, values and line management.

This distinction, and the qualified separation, of the person from the environment, the individual from the 'system', allows a discussion of the dynamics between the individual and wider social structures and processes, rather than merely concentrating on the impact of the system on its members. The aim, therefore, is to establish how organisational culture is transformed into an organisational climate, how the structural becomes the perceptual (and vice versa), and how individuals create, receive and interpret prevailing managerial philosophies.


Thus in this working paper we are concerned with developing an approach to the analysis of the place of both policies and practices in employing organisations focussed on allowing employees to 'care' in their private lives and those policies and practices that enable or hinder care for employees in their work within the employing organisation.

Our interpretation of this relationship is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The focus of organisation carescapes



The overlap area is the focus of most work-life balance research and policies

 = the focus of organisation carescapes

As individuals, employees at all levels are themselves traversing a range of issues through their lives that involve clusters of care activities, for example, organising, resourcing and delivering care for older relatives alongside care for children or a chronically ill partner or dependent. Workplace ‘care’ policies and practices impact on these activities and on paid work activities. For example, relevant workplace policies and practices include and affect the differential availability of time and resources for care, and differential access to policies that may offer redress in circumstances where ‘care’ is neglected; such various organisational circumstances can in turn result in stress, harassment or bullying.

Furthermore, these varied policies and practices on ‘care’ involve negotiations, and sometimes disputes, among workers, employers, trade unions, professional associations, governments and supranational organisations about what is acceptable and appropriate. Differentials in power and ideas on gender and morality imbue these processes. For example, a woman seeking time off to take a sick child home from school is likely to be readily supported by line managers and colleagues, whereas a male worker seeking time to take his elderly father to a hospital appointment may be asked if another (female) relative could do this.

Assumptions about age and gender come into play. These are also evident in a range of inequalities that are created and reinforced through paid work, for example, gender segregation and pay differentials, differences in access to policies and services in organisations with hierarchical structures, and availability of support, policies and services between organisations in various sectors and economic contexts.

Seeking to theorise these varied issues, we offer a conceptual framework for the identification and critical exploration of the topic of ‘care’ in a range of work place and related contexts, namely *organisation carescapes*. This also draws upon recent research projects we and our colleagues are working on in organisation and employment studies and work-life reconciliation in Finland and the UK.

Key definitional and theoretical debates

The starting point in our exploration of key terms and ideas are the concepts of the ‘lifecourse’ and ‘care’, and here we also note the impact of longevity, social and economic trends and contexts on working lives. ‘Work’ in the context of employment and organisations is then considered. In these discussions we highlight the contested nature of concepts, yet identify broad agreements that care is multi-faceted and organisations are multicultural, and that both involve changing social relations. Policies and practices on care in employing organisations are complex, fluid and transient processes. Finally in this section, we attend to ‘theories of practice’ as an analytical and practical focus in our work.

Lifecourse

As a concept, the *lifecourse*, has been subject to debate in recent years, not least because it has been strongly associated with welfare policy provision and the idea of ‘cradle to grave’ provision mediated by the state. The notion of a succession of age cohorts suggests that a synchronisation between individual time, family time, social time and historical time is possible. It is the case that over the last 50 years there has been a growth in the recognition of age cohorts due to changes in fertility and longevity; for example, teenage years, extension of education into

late teens and early 20s and the over 50s born in the decade following the second world war, sometimes referred to as ‘baby boomers’.

Policies and services offer a level of social protection and specialisation based upon age, but also ascribe rights and duties to the individual based on their lifecycle position. Social and public policies and services have evolved around age cohorts, most notably social services, education, training and employment. It is also notable that the actions of employing organisations respond to and help to create the social construction of age cohorts through expectations about and practices concerning working careers. These vary between sectors (for example, the financial district of London commonly referred to as The City, the Civil Service, and retailing outlets) and between employee grades. At the individual level, however, expectations, aspirations and actions do not necessarily configure with the routinisation afforded by services, policies and employment practices.

Recent debates have identified the potential for the lifecycle to illuminate stratification over the years, as well as the stratification of the lifecycle. Initial inequalities are often reinforced over time and these may be partially explained by the overvaluation of those with high social prestige and undervaluation of those with lower social prestige. In his work on science and society Merton (1968), working with Harriet Zuckerman,⁷ illuminated a process of cumulative advantage and disadvantage through which opportunities and resources are filtered. Over time initial inequalities grow in impact and, thus, reinforce and increase differentiation. The lifecycle-related expectations and practices of employing organisations are an important element of these processes of differentiation. Moreover, in relation to a specific employing organisation, the changing competitive environment will itself influence the ways in which individual working careers are structured, the employment opportunities that may open up or reduce and the likelihood of redundancy, promotion or of staying in the same job.

Such changes and the competitive situation of a firm may be peculiar to that firm but more often relate to broader economic and social shifts. In summary, cohort

⁷ Also see Rossiter (1993).

members traverse terrains in which initial inequalities, combined with socio-economic structures and opportunities, affect people's social mobility and accumulation of resources. Furthermore, unforeseen personal events (for example, bereavement, accidents, loss of job) and structural or political shifts (for example, economic depression, corruption, global economic changes, civil unrest and natural disasters) form the broader context to cohort stratification.

Lest we over emphasise a linear perspective to the cumulative effects of advantage and disadvantage, we also draw attention to the interplay of the state, families and relationships. In addition, the increased importance of paid work, less stable trajectories in families and relationships, employment and access to benefits and social protection, suggests that a *political economy approach to the lifecourse* might offer enhanced potential to theorise how individuals traverse opportunities and challenges across the varied dimensions of paid and unpaid work. In sum, this highlights the need for studies on the interrelations between political and economic processes as people grow up and grow older.

Care

Care is a multi-faceted term that can combine feelings of concern and anxiety for others alongside the provision of practical labour and tasks that attend to a person's needs (Cancian and Oliker 2000: 2). Whilst it is difficult to specify the complex emotional and material concerns that caring entails, there are a variety of caring processes that are crucial to the organisation of everyday life and future thoughts and plans for family, children, friends and relatives (Bowden 1997: 184). In particular, caring, as a combination of tasks with feelings, has been conceptualised in two ways, as 'caring about': the feeling part of caring, and 'caring for': the practical work of tending for others (Parker 1981; Ungerson 1983; Sevenhuijsen 1998).

Caring frequently combines an emotional relationship, for example, verbalised concern about a colleague's work or home circumstances, with practical care. At some point in all our lives, regardless of whether we are the company chief executive or cleaner, we will require or give care and 'caring expresses ethically significant ways in which we matter to each other' (Bowden 1997: 1).

Rather than caring being a consequence of relationships, the act of providing care, especially if repeated routinely over time, in fact, *creates* a relationship. David Morgan (1996: 111) proposes the idea of ‘a caring nexus’ in which practices and processes shape identities, all too often associating care and care work with vulnerability and femininities: ‘At the same time, caring is taken away from men: not caring becomes a defining characteristic of manhood’ (Graham 1983). Thus the dialectics of care creates and maintains gendered inequalities in opportunities and income across the lifecourse (Women’s Unit of the Cabinet Office 2002) and these are evident in, and often recreated, by organisations that are gendered and sexualised contexts (Hearn and Parkin 2001).

In employing organisations workers may ‘care about’ each other but may also ‘care for’ one another. Caring for other workers (whether peer, superordinate or subordinate) may result from policy prescriptions or from individual initiative. Clearly the climate and culture of an organisation is likely to affect the ways in which such care is practised and evidenced. The notion of ‘organisational culture’ is a hugely contested area (for example, Smircich 1983; Martin 1992, 2002; Hearn and Parkin 2001; Alvesson 2002; Hearn 2002; Bairoh 2007).⁸ Whatever critical conceptualisation is used, analysis of the practising of care and caring in and around organisations need to be contextualised in relation to organisational culture, and indeed its contestation.

Work

Recent debates recognise the continued centrality of paid work to the lives of many people but call for a broad conceptualisation of work that includes recognition of the ‘complex, messy, dynamic trajectories that encapsulate

⁸ Many, but by no means all, attempts to define organisational culture suggest that it refers to the idea of something held in common, described variously as shared meanings, beliefs, assumptions, understandings, norms, values and knowledge (Denison 1996). Hofstede et al. (1990) suggest that organisational culture operates within distinct and diverse national cultures and has a number of key characteristics pertinent to this discussion. Within its national context, it is characterised as relatively holistic, historically determined, socially constructed and difficult to change. Organisations can illuminate cultures, for example, the culture of a department may differ from that of organisational mission and the culture promoted by head office. The assertions of Hofstede and colleagues are, however, strongly contested, and they have spawned a variety of critical debates (Holden 2002; McSweeney 2002; Williamson 2002).

people's working lives' (Pettinger et al. 2005: 4). Such a conceptualisation must consider the varied life-stages relevant to paid work such as education, training, pre-retirement, career changes, and unemployment that are part of broader life changes. Paid work continues to be a major force in the lives of many adults. Moreover, older workers, those with physical or psychological impairments, and single parents are among groups increasingly expected to engage in paid work regardless of barriers.

Employing organisations are embracing, bending to, or resisting, policies and practices relevant to care proffered by a range of local, national, supranational and global forces. In some arenas, such as the EU, renewed calls to corporate social responsibility have heightened debates on the role of organisations and potential duties to care about communities, as well as users and workers. And just as workers may be 'seeking out' and 'trying out' job and career options so too are organisations.

In noting the transformations of work – new occupations, skills and divisions and on-going surveillance and technological developments – Glucksmann's concept of the Total Social Organisation of Labour (TSOL) (2005: 20) affords equal significance to developments in 'non-market and unpaid work, including proliferation of the modes and extent of care work, the growth of voluntary or community work in the public domain, and shifts in both directions across the commodity / non commodity divide.' To this we would add the mixed economies of provision of services with blurred boundaries, as, for example, with private finance initiatives to fund elements of public services.

Central to TSOL is the inclusion of the many varied modes and experiences of working and living and recognition of the need to locate these in their temporal and spatial contexts. Thus Glucksmann's work raises the question of where paid work begins and ends. Does the home really continue to be a haven from the world of work? Does such a notion operate differently for women and men, and so need to be seen through a clear and critical gender lens? Increasingly the economies and projects of the household are interwoven with commitment to the completion of projects sought by employers. The spatial and temporal boundaries

of employment are hard to maintain. Pay differentials and work commitments create new relationships in the context of the household with some workers paying for others to undertake domestic work.

Furthermore, these kinds of observation need to be qualified by the growth of capitalist(ic) modes and methods in the public sectors of many countries. New Public Management (NPM) is now recognised as prevalent in many Western state and public sectors (for example, Clarke and Newman 1997; du Gay 2000). In many such countries, the public sector has become more marketised, in the sense that internal markets, public-private partnerships, 'private finance initiatives', market testing and various forms of privatisation have been introduced in recent years, often with the aim of running the public sector along private lines as far as possible. On the other hand, these developments are not so new. For example, in the UK various forms of private sector organisation and management have been introduced into the public sector from at least the 1960s and probably earlier (Hearn 1976).

Governments and organisations grappling with new standards of accountability can regulate employment to a greater degree than previously. Yet the impact and reach of legislation, guidelines and contracts remain somewhat unclear with many organisations sub-contracting work and governments privatising work. Some workers can envisage varied and challenging lives that will offer reasonable income and security during and after employment. Others may experience casual, low paid work with little financial security and in the longer term poverty in later life.

Many, indeed a growing number, will traverse paths that shift across security and insecurity, encouraged to be flexible. As noted earlier, the notion of 'flexicurity' has arrived and is promoted by the EU directorate for employment and social affairs (EU 2006: 15). There are new links, dependencies and ways to circumvent developments in legislation and policies. Likewise, Glucksmann (1995; 2005) notes the changing nature of care work, both in terms of caring for and caring about dependents, in addition to organisations wishing to care for workers and

communities, and governments seeking to promote mixed economies of care in ways that aid participation in paid work.

Theories of practice

To focus upon the study of organisation policies and practices we suggest that the approach of *theories of practice* offer potential for re-invigorating research and theorisation. In theories of practice analysis begins from understanding the history and development of the practice and ‘the internal differentiation of roles and positions within practices, with the consequences for people being positioned when participating’ (Warde 2003: 1). Reckwitz (2002: 249) considers a practice as a ‘routinised type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge.’

Practices consist of both doing and saying, and as Warde notes (2003: 2) this suggests ‘analysis must be concerned with both practical activity and its representations’ and he proposed three components, namely *understandings*; *procedures*, and *engagements*. The approach of theories of practice moves analysis beyond the individual and notions of rational choice to encourage focus upon the role of the routine (the policy and the everyday interpretations of that) and the varied emotions and embodied ways in which social actions and social ordering evolves (for example, discretion to use or implement policies).

Carescapes and organisation carescapes

In bringing together these social arenas and debates thereon, the total social organisation of labour (TSOL) offers a useful approach. It incorporates the multi-faceted ways in which care operates across a range of spaces and temporal frameworks. The focal point remains paid employment, albeit that inter-linkages and trajectories across a range of activities are given prominence. Our conceptual framework of organisation carescapes is similar to that of the TSOL, but differs in

a distinct manner as the focus is upon informal care – central to human flourishing – and how care is manifest in policies and practices in employing organisations.

In earlier work two of the authors developed the notion of *caringscapes* as a means by which the multi-layered aspects of informal care giving and receiving might be examined (McKie et al. 2002). The theoretical basis of *caringscapes* posits that individuals plot routes through a map of a changing, multi-dimensional terrain that is derived from their experiences and anticipations of care and that these projects of care are gendered in content and experience (Hägerstrand 1978; Giddens 1984; Adam 2000). These ‘scapes’ or ‘maps’ incorporate consideration of care over a range of temporalities and involving a variety of spatial scales and interactions between scales. Often, the chosen ‘care’ pathways are restricted by the availability of resources, income or services or routinised into well-trodden conventional (often gendered) pathways.

This framework evolved over time to ‘organisation carescapes’, as we realised that organisational policies and practices may incorporate ‘care’ and influence how ‘caring’ is done both inside and outside the workplace. This formulation, as ‘organisation’ (not organisational) together with ‘carescapes’, suggests how organisation and care can occur simultaneously, mirroring earlier conceptualisations of ‘organisation sexuality’ (Hearn and Parkin 1987/1995) and ‘organisation violations’ (Hearn and Parkin 2001).

In adapting this framework to the context of employing organisations we suggest that there are two levels to be considered. First, at the level of the employing organisation we can consider it to be a purposive entity that operates policies and practices to ‘care about’ and ‘care for’ its employees. The caring done, however, by an employing organisation is always a by-product of meeting its dominant goals of profit making in the private sector or output goals in the public sector. We suggest, therefore, that employing organisations generally put in place policies of ‘care’ in response to pressures from the state, the workforce, Trade unions, professional organisations, and government agencies, to enhance recruitment and retention. ‘Moral’ commitments may also be a factor – for example, the paternalist approach of many nineteenth century employers, the

principles adopted by some small independent employers and the avowed commitment to corporate social responsibility of some modern corporations. Such moral orientations, as well as state policies, employees' expectations and trade union and professional organisation demands will themselves be linked to the sorts of moral frameworks accepted in society at large and, in particular, to the value accorded to practices of caring for and caring about others. So we can envisage employing organisations trying to realise particular aims and goals relating to 'caring' for their employees by actively selecting their paths through a map or a terrain that include legislation, economic context, company finances and goals, and the needs of employees as these shift with demographic trends. Once again this 'map' will incorporate processes operating over a range of different temporalities and spatialities.

Second, we can explore the level of the individual employee. Here, whether we think about the situation of a manager, a secretary or a part-time shop floor worker, the individual can be thought of facing a similar 'map' of caring possibilities to our individual informal carer. This map, however, will incorporate not only their personal caring obligations and expectations (for example, their need to care for an aging mother or to be cared for by a partner) but also the caring obligations and expectations placed on them within the work-place. The structure and practices of the employing organisation (its climate and culture) will form a central and changing context for planning, following and revising their caring 'routes'. Analysis of practices of care within organisations must focus both on interactions between the employing organisation and supranational organisations, the state, the labour market and civil society, as well as the individual worker and interactions between workers and the organisation.

The concept of organisation carescapes thus directs research to analysing the genesis and operation of formal 'care policies'; the implementation of policies and practices of care; experiences of care within companies and outside companies; and organisation cultures and cultures of care more generally. In these various ways we may draw upon theories of practice to inform research thinking and design. Organisation carescapes are not static: thus the planned 'routes' of the employing organisation (policies and practices) must sometimes be changed or

amended in response to shifts in public policies (e.g. the introduction of disability rights legislation, and flexible working guidelines) or changes in their labour market competitiveness. For individual employees also planned routes will change as a result of the actions of their employers or personal events such as the arrival of a child. Often an event rather than a managed transition necessitates action by employers and workers. Adopting an organisation carescapes approach thus encompasses and works across the following areas and arenas:

- *Formal 'care policies'*: These may be defined as courses of action adopted in a written format on the range of areas in which care may be relevant. How does the adoption and form of such policies link to regulation by national and supranational governments, and pressures from professional associations, trade unions and the labour market?
- *The implementation of policies and practices of care*: This would include, if applicable, human resource managers or departments, and line managers.
- *Experiences of care*: Firstly, within companies. How have policies and practices evolved? Who uses policies? How, when and why? How far do practices match policies? Who holds discretion and how do they make decisions on accessing aspects of policies that are not statutory? Secondly, how do these practices link to wider cultures of care outside the workplace?
- *Care cultures*: What are the cultures of care in the business organisations? What impact do these have on working relations, employer-employee attitudes towards the company, job security and well-being?

It is within this broad context that members of the research team collaborate, along with other colleagues, on a range of work-life reconciliation projects in Finland and the UK. There are interesting parallels with similar demographic trends, technological developments, and the feminisation of the labour force. There remain, however, notable differences in economic productivity and gender. Finland fares better than the UK in terms of Gross Domestic Product, and the

position of women in public life. Laws and government have also enshrined a notion of ‘gender-neutrality’ with the presumption of equality between men and women in all public policies and legislation. In contrast UK workers, business and government struggle with the oft competing worlds of work, home and relationships, and data demonstrates the poor situation of women in public life in comparison to that of Finnish women.

Theoretically, we have developed earlier work on concepts of care in households and governmental policies towards care in businesses and other employing organisations, along with ongoing studies of organisations, gender and consumption. Drawing upon theories of practice as a potential approach to analysis, we are interested in the history and development of work-based practices in terms of both ‘doing and saying’. We seek to identify the routine – the policy and the everyday interpretation of that – and the emotions and embodied ways in which social actions and social ordering evolve in employing organisations.

Framed around the concept of organisation carescapes was the project *Organisational ‘Carescapes’: Policies and Practices of Care in Business Organisations* funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council (RES-000-23-0905; 2005-2009). This project considered how businesses developed policies and practices on the topic of care. It also sought to operationalise the concept of organisation carescapes. As discussed earlier, ‘care’ is embedded in organisational policies and practices in myriad and multi-faceted ways: health and safety, equality and diversity, religious observance, bullying, grievances, personal development, early retirement, voluntary redundancy and dismissal. Exploratory interviews with human resource and senior staff in large, medium and small companies, in service and public sectors, found that businesses have a narrow conception of ‘care’ continuing to focus upon childcare, sick and compassionate leave, and specific points in working lives.

These ‘cultures of care’ imbue a climate that traverses boundaries between individuals, the employing organisation, the state, civil society and other relevant organisations. The term ‘care’ is not readily used, yet it is evident in a range of policies and practices. After some debate, we decided to group policies and

practices under three interrelated areas using everyday terms: health and well-being, equality and diversity, and employer responsibilities and employee rights at work. These ‘clusters’ of policies were mapped in the survey and subsequently critically examined (Smith and McKie 2009):

Health and well-being, involving: health and safety legislation, bullying and harassment policies, grievance procedures, sickness absence, occupational health, time-off to care for dependents, healthy lifestyle provision, and staff counselling.

Equality and diversity issues, encompassing: maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, adoption leave, gender equality, sexual orientation, race relations, disability and age discrimination, religious observance, nursery access, financial assistance and advice on care for dependents.

Responsibilities and rights, including: holiday entitlement, working hours, staff appraisal, training and development, apprenticeships, life-long learning, flexible working, trade union membership, redundancy, employer pension schemes and retirement.

As employing organisations do not typically use the term ‘care’, we made a strategic decision to frame our use of language to meet the current concerns of business and entitled the questionnaire ‘The Policies and Practices of Work-related Well-being’. Following piloting, a quota sampling frame was used and 103 employing organisations completed the survey (see Appendix). The proportion of private, public and third sector organisations reflected the economy of the UK. This also offered comparative data on ‘care’ in varied workplaces across all three sectors.

Whilst in stage one of the research project we mapped the ‘care’ policies and services offered by employing organisations, in the second phase we critically examined how policies operate and are utilised in practice. We focused on a select number of organisations across the private, public and third sectors, and 86 interviews were conducted with a range of staff across the organisational hierarchy in order to understand their everyday experiences of ‘care’ policies and

practices. From the analysis of the quantitative data, we decided to focus on four policies in particular, all of which are implicitly related to ‘care’:

1. Flexible working – as many organisations had recently introduced these arrangements and they are most commonly associated with attempts at reconciling working and caring issues;
2. Training and development – as, to our surprise, relatively few organisations had formal policies in place;
3. Disciplinary procedures – all organisations across the sectors had such a policy, typically from the inception of the organisation;
4. Age – in light of the new age legislation, as the survey illuminated the fact that a number of private sector organisations were not up to date with employment law.

We used the critical incident technique, pioneered by Flanagan (1954) (see Butterfield et al. 2005) to uncover examples that will illustrate how policies and cultures of care operate in the day to day reality of organisational life. The findings of this project are available in a final report from the authors.

This research, and collaboration around it, also provides some of the background work to the project, ‘The Quest for Well-being in Growth Industries: A Collaborative Study in Finland and Scotland’, funded by the Academy of Finland (No. 124392), as part of The Future of Work and Well-being Research Programme, 2008-2011 (<http://www.aka.fi/en-gb/A/Science-in-society/Research-programmes/Ongoing/Work/>).⁹

Concluding comments

The concept of organisation carescapes provides a framework that is both broad and critical. Care and care relationships are omnipresent in workplace policies,

⁹ Hanken researchers include Project Director Jeff Hearn, Project Researcher Teemu Tallberg, Dr Pernilla Gripenberg, Academy of Finland postdoctoral researcher Dr Marjut Jyrkinen, and doctoral researcher Charlotta Niemistö, along with colleagues in the UK.

practices and cultures. The myriad ways in which ‘care’ is evident ranges from the more established issues of, for example, parental leave, health and safety regulations, and pension schemes, to more recent concerns for diversity, including religious observance, sexual orientation and disability, together with policies and practices through which ‘care’ incorporates surveillance and control, such as, harassment, bullying and grievance procedures. The development of new legislation, codes of practice and guidelines, along with the impact of the EU and supranational organisations, including the International Labour Organisation, aims to establish a global baseline of care in terms of work and the workplace.

The patchwork quilt of ‘care’ policies and practices is ever shifting, as the state, employing organisations and individuals traverse anticipated and unanticipated social and economic change, so illuminating differentials in power and resources. Across the lifecourse, the workings of cumulative advantage and disadvantage, of unexpected opportunities and crisis in circumstances and relationships, add further dimensions to care relationships in, and outside, the workplace.

Social science work on employment, labour and the workplace has tended to locate paid work as the focal point, for example, the TSOL. When care is discussed, work is dominated by the study of combining caring and working. Care relationships are often considered in terms of workplace support, tensions and responses to changing employment practices.

Our aim has been to position care and care relationships centre stage, in a way that recognises the spatial and temporal dynamics of organisations and individuals through the framework of organisation carescapes. In this way, organisation carescapes may be likened to a Total Social Organisation of Care (TSOC), in contrast to the Total Social Organisation of Labour. The conceptual framework of *organisation carescapes* directs research to the analysis of the origins of policies, their implementation and use, of how practices concerning care evolve and are experienced, and, ultimately, the cultures of care in organisations.

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Note

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‘Policies and Practices of Work-Related Well-Being’ Questionnaire

This short interview is part of a major government-funded UK-wide research project. The aim of the study is to find out what are the current challenges facing employers and managers regarding work-related well-being policies and practices.

This telephone interview will take about 20 minutes to complete and does not ask for any commercial information. All information gathered will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence and the results will only be used at an aggregated level.

A summary report of the research findings will be presented to all organisations who participate.

Part One – Introductory Questions about the Organisation

- 1. What is the full title of the organisation?**

- 2. What is your current job title?**

- 3. Approximately how long has your organisation been established?**

_____ years

4. a) Which category listed below best describes the activity of the workplace?

(please tick the most relevant box)

- Agriculture and fishing
- Mining and quarrying
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, gas and water supply
- Construction
- Wholesale and retail
- Hotels, restaurants and entertainment
- Tourism and travel
- Transport, storage and communication
- Information technology
- Financial services
- Housing and estate agents
- Other business services
- Public administration
- Education
- Health and social work
- Other communication services

b) And is the organisation part of the:

(please tick one box only)

- Private sector
- Public sector
- Voluntary sector
- A mixture of the public and private sectors *(via the Private Finance Initiative or Public-Private Partnership programme)*

5. Is this site a single/ independent establishment?

- Yes
- No. Where is the location of the Head Office of the organisation?

Part Two – Organisational Policies

6. I am now going to ask if you have policies that cover the following areas, whether they are formal written policies and, if so, how long the organisation has had these policies.

a) **Equality and Diversity Issues**

I. **Maternity leave**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?

___ years

No

II. **Paternity leave**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?

___ years

No

III. **Parental leave**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?

___ years

No

IV. **Adoption leave**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?

___ years

No

V. **Gender equality**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?

___ years

No

VI. **Racial discrimination**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?

___ years

No

VII. **Sexual orientation**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?

___ years

No

VIII. Age discrimination

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

IX. Disability discrimination

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

X. Religious observance

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

XI. Do you have an over-arching policy that covers equality and diversity issues?

Yes

No

XII. Have you recently updated any of your equality and diversity policies? And, if so, what are the reasons behind this?

b) Responsibilities and Rights

I. Holiday entitlement

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

II. Working hours

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

III. Staff appraisal

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

IV. Training

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

V. Opportunities for personal development (e.g. voluntary work)

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

VI. Flexible Working

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

VII. Trade union membership

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

VIII. Occupational pension

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

IX. Redundancy

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

X. Retirement

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

XI. Disciplinary procedures

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

XII. Dismissal

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

XIII. Have you recently updated any of these policies on responsibilities and rights? And, if so, what are the reasons behind this?

c) The Well-being of Employees

I. Occupational health

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

II. **Sickness absence**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

III. **Time off for dependents (*to deal with an emergency involving a dependent*)**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

IV. **Health and safety**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

V. **Bullying and harassment**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

VI. **Grievance procedures**

Is this a formal written policy?

Yes. How long have you had this policy (approx)?
_____ years

No

VII. **Have you recently updated any of these policies on the well-being of employees? And, if so, what are the reasons behind this?**

a) How are these policies usually communicated to employees?
(please tick all relevant boxes)

- Staff handbook
- Contract of employment
- Staff notice board
- Staff newsletter
- Intranet or computer network
- Staff induction programme
- Supervisor/ line-manager
- Other, please specify

b) Which is the most effective?

7. Who is involved in the formulation of these policies? And where does this take place? (e.g. locally, head office, nationally, etc)

8. Does the organisation monitor any or all of these policies? If so, what does this involve?

Part Three – The Implementation of Policies
--

9. Does the organisation have a designated Human Resources or Personnel Department?

- Yes
- No. Who then takes responsibility for HR issues?

10. I'd like to know how useful the following are when drafting policies.

Government departments 5 4 3 2 1
 N/A
(e.g. Department of Trade & Industry, Department for Education & Skills)

Quangos 5 4 3 2 1
 N/A
(e.g. ACAS, Health & Safety Executive, Equal Opportunities Commission)

Business/ sector -related organisations 5 4 3 2
1 N/A
(e.g. CBI, Institute of Directors, Federation of Small Businesses)

Legal or specialist advice firms 5 4 3 2 1
 N/A

Professional Bodies 5 4 3 2 1
 N/A
(e.g. Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development)

Internal specialists 5 4 3 2 1
 N/A
(e.g. Human Resource staff and lawyers)

Trade unions & staff associations 5 4 3 2 1 N/A

11. How is support offered to line-managers who are implementing new policies?

12. I'd like to understand how the following influence policy development.

	<i>very much</i>				<i>very little</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
UK legislation					
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
EU legislation	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Economic pressures	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Labour market concerns	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
The behaviour of competitors	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Employers' Associations	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Trade unions & Staff associations					
		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Suggestions from staff	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Social attitudes & trends					
<i>(including the media)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Organisational vision & mission					
		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
Organisational strategy & business plan					
		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> N/A					

Part Four – Services and Policies

13. Can you tell me if any of the following services or facilities are available to staff?

a) Health and Well-being

- I. Occupational health service
 Yes No Not applicable
- II. Staff canteen
 Yes No Not applicable
- III. Gym or exercise facilities
 Yes No Not applicable
- IV. Health checks
 Yes No Not applicable
- V. Healthy lifestyle provision
 Yes No Not applicable
- VI. Counselling service
 Yes No Not applicable
- VII. Specialist clothing or equipment
 Yes No Not applicable

b) Equality and Diversity

- I. Nursery access
 Yes No Not applicable
- II. Advice on care for dependents
 Yes No Not applicable
- III. Financial assistance with care for dependents
 Yes No Not applicable
- IV. Provision for religious observance
 Yes No Not applicable
- V. Dress policies
 Yes No Not applicable

VI. **Language classes for migrant workers**
 Yes No Not applicable

c) **Responsibilities and Rights**

I. **Promotion of life-long learning**
 Yes No Not applicable

II. **Pre-retirement courses**
 Yes No Not applicable

III. **Pension/ financial advice**
 Yes No Not applicable

IV. **Financial support for education/ training**
 Yes No Not applicable

V. **Apprenticeships or support for young workers**
 Yes No Not applicable

14. **Are any of the following flexible working arrangements available to some employees:**
(please tick all relevant boxes)

- Part-time working
- The ability to change shift patterns
- Flexi-time
- Job share *(sharing a full-time job with another worker)*
- Work reduced hours for a limited period
- Work a compressed working week *(e.g. a four-and-a-half-day week)*
- Work during school term-time only
- Homeworking *(working at or from home in normal working hours)*
- Work annualised hours *(where employees negotiate when they work)*

15. a) **Are there any particular groups of staff who are more likely to make use of these services/ facilities and flexible working arrangements?**

b) In your experience, does this differ between male and female employees?

16. Thinking of all of your work-related well-being policies and practices, what do you believe has been the impact on:

I. Employee retention

Positive Negative No impact Don't know

II. Employee recruitment

Positive Negative No impact Don't know

III. Employee morale

Positive Negative No impact Don't know

IV. Employee commitment

Positive Negative No impact Don't know

V. Employee productivity

Positive Negative No impact Don't know

VI. Achievement of organisational goals

Positive Negative No impact Don't know

17. Has the organisation gained any accreditations or industry awards? If so, please specify.

Part Five – Closing Questions on Your Workplace

18. Approximately how many employees do you currently have on the payroll?

At this establishment

Worldwide

19. a) Approximately what percentage of staff work full-time (30 hours or more per week)?

Male

 %

Female

 %

b) Approximately what percentage of staff work part-time (less than 30 hours per week)?

Male

 %

Female

 %

20. Of those currently employed here, approximately what percentage...

are aged 16 or 17?

 %

are aged 18 to 21?

 %

are aged 50 or over?

 %

are non-UK nationals?

 %

are from a non-white ethnic group?

are registered disabled?

are temporary or agency employees?

21. Approximately what percentage of the workforce are trade union members or members of a staff association?

22. Could you briefly give me a breakdown of your workforce in terms of grades (e.g. managerial, skilled, administrative)?

23. What are the usual weekly working days in the organisation?

Monday – Friday	
6 days a week	
7 days a week	
Other (please specify)	

24. What are the usual daily working hours in the organisation?

During the day (between 8am – 6pm)	
During the night (between 6pm – 8am)	
24 hours	
Other (please specify)	

25. We have tried to make this questionnaire as comprehensive as possible, but if you think there are any issues or developments we have not covered, please note them below –
