ORGANIZATION OF WORK IN THE COMPANY
AND EMPLOYEES’ FAMILY RIGHTS

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Abstract

The organization of work in the firm must take into account the rights of the employee’s family, because the family comes before the firm and has certain inalienable rights. In addition, as the family is at the base of society, a duty exists to protect it, both on the part of society and on the part of the intermediate social organizations, each in accordance with its own possibilities.

The duty to respect, protect and help the family is connected very closely with the organization of work in the firm, because the employee belongs both to the firm and to the family. Everything which happens in either of these two areas impinges on the other via the worker.

Using different “scenarios”, a group of aspects which connect the organization of work in the firm with the worker’s family rights are introduced:

a) A working atmosphere which fosters family unity and stability.

b) A dedication to the firm which is compatible with the parents' procreative and educational mission, and other family obligations.

c) Quality of life at work in relation to the worker’s family.

d) Organization of work, always respecting the family’s independence and privacy.

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Businessmen are well aware of the close connection between employees’ family affairs and their behavior in the company. The organization of work and activities in the company has a considerable effect on family life. The family problems that arise as a result of business activities are a subject of concern both for employees and managers.

In countries where the family is a deep-rooted institution, the family-company relationship is a subject of considerable concern. According to a survey recently performed by IESE among two hundred Spanish managers, the study of the family-work relationship is one of the four or five most important subjects to be included in the business ethics courses (see Exhibit 1).

Until now, very little attention has been given to the study of the relationship between the organization of work in the company and the employee's family rights and duties. However, a number of interesting works are available, albeit focused only on particular problems and referring specifically to American society, such as those by Kanter⁴, Bailyn² and Fernández³.

Some people consider that the family, by being part of the employee's private life, has no bearing on the company. Thus, any interference by the company in the employee's family life, which obviously should never occur, is identified with corporate policies which deliberately do not take into account the family and its rights.

Others consider that it is sufficient to have a flexible agreement between the company and its employees. The family's rights can only be taken into account if the negotiating parties are conscious of them. In many cases, the employee’s family duties are only viewed as interests which are in conflict with the company’s interests but the family is not seen as a source of real rights.

There are also those who think that there is nothing permanent in the family structure and, therefore, it is pointless to talk about family rights. Others, perhaps less exaggerated, merely state the existence of several "family models" which provide an alternative to what they call the

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“traditional family”. It is true that the statistics of most Western countries show a decrease in the number of marriages and an increase in the number of unmarried couples; an increase in the number of divorces and a decrease in the birth rate. While these data clearly show a decline in the number of families, they are insufficient to warrant the rejection of values permanently inherent in the family institution.

First of all, a distinction must be made between sociological data and ethical demands. Ethics analyses events and problems; however, its purpose is not merely to record them but to indicate whether they are good or bad, and to propose criteria for acting in a principled way. On the other hand, when ethics is disregarded, negative results are usually not long in appearing.

An extreme case is juvenile delinquency, in which the family plays a key role. A study carried out in Spain showed that 88.65% of the cases of juvenile delinquency came from disturbed family backgrounds.

It should also be remembered that the crisis of the family is not a spontaneous development but is due to concrete reasons. Specifically, when social or fiscal policy sanctions living together or having children without getting married, it is not surprising that the number of marriages decreases and the number of unmarried couples increases and vice-versa. When the family institution is no longer legally protected and the communication media repeatedly attack family and marital values, one can hardly expect the family – the basic unit of society – to be stable.

**Family rights**

It is undeniable that the dynamics of history has produced changes in family situations, in families’ ways of life and in certain roles performed by the father or mother. While some of these changes seem to be irreversible, it does not seem reasonable to conclude that the institutions of marriage and the family have no permanent value.

In any case, it must be acknowledged that the family is still the basic unit of society and the basic model for living for most young people. A sincere look at the situation clearly shows that the particular characteristics of each sex reveal certain objective values of marriage and the family that are not attributed to any human invention or conventionalism but correspond to the reality of man in his social dimension, and in his natural and vital expression which is the family.

It would hardly be logical that the respect for man’s dignity and his inalienable rights – which leads to a certain ethical universality which crosses cultural, racial and religious boundaries – should neglect the role of all men and women bound in matrimony as heads of their families.

It is undeniable that a basic dimension of the human being is love or a natural tendency to form bonds. Without doubt, the human love par excellence is the love between a man and a woman. It is a love which, when it is true, encompasses all fields of man’s existence. It is a union of the body, emotions, mind and spirit; it is the union and fusion of two lives naturally ordained for the generation of new human beings. Each child that is born confirms the spouses’ unity and projects it beyond them. The complementary psychologies of the male and the female are combined in the task of bringing up their children. With the child, the bond between the

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spouses is strengthened, inducing the parents to go beyond their own individual limits to give themselves to the fruit of their love.

The procreation and upbringing of children is essential for the continuity and improvement of mankind. It is not too difficult to discern that the natural place for the procreation and well-rounded upbringing of new human beings is the family founded on marriage between man and woman, in a lasting and close-bound union of life and love, freely entered into and publicly declared, open to the transmission of life and cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values. In the family, where the emotional and disciplinary links are so strong, children receive an ethical education that would be difficult to replace.

Thus, the family is a natural society with inalienable rights and duties; it is the inherent and essential expression of the rights of the individual who chooses marriage and family. Some of these rights have been recognized and formulated in the great international documents on human rights. In the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and in the "International Agreement of Civil and Political Rights", it is categorically stated that "the family is the natural and fundamental element of society and is entitled to the protection of society and the State". Other international texts on human rights are couched in similar terms, thus showing the existence of a wide international consensus on the intrinsic value of the family.

The social recognition of the objective value of the family as an institution and of the rights of the family is increasing in many countries. As the writer Jeanne Bourin has stated, "There is a feeling that the generation of the year 2000 will return to the so-called traditional values and marriage, true marriage, is paramount among them ....".

In 1981, Pope John Paul II published the Apostolic Exhortation Familiaris consortio on the family. In this document, the Pope pointed out some basic family rights and committed the Holy See to preparing a Charter of the Rights of the Family. This Charter was published on October 22, 1983. It was the first time in history that an international document on the rights of the family was presented.

In the introduction, it is stated that this document "is not an exposition of the dogmatic or moral theology of marriage and the family, although it reflects the Church's thinking on the matter. Nor is it a code of conduct for persons or institutions concerned with the question. The Charter is also different from a simple declaration of theoretical principles concerning the family. It aims, rather, at presenting to all our contemporaries, be they Christian or not, a formulation – as complete and ordered as possible – of the fundamental rights that are inherent in that natural and universal society which is the family".

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7 J. Bourin in Madame Figaro (2.2/3.1985).


One can reasonably hope that in the near future there will be more international documents on family rights which can assist in policy formulations by countries. Recently, Mr. Oreja, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in his address to the 20th Conference of Ministers responsible for the family, proposed drawing up a European Charter of Family Rights\textsuperscript{10} which could act as the basis of inspiration for family policies in the nations of Europe in the near future.

The rights of the family are accompanied by a corresponding set of family duties. Of course, the moral responsibility for performing those duties lies primarily with the members of the family themselves. But society as a whole has to contribute to making viable the family’s mission as a part of the common good. And within society, corporations and their actions may markedly favor or harm their employees’ family rights.

A major part of companies’ social responsibility is to organize work in a manner that respects the worker’s personal rights, including those that pertain to his family. This social responsibility will normally be wider than the legal responsibility derived from labor legislation designed to protect family rights.

In fact, some family rights can easily be infringed as a result of the organization of work within the company. These rights can be enumerated as follows:

1. The right to find the necessary social support to consolidate the family’s unity and stability so that it may carry out its specific task.

2. The right to socioeconomic conditions that enable it to carry out its duties with respect to the procreation and upbringing of children.

3. The right to working hours and periods that enable the necessary time to be given to the other spouse, to the children and to just being together.

4. The rights to a quality of life at work that does not affect the workers’ genetic heritage nor their physical or mental health nor does it make it unreasonably difficult to give the necessary attention to the family.

5. The right to a sufficient compensation to start and maintain a family.

The following discussion deals with some aspects of work organization connected with the above-mentioned family rights illustrated in several scenarios taken from cases that have been published or that the author has direct knowledge of.

\textbf{A working environment that favors marital unity and stability}

True marriage is a lifelong, mutual commitment between a man and a woman that demands faithfulness. Any unbiased look at the nature of marriage leads to the conclusion that marital fidelity is an essential part of it. Leclerq, among others, has studied closely this aspect of marriage and the family\textsuperscript{11}. Marital fidelity is the key to the family’s unity and stability. To break the word given in a contract is an ethical fault that usually generates strains that

\begin{footnotesize}

\end{footnotesize}
endanger the very continuity of the contract. This risk is heightened in marriage. In fact, 37% of Europeans think that faithfulness is the most important factor in a marriage’s success\textsuperscript{12}. On the other hand, it is a fact that divorce, which is the expression of a marriage’s failure, has a high social cost\textsuperscript{13}, affects the mental health of the people involved\textsuperscript{14}, causes situations of injustice, especially in the woman\textsuperscript{13} and raises significant problems with respect to the children’s upbringing.

The company’s policy or work organization may attack the family’s unity and stability in a variety of situations such as those illustrated in the following scenarios:

a) Bribery or extortion causing extramarital sexual relations

\textit{Scenario 1:} A company invites several D.P. managers to a convention at which its latest products will be presented. The reception includes all manner of entertainment, including call girls, which is supposed to smooth the way for sales to the potential buyers.

b) Sexual harassment within the company

\textit{Scenario 2:} A male supervisor sexually harasses a female subordinate. The subordinate is aware of the unfavorable consequences that would result from rejecting the supervisor’s advances: loss of promotion, misleading information on her performance to their superiors, effect on salary increases, and perhaps, dismissal in a future restructuring.

c) Situations that favor sexual attraction in the company

\textit{Scenario 3:} A fast-moving finance company specializing in high-risk loans wishes to recruit a recent Harvard MBA graduate. At his first visit to the company, the young MBA realizes that most of the women in the office are young and very attractive (perhaps even provocative). In fact, he had never seen so many pretty women in one place before. Was it pure chance or did it respond to some policy?

Later he learned that the company’s vice-president (only him?) usually had some secretary accompany him on his business trips, suggesting that they sleep together to “save the firm the price of a second room”.

The executives earned a lot of money but if they wanted to get to the top they had to work Saturdays and Sundays.

With all this, it is not surprising that the company’s divorce rate was somewhat high...\textsuperscript{15}

In these situations, in addition to damaging the family, the business organization itself will be ultimately harmed by distorted communications, the exercise of personal interests that go against the company’s interest, hostility, impairment of the work unit’s reputation, greater slowness in decision-taking, etc.

\textsuperscript{13} In Great Britain, for example, divorces cost the country £1 billion in 1983. Most women find themselves at a serious disadvantage after divorce. Only one out of every ten women can live exclusively on the alimony paid by the husband. Most divorced women survive thanks to State benefits and part-time work (Cfr. The Times, 11.21.1983).
\textsuperscript{14} Cfr. Conference on marriage and health held at the Royal College of Physicians in London and reported in The Times (3.29.1984).
d) Dual careers and prolonged separation of spouses

The desire by both wife and husband to have successful careers may significantly endanger the unity and stability of the marriage and the family. If the company where one of the spouses works is inflexible or pressures too hard for a change of job or location in detriment to the career of the other spouse, it is in fact acting indirectly against the family’s unity.

Scenario 4: A large group of companies has employed Antonio to solve the difficult situation of one of its companies near Barcelona. Antonio performs a magnificent job and within two years the company is in excellent financial shape. Antonio is then asked to do the same in another company in the south of Spain. It is planned that he will spend three to five years in the new company. Antonio may have a very good career before him in this group of companies but he must be prepared to accept all the changes that the company requires.

Antonio is married with three children under 14 years of age. His wife Montse is an architect and works for the regional government. Her career prospects are also good. Montse also takes an active part in political life and knows a lot of people in the Barcelona area. Their children go to a school they are very happy with. They also think that such a dramatic cultural change would not be good for the children. Antonio’s bosses have pressured him a lot on this change and have given him to understand that if he does not accept their demands, he can expect little future in the company. Antonio faces a dilemma and fears that he would not be able to find such a good job in another company.

It is hard to say just how much a company can pressure in defense of its legitimate interests but it is clear that if it does not act with a certain consideration for family circumstances, it will be favoring the family’s breakup. The prolonged separation of spouses gives rise to a lot of problems which may undermine the family’s unity and stability, especially when this separation is accompanied by frequent dealings with people of the other sex for work or social reasons. In fact, statistical data show that the jobs with highest risk of divorce are those that require frequent traveling or frequent or prolonged periods of separation.\footnote{Cfr. The Times (11.26.1984).}

In all these scenarios, of course, the person involved is free to refuse to accept the proposition of infidelity but the company’s policy, the work environment or the behavior of its managers may significantly influence the preservation of the couple’s unity and stability.

The company can make it easier to fulfill the duties of marital unity and stability by acting in the following areas:

1. Forbidding its employees to use any kind of bribery based on exploiting its possible customers’ sexual instincts.

2. Penalizing those who take advantage of their decision power to extort people for sexual gratifications.

3. Taking steps to prevent sexual harassment between employees, especially that derived from the abuse of power. It should be remembered that, according to the Merit System Protection Board, sexual harassment has little to do with mutual physical attraction,
provocative behavior or even sex\textsuperscript{17}. It is above all an expression of dominance and non-reciprocal behavior directed by the strongest at the weakest.

4. Acting with care in the organization of work and avoiding, as far as is possible, forms of business activity that may easily result in thoughtless sexual provocation between its employees.

5. Creating an atmosphere of seriousness in the company and encouraging managers to exercise care in their relations with the people they work with most. On this point, the comment made by R. Quinn\textsuperscript{18} is interesting in that he states that in 74\% of the love affairs that occur at work, the man holds a higher position than the woman and, in almost half of the cases, the woman involved is his secretary.

6. Taking into account the effects of dual careers on families, avoiding an excessive pressure on the employees that may lead to situations of discrimination.

7. Avoiding as much as possible prolonged separations of spouses.

**Work compatible with the obligations of parenthood**

Attention given to the family, and especially to bringing up the children, can be unacceptably low as a result of the organization of work in the company. The organization itself can hinder, and in some cases, even prevent parents from freely choosing the type of education their children should receive. Here are a few situations:

**a) Moving employees or managers to another city or country**

This may affect the professional or social interests of the other spouse or of the rest of the family, as well as affecting the children’s education (change of school, educational system or culture).

*Scenario 5:* A leading leather tanning factory in Valencia (Spain) opened a factory in Indonesia. The factory had to be managed by someone trusted by the company, who knew the process and the leather and leather-tanning trade well. The company’s management was convinced that this person had to be one of its employees. However, moving the employee with his family not only meant having to live in a different country and culture but also it would be impossible to find a school that would educate his children in accordance with his wishes. In fact, in spite of the promotion and the good pay, there was no-one prepared to move.

The company saw two alternatives: pressure the person chosen in various ways until he was persuaded to move or act respecting family rights. The solution was to appoint two managers who would work alternate three-month periods in Indonesia and Valencia.


b) Business trips that excessively shorten the amount of time available to the family

Scenario 6: A Barcelona company builds and sells turnkey ceramic and earthenware plants. It carries out assignments all over the world. Part of its staff of 1,500 employees work on the assembly and start-up of the new plants and, where necessary, on repairing those already existing.

These traveling workers spend from six months to two years away from their city (normally abroad). Their allowances are not excessive and they are not given more vacation time than their non-traveling colleagues. If necessary, return from one country is followed almost immediately by departure for an assignment in another country, as a result of which the worker is hardly able to spend any time with his family. Of course, his employment contract includes the obligation to travel as often as necessary.

On occasions, especially when the stay is going to be long, the workers take their families with them. The educational problems that arise are heightened by the cultural and religious differences in the customer countries, some of which have communist governments.

The trips abroad are organized without any consideration for the worker’s personal situation.

Obviously, moving away is not equally distressing for all employees. Consider the case of a bachelor, a man whose children are grown up or a man whose children are of school age. It does not seem reasonable to exclude an employee’s family situation unless no consideration is made of the personal aspect of work.

A totally liberal approach would argue that trips and living abroad are within the contractual provisions freely agreed on. However, such circumstances harm family rights which, because they are natural rights, come before any other kind of commitment.

On the other hand, contracts that contain elements of superior power or coercion may lead one to question their fairness. This would be the case of a contract that did not respect the worker’s family rights if the freedom of choice was reduced, as occurs, for example, in situations of very high unemployment.

c) Rigidity in working hours and possibility of working at home

It is becoming increasingly common for both wife and husband to work outside the home. In the USA, more than two-fifths of the work force (47 million employees) are composed of spouses in working households19. In Europe, this proportion varies widely according to the country but is large enough to pay attention to it20.

Rigid working hours usually adversely affect mothers who wish or need to work out of home, especially when the children are still young. This is perhaps one of the most pressing problems

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for many families. The problems that usually arise when both parents work are well known: the
care of young children, the mismatch between work and school vacations and working hours,
the care of children when they fall ill and, above all, the deficiencies in upbringing that usually
arise because of lack of time and parents being too tired to give enough attention to their
children.

There seems to be no doubt that the best solution to these problems is to spend more time
working at home, especially when the children are very young. However, this is not always
possible for a number of reasons.

Some companies have proposed various solutions, ranging from locating kindergartens and
schools next to companies to flexible leaving times. They are solutions that each have their
pros and cons and respond rather to a compromise of interests than to a social recognition of
parents’ rights and duties, foremost among which is the care and upbringing of their children.

On the other hand, working at home – for those who decide to do it – or working outside of
home with a reasonable degree of flexibility may also provide very suitable solutions.

Nancy R. Pearcy, a writer resident in Canada and a former feminist, advocates work in the
house and not just housework. This would be compatible with the mother’s important task of
bringing up her children. She thinks that women who work at home can have the best of both
worlds: earn a living while being able to freely organize their working hours, in accordance
with the number and age of their children. The idea is interesting and even feasible in some
situations; however, when there is no appropriate labor legislation, there may be companies
that take advantage of responsible, hard-working mothers to exploit them using the well-
known practices of the black economy:

Scenario 7: An imitation jewelry firm contracts out assembly work to home workers.
Without any employment contract, social security, abnormally low piece rates and tax
avoidance, this firm is able to make large profits while the workers – mothers with young
children in almost all cases – are able to look after their offspring while working at home
but with a ridiculously low pay.

It does not seem fair that labor legislation should prevent flexitime working or home
working; but, in any case, business ethics demands that abuses be avoided and
alternatives be devised to solve this problem which, for many families, has serious effects.

d) Working hours or vacation periods which hinder family life and especially the
care of children

Inflexible working hours or prolonged working hours and rigidity at work in general
(prohibition of part-time working, vacation periods dictated by the company, etc.) all too often
affect family duties, especially those of mothers who work out of home. This situation largely
depends on the company’s management. Working times can be influenced by labor legislation
although companies usually have ample room for maneuver.

Scenario 8: Arturo García, the managing director of a Spanish firm employing 90 people,
usually has his lunch outside of the office and, after a long rest, returns to his office at
about 5:30. He then starts to work at a feverish pace. He wants his immediate

subordinates to extend their working day until very late to help him. One of his secretaries, who is an excellent worker, has stated her desire to not extend her working hours beyond the normal time because she must fetch her children from school. This attitude has upset Mr. Garcia who is not prepared to promote that person nor increase her salary beyond that stated in the collective agreement because, according to him, "she can’t be counted on”.

Arturo Garcia places his convenience and habits before the legitimate rights of his employees. Mr. Garcia could probably organize his work without interfering with the family rights of his employees.

e) Overwork to the detriment of family life

On occasions, temporary increases in the workload make it necessary to spend a lot of time at work. However, on other occasions, this becomes a habit and the person overworks unnecessarily. Perhaps he loses sight of the fact that work is not an end to itself.

*Scenario 9*: Juan is a top executive in a Spanish automobile company. He is married and has three children aged 6, 8 and 11. He leaves home at 6:30 a.m. and gets back exhausted at about 10 p.m. when the children are already in bed. He also goes to the office on many weekends or takes work home. His job requires frequent travel. In order to make the best use of time, he often starts his trips on a Sunday.

Juan earns a lot of money which he uses to try to satisfy all his wife's and children’s desires. His wife, Maria, often complains that she has everything except a husband. The few times she is with her husband in suitable circumstances for talking about their children, she tries to explain to him that he cannot delegate to her his part of the children’s upbringing. Juan justifies himself by saying that the amount of work he has to do is due to the pace set by the company’s president and adding that he has to work as hard as he does to maintain his position, earn enough money and maintain his family’s admittedly high standard of living.

In such situations of overwork, the initial responsibility lies with the employee. Juan should reconsider his scale of values, his duties as father and husband, his behavior towards his family and the organization of his own work. However, the company may also be partly responsible. Could Juan alone change the situation without giving up his job? Perhaps, but the management style imposed by the president no doubt has a significant influence.

**Working conditions in relation to family duties**

Health and safety conditions at work primarily affect the worker. However, working conditions may have effects that go beyond the individual worker, involving his family life.

The following two situations, while not intended to be exhaustive, illustrate two types of inadequate working conditions and their relation to family rights.
a) Physical, chemical or psychological conditions that affect the employee's health, which obviously affects to a greater or lesser extent the real possibilities of carrying out family activities.

Scenario 10: In Spain, as in other countries, in the mid-60's there was no protection against the deafening noise in the cement mills. The people who worked there ended up completely deaf. In exchange, the company paid them a bonus for dangerous work. It is not difficult to imagine the problems of oral communication that occur in the family.

Today, this situation has been overcome in most industrialized countries by thick insulating walls and remote control. Worker health in such industries is usually well protected by legislation in industrialized countries. The problem lies in enforcing this legislation and, above all, in the working conditions prevailing in certain developing nations.

b) Lack of protection of fertility and genetic heritage or inadequate working conditions for pregnant mothers

The protection of the transmission of life derives from the right of the new being already conceived to the preservation of life or its genetic heritage, which may be altered as a result of the action of certain substances present at the place of work. It also derives from the inalienable right of parents to responsibly transmit life, which should not be harmed by working conditions.

Scenario 11: AT&T detected a high rate of miscarriages among the female workers in the chip manufacturing lines. Consequently, in 1986, AT&T decided to transfer those pregnant workers who were working on the semiconductor production lines.22

Respect of independence and family privacy

The company, like the rest of society, should not interfere with the family’s privacy or with its formation, development and future prospects. Nor should it pressure or discriminate due to:

a) the status of the spouse and the number of children

b) the type of education or school chosen by the parents

c) the family's moral or religious values

Scenario 12: In 1978, the American Cyanamid Company in Willow Island (West Virginia) had a dye production plant which used lead chromate, a fetotoxic substance. Eight women worked in this section. As a result of legislation, the company drew up a series of safety regulations which included removing women from this section unless they could certify they were sterile. In fact, of the eight women employed in the lead dye section, five had themselves surgically sterilized. This drastic decision was probably influenced by the poor economic conditions in the area, the small size of the Willow Island facilities and the non-existence of jobs available for the women in the immediate short term. In subsequent lawsuits, the company argued that it had tried to dissuade the five women from sterilizing

themselves and that it had offered them suitable alternatives in the form of jobs of similar rank and pay. If this is true, the offer was either not convincing or the regulations made did not take into account sufficiently the logical consequences in those female workers who destroyed all possibility of having children in order to keep their jobs.

In cases such as this, the organization of work may violate family privacy and one of the most important family rights: the right of responsible procreation. This type of situation shows the inadequacy of a system of ethics that does not take into account the foreseeable consequences.

**Sufficient compensation for a decent family life**

Paying unjustly low wages is another way of violating family independence. It is well-known that remuneration for work done is the principal means of living for most employees. If real pay is insufficient to bring up a family, a basic right which, to a large extent, conditions all the rest is trampled under foot.

**Scenario 13:** A Spanish company employs 60 workers. Its financial situation is good. Most of the workers hold positions that require little skill or experience. However, wages are scaled above all according to years of service (for historical reasons and union pressure) and to date, very few benefits have been given to workers and their families. Unfortunately, economic protection of the family in Spain is one of the lowest in Europe (an annual allowance of 2,000 pesetas per child and tax deduction of 16,000 pesetas per child, in 1987).

Some of the workers in this company with large families are in serious financial difficulties. Others see an effective coercion against procreation in the current pay system. Obviously, these problems affect the working atmosphere.

Management is considering restructuring wage rates taking into account not only production but also the worker’s family situation.

In several international human rights documents, the need has been stated to provide economic protection for the family. John Paul II, following a long tradition of social teaching by the Roman Catholic Church, insists in the encyclical *Laborem exercens* on the need for a sufficient level of remuneration to enable the employee to lead a decent family life.

The State, mainly through welfare benefits and tax deductions, can provide a certain economic protection for the family. However, the company cannot remain aloof from the economic rights of its employees’ families, especially when State aid is insufficient. This consideration gives rise to two statements:

- The wages paid should not be less than those required by an average family to live a decent life within the context of the time and place concerned.

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24 Cfr. U.N.O. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 23.3; European Social Charter, art. 4.1; U.N.O. International Agreement on Human Rights, art. 11.1, etc.

b) The benefits granted by the company to its workers should cover all members of their families. These benefits should be increased when less protection is given to families by society in general. It is not always easy to give these family-weighted benefits. It requires a lot of solidarity not only from the company with respect to its employees but also between the individual employees, at least if it is not possible to exceed a certain amount in total payroll.

Effort should also be made to prevent a particular company from being excessively affected by the size of its workers' families. On the other hand, there also exists the possibility of discrimination against workers with large families. It therefore seems advisable to create special funds for families from certain groups of companies or economic sectors, providing a means for respecting the economic rights of the family without resorting to the State or overburdening individual companies.

**Conclusion**

The narrow attitude towards work which separates the worker from his family life should be dispelled. The worker is not just "labor" but a person who has family duties of crucial importance for himself and for society.

Family duties devolve primarily upon the members of the family itself but, by being natural rights of all those who have chosen marriage and family, they should be respected and even promoted by the firm to ensure social justice in employer-employee relations.

It is one of the company’s ethical obligations to organize work taking into account the family duties of its employees and their subsequent compliance.

The idea that the loose agreement between employee and employer is sufficient, without considering the rights of the family, is not always just. When the negotiating parties do not have the same power or there exists the need to work, family rights and other rights may be disregarded in the name of bargaining freedom.

Family rights must be enforced with care and not just as a mere legalism in the organization of work in the firm. By doing so, the efforts to respect family rights will lead to corresponding improvements in labor relations.
Exhibit 1
Subjects suggested for inclusion in the "Business ethics" sessions at IESE (score between 0 and 5)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Position of those surveyed</th>
<th>Department Managers</th>
<th>General Managers</th>
<th>Company Presidents</th>
<th>Overall</th>
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<td>1. Ethics of remuneration</td>
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<td>3.82</td>
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