

Women in the Physician Workforce

Creating Work-Life Satisfaction for Women Physicians

Phyllis L. Carr, M.D.

Part-time or Reduced-hours Careers

- **What do we know?**
 - **Numbers of part-time physicians are increasing**
 - **Pediatrics: 11-15% between 1993 and 2000**
 - **Likely due to more dual-earner couples**

Brandeis Study Database

- **Random sample of female physicians**
 - **Massachusetts Registry of Board Certification**
 - **Between 25 and 50 years of age**
 - **Twenty-minute mailed questionnaire**
 - **Sixty-minute closed-ended interview (face-to-face)**
 - **51 full-time and 47 reduced-hours physicians**

Sample Demographics

- **No difference in:**
 - **Age**
 - **Number of years as a physician**
 - **Mean household income**
 - **Number of children**
 - **Presence of an infant in the home**

Sample Demographics

- **Reduced-hours physicians**
 - **More likely to be in a generalist specialty (40% vs. 12%, $p = 0.001$)**
 - **Spend a greater proportion of their time in patient care (64.5% vs. 50.1%, $p = 0.003$)**
 - **Less time in research (4.9% vs. 18.0%, $p = 0.002$)**
- **No difference in:**
 - **Perception of work interfering with family (1.8 vs. 1.7, $p = 0.17$)**
 - **Family life interfering with work (1.4 vs. 1.5, $p = 0.62$)**

Work Hours

- **Physicians who worked their preferred number of hours:**
 - **25% of full-time**
 - **57% of reduced-hours**
- **Better job-role quality ($p = 0.001$)**
- **Schedule fit ($p \leq 0.001$)**
- **Lower burnout ($p = 0.03$)**
- **Better marital-role quality ($p = 0.006$)**
- **Higher life satisfaction ($p = 0.005$)**

Work Hours

- **Women who worked their preferred number of hours had the best balance of work and family outcomes.**

Value of Part-time or Reduced-hours Physicians

- **Higher productivity than full-time physicians**
- **Equal to higher performance**
- **Similar patient satisfaction**
- **Similar ambulatory costs**

Value of Reduced-hours Physicians

- **Conflicting data on visit based continuity of care**
- **Brigham and Women's study**
 - **Reduced-hours physicians scored higher on the HEDIS (Health Employer Data and Information Set) quality measure, including:**
 - **Access**
 - **Availability of care**

Studies of Other Professions

- **Reduced-hours employees are also more productive.**

Reduced-hours Physicians

- **Compared to full-time counterparts there is little difference in:**
 - **Job role quality**
 - **Career satisfaction**

Working the Preferred Number of Hours for Both Full-time and Reduced-hours Physicians

- **Greatest impact on**
 - **Job-role quality**
 - **Burnout**
 - **Marital-role quality**
 - **Life satisfaction**

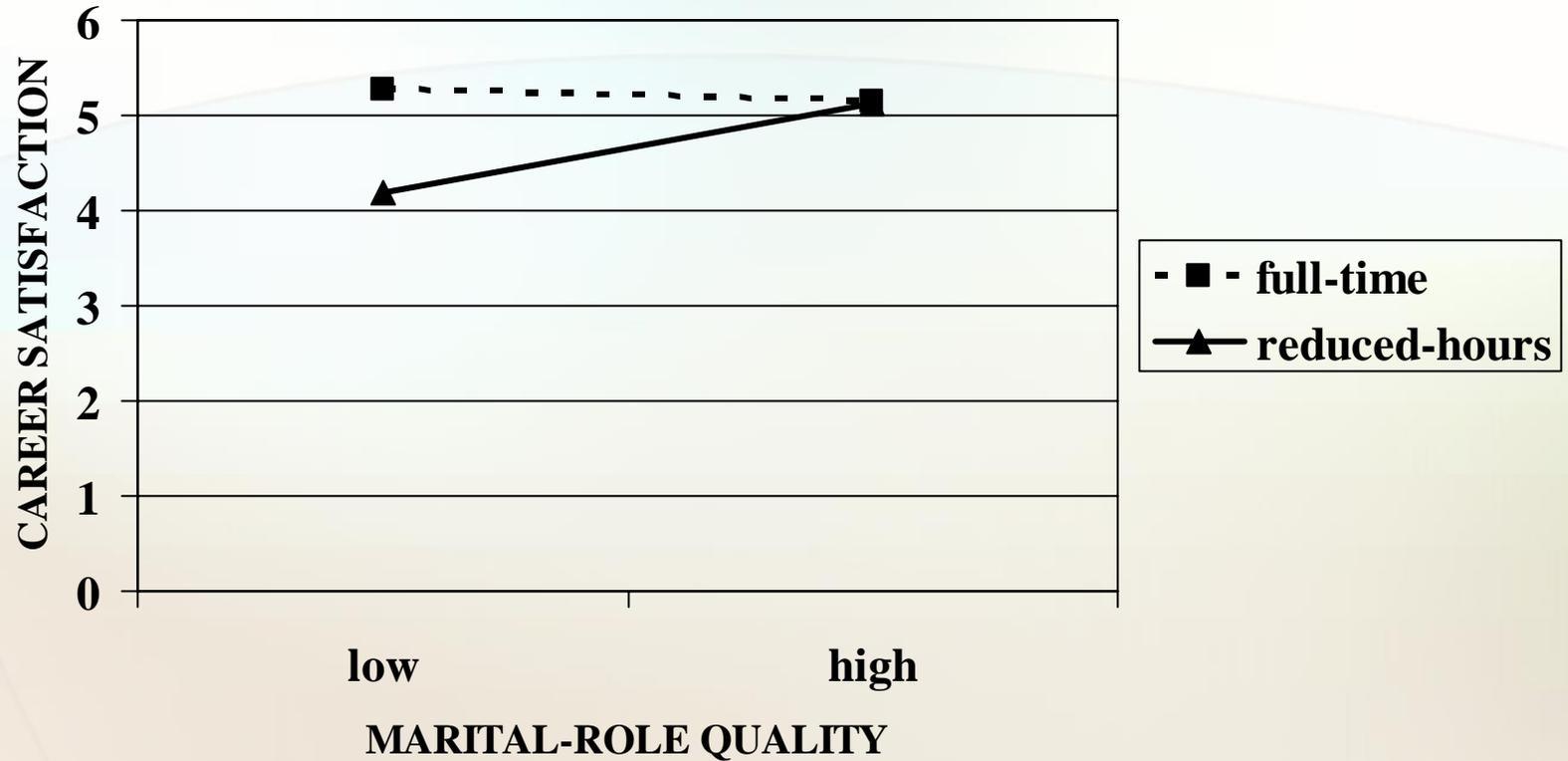
Physician Health Study

- **Strong association between work control and career satisfaction**
- **Lack of control a strong predictor of burnout in women**
 - **This is not true for men.**

Relationship of Family Experience to Career Satisfaction

- **Reduced-hours physicians**
 - **Greater correlation of family experience to career satisfaction**
- **Full-time physicians**
 - **No correlation**

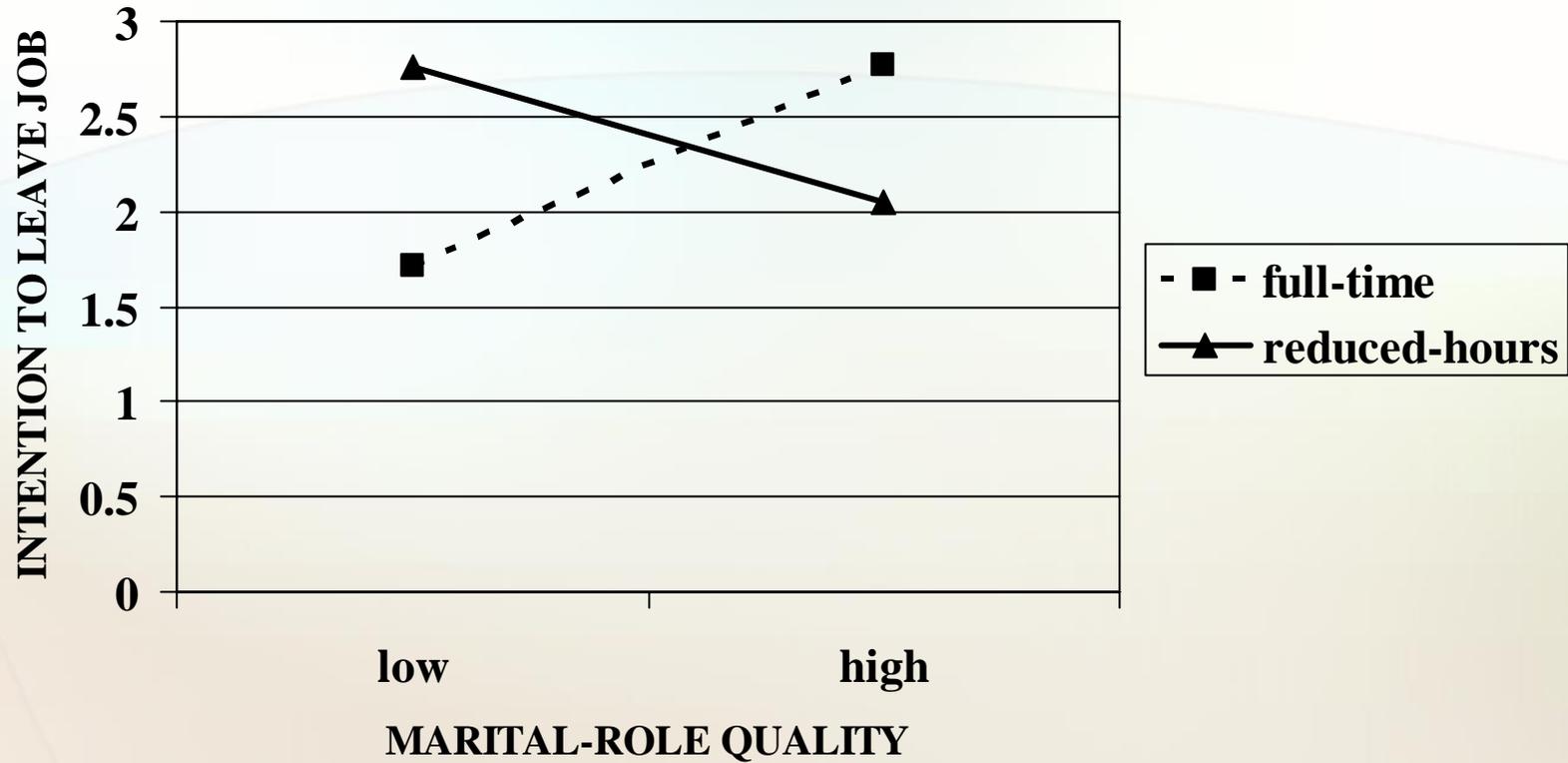
Effect of Marital-Role Quality on Career Satisfaction



Marital-role Quality and Intention to Leave the Job

- **Reduced-hours female physicians**
 - **When marital-role quality low = greater intention to leave the job**
 - **When marital-role quality high = less intention to leave the job**
- **Full-time female physicians**
 - **Suggestion that when marital-role quality is high, there is a greater intention to leave the job**

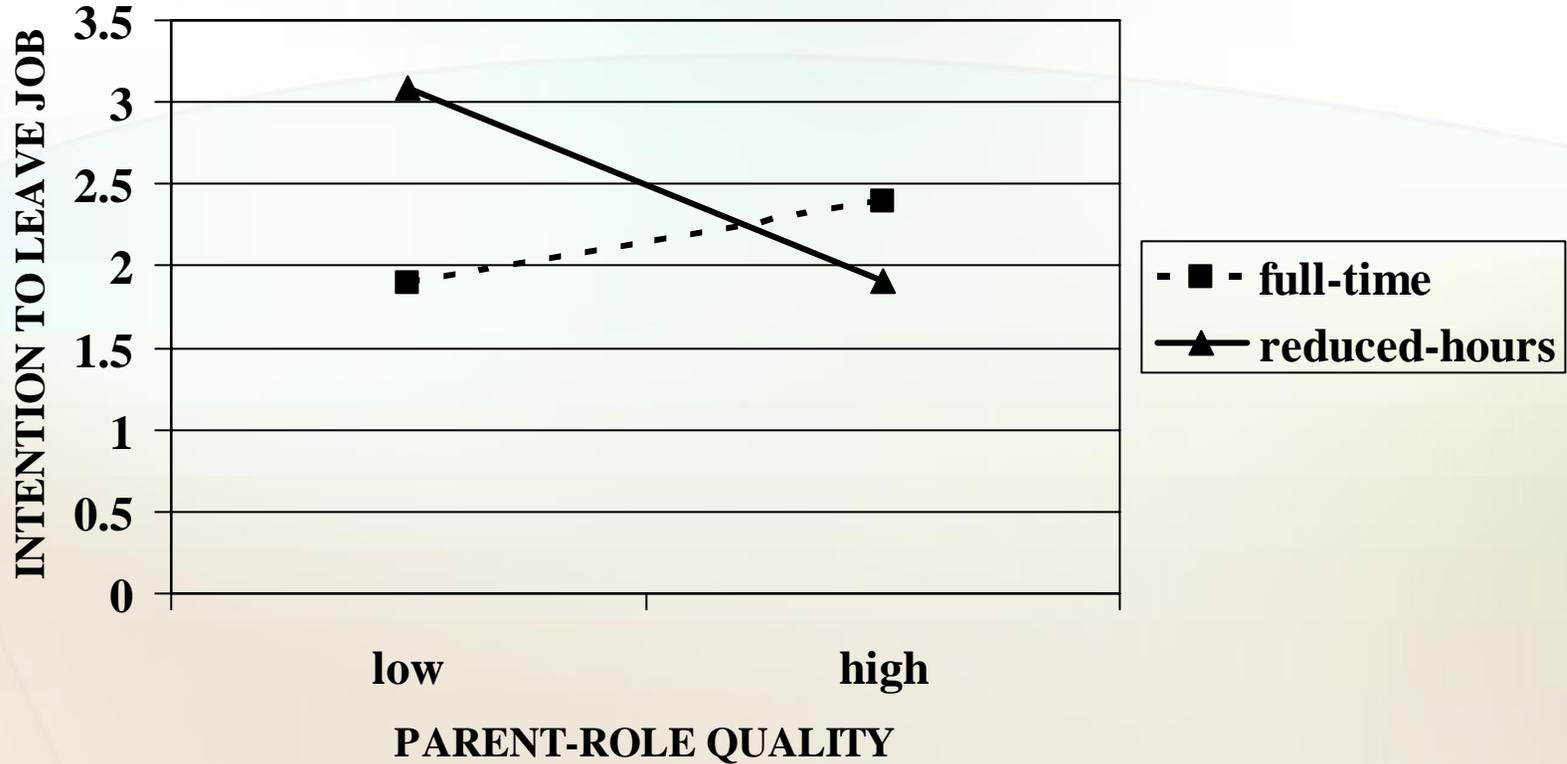
Effect of Marital-role Quality on Intention to Leave Job



Parent-role Quality and Intention to Leave the Job

- **High parent-role quality**
 - **No difference in intention to leave the job**
- **Low parent-role quality**
 - **Reduced-hours physicians had greater intention to leave the job than full-time counterparts**

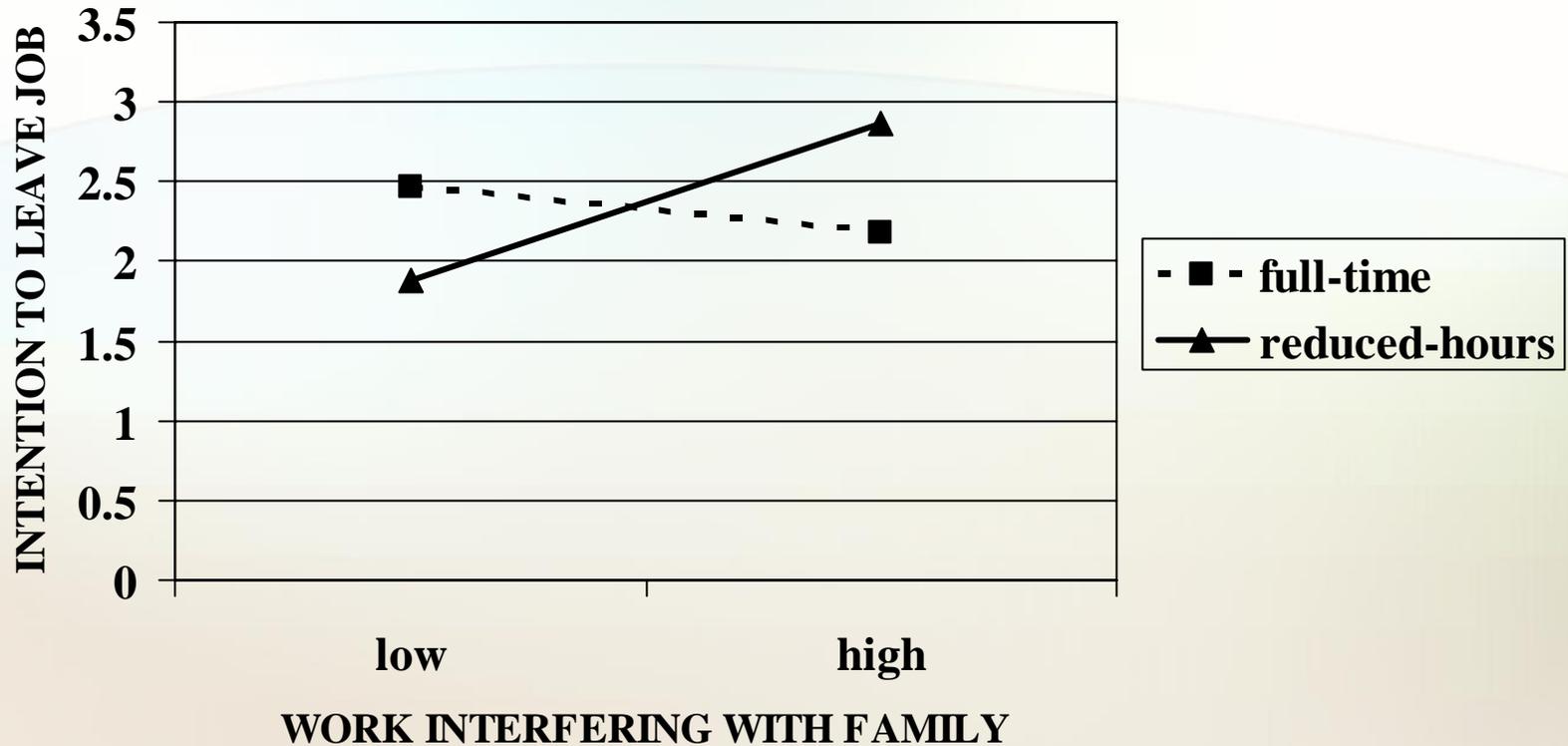
Effect of Parent-role Quality on Intention to Leave Job



Work-Family Interference and Intention to Leave Job

- **Full-time physicians**
 - **No relationship**
- **Reduced-hours physicians**
 - **High work-family interference correlated with higher intention to leave the job**

Effect of Work-Family Interference on Intention to Leave Job



Academic Medical Careers

- **This data is largely on women physicians in practice who are not in academic medical careers.**
- **Still a poor understanding of:**
 - **The factors related to choices for reduced-hours**
 - **Generally lumped under “for family reasons”**
 - **The affects on academic careers of reduced-hours**
 - **Need a national study to evaluate this issue**