

**WORK-LIFE INTERACTION AMONG AFRIKAANS
SPEAKING SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS IN THE
NORTH WEST PROVINCE:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

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COMMENTS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- The editorial style as well as the references referred to in this mini-dissertation follow the format prescribed by the Publication Manual (5th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA). This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University (Potchefstroom) to use APA style in all scientific documents as from January 1999.
- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Work-life interaction among Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators in the North West Province: A phenomenological study

Key words: Work-personal life interaction, experiences, domains in life, antecedents, consequences, strategies, limits of balanced life, Afrikaans secondary school educators, North West Province.

In contemporary society, work and home represent the two most significant domains in the life of a working individual. In order to help an individual live optimally, the work and personal life domains must no longer be regarded as separate domains, but as highly interrelated. The work and personal life domains must influence each other in a positive way to assist the individual in his daily responsibilities at work and in his personal life. A high proportion of employed workers, however, have serious difficulties in combining obligations in their work and personal lives. Educators are one of the occupations that may find it difficult to integrate their work and personal life.

The objectives of this research were to determine how Afrikaans-speaking educators experienced Work-Personal Life Interaction (WPLI), to determine the domains in Afrikaans-speaking educators' lives that could interact with one another, to determine the main antecedents and consequences of WPLI for Afrikaans-speaking educators and to investigate which strategies Afrikaans-speaking educators used to deal with WPLI issues. A non-probability purposive voluntary sample ($N = 11$) of Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators was used from the North West Province (in the Potchefstroom and Promosa areas). A qualitative design from a phenomenological approach was used to determine educators' experience of WPLI. Content analysis was used to analyse, quantify and interpret the research data.

The results indicated that educators experienced certain aspects in their work environment and personal lives as demanding. Certain dimensions were identified in both their work and personal lives. As a result of a demanding work environment, they experienced time and strain-based

conflict between their work and personal lives. However, it was found that educators possessed various factors that facilitated their WPLI and strategies they used to deal with WPLI issues.

Recommendations were made for the organisation and for future research.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Werk-lewe interaksie onder Afrikaanssprekende sekondêre onderwysers in die Noordwes Provinsie: 'n Fenomenologiese studie.

Sleuteltermes: Werk-persoonlike lewe interaksie, ondervindinge, domeine in lewe, antesedente, gevolge, strategieë, beperkinge van gebalanseerde lewe, Afrikaans sekondêre skoolonderwysers, Noordwes Provinsie.

In die kontemporêre gemeenskap verteenwoordig werk en huis die twee mees betekenisvolle domeine in die lewe van 'n werkende individu. Om 'n individu in staat te stel om optimaal te lewe, moet die werk- en persoonlike lewe domeine nie meer gesien word as afsonderlike domeine nie, maar as hoogs verwant aan mekaar. Die werk en persoonlike lewe domeine moet mekaar op 'n positiewe manier beïnvloed om die individu by te staan met sy daaglikse verantwoordelikhede by die werk en in sy persoonlike lewe. 'n Hoë persentasie werkers het egter 'n ernstige probleem om verpligtinge by die werk en by die huis te kombineer. Die onderwys is een van die beroepe waar werkers dit dalk mag moeilik vind om hulle werk en persoonlike lewe te integreer.

Die doelwitte van die navorsing was om te bepaal hoe Afrikaanssprekende onderwysers Werk-Persoonlike Lewe Interaksie (WPLI) ervaar, asook om te bepaal wat die domeine in Afrikaanssprekende onderwysers se lewe is wat op mekaar kan inwerk, om so die hoof antesedente en gevolge te bepaal van WPLI vir Afrikaanssprekende onderwysers en om die strategieë te ondersoek wat Afrikaanssprekende onderwysers gebruik het om WPLI-probleme te hanteer. 'n Doelgerigte vrywillige niewaarskynlikheid-steekproef ($N = 11$) van Afrikaanssprekende sekondêre skoolonderwysers van die Noordwes Provinsie (in die Potchefstroom- en Promosa-areas) is gebruik. 'n Kwalitatiewe ontwerp van 'n fenomenologiese benadering is gebruik om onderwysers se ondervinding van WPLI te bepaal. Inhoud-analise is gebruik om te analiseer, kwantifiseer en navorsingsdata te interpreteer.

Die resultate het aangedui dat onderwysers in beide hulle werksomgewing en persoonlike lewe sekere aspekte as veeleisend ondervind. Daar is ook sekere dimensies geïdentifiseer in beide hulle werk- en persoonlike lewe. As resultaat van onderwysers se veeleisende werksomgewing het hulle tydgebaseerde en inspanninggebaseerde konflikte tussen hulle werk- en persoonlike lewe. Daar is gevind dat onderwysers oor verskillende faktore beskik wat hulle WPLI fasiliteer en daarom ook strategieë het wat hulle help om WPLI-sake te hanteer.

Aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsing word aan die hand gedoen.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation focuses on the Work-Personal Life Interaction (WPLI) among Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators in the North West Province. Chapter 1 contains the problem statement and a discussion of the research objectives, in which the general objective and the specific objectives are set out. A discussion on the research method and research procedure follows. It concludes with a chapter summary giving an overview of the chapters that comprise this mini-dissertation.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Educators have a significantly important role to play in any country. In South Africa, defining the role of educators is not easy and the variables that come in to play are growing more complex (Jackson & Rothmann, 2006). Some of the changes that educators experience are affirmative action, democracy, diversity, retrenchments and redeployment. In addition to these changes, educators also experienced a transition from nineteen departments of education to one national and nine provincial departments of education, as well as the change from mono-cultural schools to multicultural schools (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002).

Apart from the pressures of a changing country, teaching is in itself an extremely demanding occupation. In general, educators have to cope with demands such as an increasing workload, increased specialisation, the growing scope of syllabuses, a higher number of learners per class, an unsatisfactory classroom climate, various and competing tasks to complete, low decision-making powers, little support from colleagues and low salaries. There are also specific demands in the work situation that educators have to deal with that include a lack of classroom discipline, routine, tension within the school, a lack of acknowledgement and a lack of material aids to accomplish tasks efficiently (Niehaus, Myburgh, & Kok, 1995; Montgomery, Mostert, & Jackson, 2005).

Due to these demanding aspects, many educators find that their feelings about themselves, their students and their profession are becoming more negative over time. These educators

are susceptible to chronic feelings of emotional exhaustion and fatigue, negative attitudes toward their students and feelings of diminishing job accomplishments (Van Wyk, 2004). The opinion is that these feelings are aspects of stress and can have a wide range of negative effects on individuals with several negative outcomes, including psychological (e.g., job dissatisfaction), physiological (e.g., high blood pressure) and behavioural (e.g., absenteeism) outcomes (Jackson & Rothmann, 2006).

The demanding aspects that educators experience in their work may also have a great impact on the way that they need to integrate their work and personal life domains. In contemporary society, work and home represent the two most significant domains in the life of a working individual. Work represents the obligations and responsibilities that a working individual have to various others in their work domain (e.g., their employer, superior, colleagues and subordinates) (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). The personal life domain represents the obligations and responsibilities that an individual has to spouses, children, relatives and friends (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). The household domain delivers individuals to the workplace in a condition fit for work, clothed, fed and rested. Over and above these physical contributions, the home domain also provides an important source of psychological support for those in work and exerts a major influence on the overall pattern of labour market participation (Montgomery, Panagopoulou, Peeters, & Schaufeli, 2005).

In order to help an individual live optimally, the work and personal life domains should no longer be regarded as separate domains, but as highly interrelated (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). The work and personal life domains should influence each other in a positive way to assist the individual in his daily responsibilities at work and in his personal life. Consequently, it is important for employees to integrate their responsibilities both at work and in their personal life.

Even though it is important that the different domains in an individual's life are integrated, economic, political and social changes suggest that the integration between these two domains will become more difficult and work-personal life issues will become increasingly important. This is also because of the changing composition of the workforce and the nature of work itself. Women form a substantial part of the active working force. Consequently, the number of dual-earner couples and employed persons with care-giving responsibilities is rapidly growing. There is evidence, specifically in the developed and industrialised world,

that managerial and professional women and men are working harder and for longer hours (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Furthermore, organisational downsizing and restructuring, the recent economic downturn followed by a jobless recovery and increasing levels of international competition, have increased work demands on many professionals. Advances in technology, such as e-mail, mobile phones and laptop computers, have also made it possible to work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week (Burke, 2004).

Recent statistics show that these economic, political and social changes are not without a price. In fact, a high proportion of employed workers and particularly of employed parents, have serious difficulty in combining work and domestic obligations, therefore creating the potential for interference of conflict between these two domains (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). In addition, this poor interaction between work and personal life is also associated with various negative organisational outcomes and include reduced job and life satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), low organisational commitment and intentions to quit (turnover) (Jamal, 1981), job stress and burnout (Kandonlin, 1993), low levels of job performance and the prevalence of accidents (Monk & Folkard, 1985).

These changes have further stimulated a larger and growing number of literature devoted to understanding the dynamic relationship between work and personal life (Frone, 2003). The most up-to-date organisational view of work and personal life indicates that these domains are independent, and that this interdependence has a significant impact on individual behaviour in an organisation and private setting, and ultimately on organisational functioning itself (Montgomery, Panagopoulou, et al., 2005).

Although research on WPLI has increased over the last years, it is problematic to assume that the same findings of international research are automatically applicable to the South African context. Research regarding work-life interaction in South Africa is also characterised by several limitations, such as poorly designed and controlled studies, a lack of sophisticated statistical analysis, the use of international measuring instruments without determining the equivalence and bias thereof, and a lack to include all cultural groups in studies (Mostert, 2006). Because South Africa is a multicultural society with a diverse workforce and different economical, political and societal factors that can influence WPLI in different ways, it seems that the meaning South African employees attach to WPLI can differ from those of other countries.

Social demographic characteristics like gender, age and work experience of employees can also have an impact on the way South Africans differ regarding their interaction between their work and personal lives. Males and females may value the work and personal life domains in different ways and unique meanings can be attached to certain aspects concerning WPLI. There are indications from other countries that the experience of negative interaction between both domains depends on one's life stage (e.g., having children) and that this relationship is gender related. Female workers with young children seem to experience the highest levels of negative interaction between both domains, compared to males and to females with older children (Geurts & Dikkers, 2002).

The second social demographical characteristic, age, has not been related to any type of negative interaction between both domains. However, Grzywacz and Marks (2000) showed that, after controlling for work and family characteristics, younger men reported higher negative interaction between both domains and lower positive interaction from their personal life to work than older men. Younger women on the other hand, reported interaction that is more positive from work to personal life and interaction that is more negative from personal life to work than older women did. Grzywacz and Marks (2000) did not provide an explanation for these differences. The final social demographical characteristic that can also have an impact on the way South African employees differ regarding their interaction between their work and personal lives is the work experience employees have. Employees' work experience can influence the use of different strategies in order to deal with WPLI but little research has yet been done on this aspect.

The above-mentioned makes it therefore clear that little research has been done in South Africa regarding WPLI especially regarding gender, age, and work experience. It is therefore important to investigate how employees and especially secondary school educators experience WPLI. Since this investigation is done in the North West Province and Afrikaans is one of the most prominent language groups in the North West Province, this study will focus on the experience of WPLI of Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators.

The following research questions can be formulated:

- What are the domains in Afrikaans-speaking educators' lives that can interact with one another?
- What are the main antecedents and consequences of WPLI for Afrikaans-speaking educators?
- Which strategies do Afrikaans-speaking educators use to deal with WPLI issues?
- How do Afrikaans-speaking educators experience WPLI?

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives are divided into two main categories, namely general objectives and specific objectives.

1.2.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is to investigate critically how Afrikaans-speaking educators experience WPLI.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research are:

- To determine what the domains in Afrikaans-speaking educators' lives are that can interact with one another.
- To determine what are the main antecedents and consequences of WPLI for Afrikaans-speaking educators.
- To investigate which strategies Afrikaans-speaking educators use to deal with WPLI issues.
- To examine how Afrikaans-speaking educators experience WPLI.

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method consists of a literature review and an empirical study. The literature review focuses on WPLI in broad. The focus is on a brief history of WPLI, why it is important to investigate this phenomenon and major limitations in the field, specifically in the South African context. The reader must note that a literature study is conducted for the purposes of the article. This paragraph focuses on aspects relevant to the empirical study that is conducted. The results obtained from the research will be presented in article format.

1.3.1 Research design

For the purposes of this research, a qualitative design from a phenomenological approach was used. In this approach, the researcher was interested in the meaning a person attributes to his or her experiences of reality, his or her world and his or her relationships. The person's cognitive experience must be understood and defined because it is only through this that the true essence of the person's experience can be realised (Rothmann, Gerber, Lubbe, Sieberhagen, & Rothmann, 1998).

Qualitative research makes it possible to determine the subjective experiences of Afrikaans-speaking educators in the North West Province. Qualitative research is defined as the study of people in their natural environments as they go about their daily lives (Bailey, 1994). Despite the negativity surrounding the use of qualitative research, Woods and Catanzaro (1988) indicated that the validity of qualitative research is one of its biggest advantages.

1.3.2 Participants

A non-probability purposive voluntary sample of secondary school educators is used to reach the objective of this study. It is clear from Woods and Catanzaro (1988) that small samples can provide reliable research data and are therefore acceptable for phenomenology studies. Secondary schools in the North West Province (in the Potchefstroom and Promosa areas) were used. The population consisted of Coloured and White Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators.

The following selection criteria were used to determine which participants were included in the sample:

- Educators working in the selected schools in the Potchefstroom and Promosa area.
- Educators that are Afrikaans-speaking.
- Employed educators with at least two years work experience.
- Educators who were willing to participate in the research (and who were willing to give written informed consent) after having been informed about the purpose and procedures of the research.
- Educators who were prepared to have a tape-recorded interview with the researcher.

The number of willing and accessible participants determines the size of the samples in the research. Data was collected until data saturation was reached within each sample (Burns & Grove, 1987).

1.3.3 Data collection

The measuring instrument used in this research was a semi-structured interview, based on the phenomenological paradigm. The researcher studied the phenomenon without predetermined expectations of categories and tried to understand the data from the perspective of the participant. A workshop regarding interviewing skills and techniques used during interviews was conducted by an expert and attended by the researcher. During this workshop, questions that were not clear were refined and adjusted with the help of the expert.

The interview was held where it best suited the participant. In order to ensure a relaxed environment, attention was given to the climate/atmosphere of the room. A 'do not disturb' sign was put outside the door to ensure that the interview was not interrupted. The researcher introduced herself in a friendly and warm manner in order to ensure that the participant was at ease. The researcher then explained the context of the interview, and with the permission of the participant, tape-recorders were used. The participants were informed that the tapes would be erased after the research had been completed and that they would remain anonymous. It was emphasised that the participant could withdraw from the study at any time.

All participants were asked a standard question: “You have a work life and a personal life. Can you please tell me how you experience the interaction between your work, and all facets of your personal life?”. The researcher asked the introductory question and made sure that the participants understood the question. In order for the participants to explain their experience in detailed the researcher also asked two follow up questions: “What are the causes and consequences of the interaction between your work and personal life?” and “What strategies do you use to deal with the interaction between your work and personal life?”.

The researcher faced the participant squarely in a relaxed way, had an open body posture and leant slightly forward to ensure that the participant was comfortable during the whole interview. The researcher also kept eye contact with the participant at all times. Non-directive dialogue techniques like minimal verbal responses (e.g., “mm-mm, yes, I see”), paraphrasing (stating the participant’s words in another form with the same meaning), clarification (e.g., “Can you tell me more about...” “You seem to be saying...”), reflection (e.g., “So, you believe that...”), reflective summary (“So what you’re saying...”) and silence were used to assist the participants to share their experiences.

After the interview, the participant was asked to complete a short biographical questionnaire that included gender, age, race, language, qualification, marital and parental status, as well as years of experience.

1.3.3.1 Pilot study

A pilot study is a prerequisite for the successful execution and completion of a research project. It allows a researcher to acquire thorough background knowledge about a specific problem that the researcher intends to investigate. The purpose of the pilot study is to improve the success and effectiveness of the investigation (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, Poggenpoel, & Schurink, 1998). In this study, the researcher used a preliminary pilot to identify the possible unforeseen problems, which could have emerged during the main investigation. The pilot consisted of three Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators from Potchefstroom. The pilot study was a valuable means to gain practical knowledge of and insight into the problem. A pilot study assisted the researcher in making necessary modifications of the data-gathering instruments. An expert evaluated the appropriateness of the interview schedule, before the main investigation proceeded.

1.3.3.2 Field notes

Immediately after each interview, the field notes regarding that interview were transcribed. Field notes are a written account of the things the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks in the course of the interview. The field notes included both the empirical observation and interpretations. The researcher wrote down her emotions, preconceptions, expectations and prejudices so that they could be developed in the final product.

1.3.3.3 Trustworthiness

Guba's model for qualitative research (Guba, 1981; Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was applied in order to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. Attention was given to the principles of credibility (checking the truth value of the findings), by means of field notes, triangulation, peer examination and independent coding; transferability (ensuring applicability of the findings), through comparison of sufficient descriptive data, as well as dense description of the data; dependability (ensuring consistency of the findings), by means of an audit, keeping of the raw material, giving a full description of the research method, applying the same procedure throughout, triangulation, peer examination and the code-recode procedure; conformability (which was accomplished by using the criterion of neutrality or freedom from bias), by keeping an appropriate distance in order not to influence the research, as well as triangulation and the code-recode procedure.

1.3.4 Data analysis

An important aspect of understanding the meaning that people attach to WPLI is the understanding of the data from the perspective of the participants' work and personal lives. In this study, the results of the interviews were analysed by the use of content analysis. The content analysis consisted of the following steps (Giorgi, 1985; Kerlinger, 1986):

- The first step in content analysis was to universalise the context that needed to be analysed (for example the entire set of verbal answers of the participants), to be defined and to be categorised.
- The second step was to determine the sub-units of the analysis, namely words and themes.

The researcher read the responded notes in order to form an overall picture. Afterwards, the researcher once again read it in order to determine the themes. The words that were used by the participant were the smallest analysis that could be made. A sub-theme is usually a sentence and is more difficult but also more useful to analyse. Sub-themes were combined in order to determine the themes. The analysis of the information was continued until repeated themes were identified.

- The third step was to free the data from unnecessary information and to determine the meaning of the rest of the sub-units by linking it to the whole picture.
- The fourth step consisted of the conversion of the concrete language of the participants, into scientific language and concepts. The precise words of the participants were used in support, based on gained insights, integration and synthesis was then done.

The number of objects per category was counted and placed in order of preference. The trustworthiness of the content analysis was promoted by the coding that was done by the researcher and a co-coder. A literature-control was done to investigate relevant research in order to determine the comparativeness and uniqueness of the current research (Krefting, 1991).

The researcher strived to promote the validity by spending enough time with the participant in order to establish a report. Social-desirable responses were minimised by making use of dialogue techniques. Rephrasing and repetition of questions were used in order to gain credibility of information. The researcher made use of a diary to highlight the ideas and feelings of the respondents during the research process. These notes consisted of information about the problems and frustrations that were experienced (Krefting, 1991).

1.3.5 Ethical aspects

Conducting research is an ethical enterprise. Research ethics provide researchers with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct research in a morally acceptable way. The following were applicable at all times to retain an ethical climate (Struwig & Stead, 2001):

- The researcher was honest, fair and respectful towards the participants and did not attempt to mislead or deceive the research participants.

- The researcher respected the rights and dignity of others. This included respecting the privacy, confidentiality and autonomy of the research participants. The researcher was also mindful to cultural and individual differences among people, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language and socio-economic status. The researcher did not knowingly discriminate against people on the basis of such factors.
- The welfare of others was of major concern. The researcher avoided or minimised any harm befalling the research participants because of interaction with them.

1.4 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

After consent was received from the Department of Education and participating schools, participants were invited to take part in an informal one-to-one interview regarding their experience of WPLI. The interviews took place in a venue with enough ventilation, lighting and comfortable chairs. Tape recorders were used with permission from the participants to ensure that no information got lost (Omery, 1983). The candidates were put at ease before the start of the interviews. The researcher introduced herself at the beginning of each interview and also explained the context of the interview. It was emphasised that participants could withdraw from the study at any time. All participants were asked the standard research question. Non-directive dialogue techniques like attentive body language, reflection, clarification, minimal encouragement and silence were used to assist the participants in sharing their experiences (Meulenbergh-Buskens, 1994). The researcher transcribed the tape recording of the interview verbatim in order to analyse the information.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

In Chapter 2, the work-personal life experiences of Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators are discussed in the form of a research article. Chapter 3 deals with the conclusion, limitations and recommendations of this research.

1.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 focused on the problem statement and objectives of the study, as well as the research methodology employed. This was followed by a layout of the chapters that follow. Chapter 2 will focus on the work-personal life experiences of Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators.

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CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH ARTICLE

WORK-LIFE INTERACTION AMONG AFRIKAANS-SPEAKING SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to determine how Afrikaans-speaking educators experienced work-personal life interaction (WPLI). A non-probability purposive voluntary sample of 11 Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators was taken from Potchefstroom and Promosa areas. A qualitative design from a phenomenological approach was used to determine educators' experience of WPLI. Content analysis was used to analyse, quantify and interpret the research data. The results indicated that educators experienced certain aspects in both their work environment and in their personal life as demanding. Certain dimensions were identified in both their work and personal lives. As a result of educators' demanding work environment, they experienced time and strain-based conflict between their work and personal lives. It was, however, found that educators possessed various factors that facilitated their WPLI and strategies they used to deal with WPLI issues.

OPSOMMING

Die algemene doelstelling van hierdie studie was om te bepaal hoe Afrikaanssprekende onderwysers werk-persoonlike lewe interaksie (WPLI) ervaar. 'n Doelgerigte niewaarskynlikheid-steekproef van 11 Afrikaanssprekende sekondêre skoolonderwysers van die Potchefstroom- en Promosa-areas is gebruik. 'n Kwalitatiewe ontwerp van 'n fenomenologiese benadering is gebruik om onderwysers se ondervinding van WPLI te bepaal. Inhoud-analise is gebruik om te analiseer, kwantifiseer en navorsingsdata te interpreteer. Die resultate het aangedui dat onderwysers in beide hulle werksomgewing en in hulle persoonlike lewe sekere aspekte as veeleisend ervaar. Daar is ook sekere dimensies geïdentifiseer in beide hulle werk- en persoonlike lewe. As resultaat van onderwysers se veeleisende werksomgewing het hulle tydgebaseerde en inspanninggebaseerde konflikte ervaar tussen hulle werk- en persoonlike lewe. Daar is gevind dat onderwysers verskillende faktore het wat hulle WPLI fasiliteer en daarom ook strategieë het wat hulle help om WPLI-sake te hanteer.

The past two decades have brought a vast increase in the number of individuals with significant responsibilities both at work and within their personal lives including single parents, working women, dual-career couples, and fathers heavily involved in parenting (Carnicer, Sánchez, Pérez, & Jiménez, 2004). In South Africa the case is not different. Steward and Donald (2006) state that 46% of women and 62% of men participate in the labour force and 34% of married women are employed (Mutudi, 2002/3). Although figures on dual-career couples in South Africa are not available, it is likely that the number of employed working mothers has increased over the last two decades. Consequently, a high proportion of employed workers and particularly of employed parents has serious difficulty in combining obligations in the work domain and personal life (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

Work obligations represent the responsibilities that a working individual has to various roles in the work domain (e.g., their employer, superior, colleagues and subordinates), while the personal life domain represents the obligations and responsibilities that an individual has to spouses, children, relatives and friends (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). For many workers, managing these obligations and responsibilities creates the potential for interference or conflict to occur between their work and personal lives (Peeters, Montgomery, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2005).

These conflicts that can occur between individuals' work and personal lives have been shown to have an unfavourable outcome on employees' work life, home life (e.g., lowered performance in the parental role, less life satisfaction) and general health and well-being (e.g., greater health risks for working parents, anxiety, work stress) (Carnicer et al., 2004). This poor interaction between individuals' work and personal lives is also associated with various negative organisational outcomes that include reduced job satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), low organisational commitment and intentions to quit (turnover) (Jamal, 1981), job stress and burnout (Kandonlin, 1993), low levels of job performance and the prevalence of accidents (Monk & Folkard, 1985). Furthermore, life outside work has an impact on how individuals feel and behave at work. Well-being and performance at work benefit from positive moods experienced at home (Williams & Alliger, 1994) and from the absence of conflicts between personal life and work (Burke, 2004).

Therefore, an individual's work and personal life must be in harmony with one another and influence one another in a positive way to assist the individual in his daily responsibilities at

work and personal life. In order for individuals to live in this optimal way, it is necessary to integrate both their responsibilities at work and in their personal life.

Within the South African context, education is one of the occupations where individuals may find it difficult to integrate their work and personal life. Educators' work is increasingly becoming more complex and demanding. Empirical research has consistently shown that work demands interfere with personal life (i.e., work-personal life interference) more often than vice versa (i.e., personal life demands interfering with work life) (Van Hooff et al., 2005). Educators also have to cope with demands such as the rationalisation of personnel, increased specialisation, the growing scope of syllabuses, a higher number of learners per class (Niehaus, Myburgh, & Kok, 1995), increased workload, an unsatisfactory classroom climate, low salaries and also specific factors in the work situation, such as a lack of classroom discipline, a lack of acknowledgement and support for what is being accomplished and a lack of material aids to accomplish tasks efficiently (Montgomery, Mostert, & Jackson, 2005).

In addition to these demands, educators also have to deal with the increasing changes on political, societal and educational front. Some of the political changes affecting educators' work are for instance the move from 19 departments of education to one national department and nine provincial departments of education, and mono-cultural schools, which changed into multicultural schools. Along with this process, rationalisation, retrenchment and redeployment of educators also took place as the new government established its own policies (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002). The societal and educational changes causing educators to have to make variety of modifications in their professional and personal lives include population increase, diversity in school populations, increase in cost of living, crime and its effects on learner behaviour, performance appraisal systems and demands of unions (Jackson & Rothmann, 2006). News reports reflect that these changes in the educational system have placed a lot of pressure on educators (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002).

The problem that educators face is because these changes accompany an increase in responsibilities in educators' work life. Consequently, educators' work and personal lives compete for limited amounts of time and energy (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), making them vulnerable to problems regarding WPLI. It is therefore necessary to investigate how educators experience their WPLI. Furthermore, it is necessary to determine the domains in

educators' lives that are in interaction with one another, the possible antecedents and consequences of this interaction and also the strategies that educators use to deal with WPLI issues.

Work-Personal Life Interaction

Work and personal life (i.e., family, home, non-work) issues have received a lot of research attention over the past two decades. In most studies work and personal life is conceived as two conflicting domains. From this perspective, work-family conflict can be defined as a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and personal life domains are mutually incompatible, such that participation in one role makes it difficult to participate in the other (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This definition implies a bidirectional dimension in which work can interfere with personal life (work-personal life interference) and personal life can interfere with work (personal life-work interference) (Peeters et al., 2005). Consistent with this definition, three forms of work-personal life conflict have been identified in the literature. The first one is time-based conflict. This occurs when time devoted to one role makes it difficult to participate in another role. The second one is strain-based conflict that suggests that strain experienced in one role intrudes into and interferes with participation in another role. The last one, behaviour-based conflict, occurs when specific behaviours required in one role are incompatible with behavioural expectations in another role (Carnicer et al., 2004).

Consequently, a large body of research deals with the possible causes and consequences of conflict (also referred to as interference or negative spill over) between work and personal life, whereas only few studies address factors that may promote positive interaction (also referred to as facilitation or positive spill over) between both domains (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004).

The first efforts to address these levels of work-personal life conflict emphasised balance; individuals must strive for work-personal life balance. To realise balance, individual coping efforts play a role along with organisational efforts to support this balance. However, there were difficulties with the notion of balance (Burke, 2004). Also balance proved to be difficult to achieve. According to Frone (2003), there is no explicit definition of the phrase work-personal life balance or an explanation of what it means for work and personal life to be “in

balance". In addition, achieving balance implies taking away from one domain and adding it to another domain. It also suggests a 50/50 investment and further suggests a similar solution for everyone. Another problem with the word "balance" is that it suggests that work is not a part of an individual's life but something separate. The balance notion also leads to a quick-fix solution to work-personal life conflict (Lewis & Cooper, 2005).

A more useful statement to the problem emphasises, work-personal life in terms of integration (Burke, 2004). This suggests that individuals aspire to integrate their work and personal lives (e.g., home, family, spouses, children, therefore all aspects of their experience) in a more satisfying way. Work-personal life interaction can therefore be defined as an interactive process in which a worker's functioning in one domain (e.g., personal life) is influenced by (negative or positive) load effects that have built up in the other domain (e.g., work) (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004). Individuals will also vary in the nature of this integration and individuals may have different integrations at different life and career stages (Burke, 2004).

METHOD

Research design

A qualitative design from a phenomenological approach was used. The objective of this research design was to analyse educators' experience of the interaction between their work and personal lives. In this approach, the researcher was interested in the meaning educators attributed to their experiences of reality, their world and their relationships. The educator's cognitive experience had to be understood and defined because it was only through that, that the true essence of the educator's experience could be realised (Rothmann, Gerber, Lubbe, Sieberhagen, & Rothmann, 1998).

Participants and procedure

The population consisted of a non-probability purposive voluntary sample of secondary school educators in the Potchefstroom and Promosa area ($N = 11$). It is clear from Woods and Catanzaro (1988) that small samples can deliver reliable research data and is therefore acceptable for phenomenology studies. The headmasters of each school acted as mediators. They were provided with information about the research project, as well as with the selection

criteria for the identification of possible participants. Criteria for inclusion were educators who 1) were working in the selected schools in the Potchefstroom and Promosa area; 2) were Afrikaans-speaking; 3) had at least two years' working experience; 4) were willing to participate in the research and prepared to have a tape-recorded interview with the researcher. The criteria for inclusion represented an attempt to control homogeneity. However, no effort was made to control gender, age, race, qualification, marital status, parental status and teaching experience. The possible participants were contacted and interviews were scheduled with them. Of these participants, 11 were interviewed. Data reached saturation (Woods & Catanzaro, 1988) after the 10th interview. One more interview was conducted to ensure saturation of the data. Descriptive information of the sample is given in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Participants

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	4	36,4
	Female	7	63,6
Age	30 – 39 years	4	36,4
	40 – 49 years	4	36,4
	50 – 69 years	3	27,3
Race	White	7	63,6
	Coloured	4	36,4
Qualification	University degree	2	18,2
	Postgraduate degree	6	54,5
	Other	3	27,3
Marital Status	Married	10	90,9
	Not Married	1	9,1
Parental Status	No Children	1	9,1
	One Child	1	9,1
	Two Children	7	63,6
	Tree Children	2	18,2
Teaching Experience	2 – 9 years	1	9,1
	10 – 19 years	5	45,5
	20 – 29 years	3	27,3
	30 – 39 years	2	18,2

As can be seen in Table 1, the participants were predominantly female (63,6%) and white (63,6%). Most of the participants were between the ages of 30 – 39 years (36,4%) and 40 – 49 years (36,4%). Regarding marital status, 90,0% of the participants were married, and most of the participants had two children (63,6%). Nearly half of the participants (45,5%) had been teaching for 10 – 19 years. Six of the participants were qualified with a postgraduate degree. Four of the participants were from the Potchefstroom area and seven from the Promosa area.

Data Collection

A semi-structured interview, based on the phenomenological paradigm was used in this research. The researcher studied the phenomenon without predetermined expectations of categories and tried to understand the data from the perspective of the participant. The interview was held in a relaxed environment where attention was given to the climate and atmosphere of the room. In order to ensure that the interview was not interrupted, a 'do not disturb' sign was put outside the door. Ensuring that the participant was at ease, the researcher introduced herself in a friendly and warm manner and explained the context of the interview. The interview was tape-recorded with the permission of the participant and it was also emphasised that the identity of the participant would remain anonymous and that the participant could withdraw from the study at any time.

The interview was informal and non-directive, with the central question: "You have a work life and a personal life. Can you please tell me how you experience the interaction between your work, and all facets of your personal life?". The researcher asked the introductory question and made sure that the participants understood the question. In order for the participants to explain their experience in detailed the researcher also asked two follow up questions: "What are the causes and consequences of the interaction between your work and personal life?" and "What strategies do you use to deal with the interaction between your work and personal life?".

A pilot study of three Afrikaans-speaking secondary school educators from Potchefstroom was carried out to improve the success and effectiveness of the investigation (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, Poggenpoel, & Schurink, 1998). The pilot study assisted the researcher in making the necessary modifications of the data-gathering instrument. The interview schedule was evaluated by an expert for appropriateness, before the main investigation proceeded. The pilot study also ensured that the researcher was able to use non-directive dialogue techniques. The researcher faced the participant squarely in a relaxed way, had an open body posture and leaned slightly forward to ensure that the participant was comfortable during the whole interview. The researcher also kept eye contact with the participant at all times. Non-directive dialogue techniques like minimal verbal responses (e.g., "mm-mm, yes, I see"), paraphrasing (stating the participant's words in another form with the same meaning), clarification (e.g., "Can you tell me more about..." "You seem to be saying..."), reflection (e.g., "So, you

believe that...”), reflective summary (e.g., “So what you’re saying...”) and silence were used to assist the participants to share their experiences. Social-desirable responses were also minimised by making use of these dialogue techniques. Rephrasing and repetition of questions were used in order to gain credibility of information. The researcher strived to promote the validity by spending enough time with the participant in order to establish a report.

After the interview, the participant was asked to complete a short biographical questionnaire that included gender, age, race, qualification, marital and parental status, as well as years of experience. Immediately after each interview, the field notes regarding that interview were written down. The field notes included both the empirical observation and interpretations. The researcher wrote down her emotions, preconceptions, expectations and prejudices so that they could be developed in the final product.

Trustworthiness

Guba's model for qualitative research (Guba, 1981; Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was applied in order to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. Attention was given to the principles of credibility (checking the truth value of the findings), by means of field notes, triangulation, peer examination and independent coding; transferability (ensuring applicability of the findings), through comparison of sufficient descriptive data, as well as dense description of the data; dependability (ensuring consistency of the findings), by means of an audit, keeping of the raw material, giving a full description of the research method, applying the same procedure throughout, triangulation, peer examination and the code-recode procedure; conformability (which was accomplished by using the criterion of neutrality or freedom from bias), by keeping an appropriate distance in order not to influence the research, as well as triangulation and the code-recode procedure.

Ethical aspects

Conducting research is an ethical enterprise. Research ethics provide researchers with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct research in a morally acceptable way. The following was applied at all times to retain an ethical climate (Struwig & Stead, 2001): The researcher was honest, fair and respectful towards the participants and did not attempt to mislead or

deceive the research participants. The researcher respected the rights and dignity of others. This included respecting the privacy, confidentiality and autonomy of the research participants. The researcher was also mindful to cultural and individual differences among people, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language and socio-economic status. The researcher therefore did not knowingly discriminate against people based on such factors. The welfare of others was a major concern. The researcher avoided or minimised any harm befalling the research participant because of interaction with them.

Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and then coded by the researcher by means of content analysis. Content analysis consists of various steps (Giorgi, 1985; Kerlinger, 1986). Firstly, the content that was needed to be analysed was universalised, defined and categorised. Secondly, the sub-units namely words and themes of the analysis were determined. The researcher read the responded notes in order to form an overall picture. Afterwards, the researcher once again read it in order to determine the themes. The words that were used by the participant were the smallest analysis that was made. A sub-theme is usually a sentence and is more difficult but also more useful to analyse. Sub-themes were combined in order to determine the themes. The analysis of the information was continued until repeated themes were identified. Thirdly, the data was cleared from unnecessary information and the meaning of the rest of the sub-units was determined by linking it to the whole picture. Lastly, the concrete language of the participants was converted into scientific language and concepts. The precise words of the participants were used in support, based on gained insights, integration and synthesis.

The number of objects per category was counted and placed in order of preference. The trustworthiness of the content analysis was promoted by the coding that was done by the researcher and a co-coder. A literature-control was done to investigate relevant research in order to determine the comparativeness and uniqueness of the current research (Krefting, 1991).

RESULTS

The results obtained are shown in Table 2. Five main themes were identified in the interviews. Each main theme had sub-themes supporting the main themes. Table 2 shows the themes with sub-themes and the total male and female participants supporting each sub-theme. The total frequency of responses of the themes and sub-themes are shown in the last column.

Table 2

The Experience of Work-Personal Life Interaction of Afrikaans-speaking Educators

Theme and sub-themes		Male N = 4	Female N = 7	Total N = 11
Theme 1	A demanding work environment			9,3
	a) Heavy workload	2	7	9
	b) Lack of resources	4	6	10
	c) Difficult educational circumstances	3	6	9
Theme 2	A demanding personal life			4,3
	a) Family life	0	3	3
	b) Hobbies and friends	2	3	5
	c) Religion	2	3	5
Theme 3	Time-based conflict between work and personal life			4,5
	a) Family life	0	6	6
	b) Holidays and weekends	2	3	5
	c) Teaching consumes your whole life	2	2	4
	d) Personal time	0	3	3
Theme 4	Strain-based conflict between work and personal life			5,2
	a) Feelings of dejection	1	2	3
	b) Feelings of frustration	4	4	8
	c) Feelings of anger	2	2	4
	d) Stress	3	4	7
	e) Feelings of fatigue	1	3	4
Theme 5	Facilitating factors of work-personal life interaction			5,6
	a) Support and understanding from important others	3	5	8
	b) Work satisfaction	3	5	8
	c) Acceptance of teaching environment	2	4	6
	d) Teaching is a calling	1	4	5
	e) Experience	2	2	4
	f) Planning	0	4	4
	g) Keeping work and personal life apart	2	2	4

The five main themes as obtained from the study made it clear that educators experienced various aspects in their work and personal lives as demanding. The demanding work environment of educators led them to experience time and strain-based conflict between their work and personal lives and the last theme suggested that educator possessed various factors

that facilitated their WPLI. The main themes with supporting sub-themes are discussed in detail below.

Theme 1: A demanding work environment

Educators' work is considered extremely demanding. As a result, educators seem to experience a negative influence from their work on their personal lives. Consistent with this reasoning Geurts and Dikkers (2002) found that among job characteristics, particularly demanding aspects of the job seem to be responsible for negative influences of work on personal life. It appears from the interviews that most participants indicated a heavy workload, a lack of resources and difficult educational circumstances as demanding aspects in educators' work environment.

Among job demands, work overload is consistently found to be the most robust antecedent of interference from the work situation on one's personal life (Geurts & Dikkers, 2002; Geurts, Rutte, & Peeters, 1999). Jackson and Rotmann (2006) found that educators are exposed to high workloads, with a resultant increase in stress and strain. These findings are consistent with the results indicated by the educators. Most educators described preparation, compiling exam papers, marking tests and assignments, extramural activities like musicals, meetings, and parent meetings all as contributing to a heavy workload. Some of the responses in this regard, were:

"...but there are some nights that you work until 2, 3, 4 o'clock in the morning to complete your exam paper in time and to hand it in before the deadline".

"You have preparations to do for daily classes, preparations that you have to do for tests and assignments that you don't always have time for at school. A person's off periods and time at school is little, and then there are also the exams that lie ahead and then also comes your marking of all the work you have prepared, that needs to be marked. So there is, there is work that needs to be done at home in education".

"Because you are at the school, after hours, you educate until 2 o'clock. Then your extramural activities start. Usually we have sport coaching from 3 to 5 o'clock. You have your meetings in the evenings and at home, you know, in between you work".

The perceptions of the respondents also indicated that all these demands required additional time from educators' lives that was not part of school hours. As a result, the educators' work and personal life roles competed for time. Time that was devoted to the work life role could not be devoted to educators' personal lives. Demerouti, Geurts, and Kompier (2004) support this by saying that the amount of time occupied by the job counts among the most noticeable ways that occupational life affects family life.

In addition to the heavy workload that educators experienced, most of the participants stated that they worked with an unorganised new curriculum, a lack of communication and planning from the department and a lack of material aids and guidelines to accomplish work successfully. Apart from this, they had a large amount of administration; they received low salaries, and received no acknowledgement for the work done. This all indicated that educators experienced a lack of resources. According to Jackson and Rothmann (2006) demanding aspects of educators' lives that can lead to stress include: control (i.e., lack of influence in the way work is organised and preformed), resources and communication (i.e., having the appropriate training, equipment and resources), pay and benefits (i.e., the financial rewards that work brings), and aspects of the job (i.e., sources of stress related to the fundamental nature of the job self). Consistent with these findings, participants stated:

"Actually it is other people that don't do good planning. And I actually want to say that it is, e, the whole thing in the Education is about the lack of planning, poor administration, no or little communication".

"If I take my family that is in the private sector, what they do and what they receive, e, e, it is ridiculous what I studied and what I receive. A person must look at the financial aspect as well".

"Because there is not enough. And what is funny for me; according to the RPNF they emphasise resources, resources but they do not supply resources".

"A person is a stupid thing; you want recognition even as educator. You do not want a star in your mark-book but you just want somebody to see that you have done something right with the children. But it just never happens".

Apart from the heavy workload and lack of resources that educators experienced as demanding aspects of the work it also appeared from the interviews that educators also experienced difficult educational circumstances. This was corroborated by the following quotations: “...trying to adjust the poor educational climate and this is very difficult, I mean, to teach a child not to break a toilet out of frustration...”; “I think the school is starting to take over the role of the parental home” and “I am sitting with a bigger class but the problem is then that the floor is not covered, there is no tiles on the floor, it is a cement floor, it is cold there. There is also no electricity, so we cannot use overhead projectors”.

These quotations suggested a difficulty in handling of undisciplined children, educating children on levels other than academic, no parental involvement and unsatisfying classrooms with a growing number of children per class. All these aspects contributed to demanding aspects of educators' work causing interference with their personal lives.

Besides these demanding aspects of the educators' work lives, they also experienced various aspects in their personal lives as demanding. Research, however, consistently shows that work demands interfere more often with personal life than personal life interferes with work life (Van Hooff et al., 2005).

Theme 2: A demanding personal life

Similar to the job situation of educators' work, they also experienced personal life demands. According to research findings, work characteristics are mainly antecedents of negative influence from work, and home characteristics are the major antecedents of negative influence from the home domain (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004). However, it appears from the interviews that educators experienced no negative interaction between their family lives and work lives but only experienced certain aspects as demanding. This can be that the impact of family life on working life is more often evaluated positively than negatively (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

The personal life demands designated by some of the educators were, family life (spouse and children): “... look we are a very close family and my husband and children depends a lot on me. I can't even turn my back, as I take it, then they want to know, you know...”; time spent on hobbies and friends: “...and then first I have done woodwork as a hobby, cabinets... in the

afternoons, evenings, weekends and holidays. And this was a nice hobby to do”; “In the week and weekends I am socialising with my friends”; and religion: “I am very involved in my church”; “Everything in our life happens under the umbrella of church because everything works from there, children included”.

Theme 3: Time-based conflict between work and personal life

Work and personal life demands required educators to integrate both work and personal life responsibilities. Consequently, the time devoted to work obligations made it physically impossible to meet the obligations in the personal life domain (e.g., when work activities interfered with participation in family activities), creating time-based conflict between educators' work and personal lives (Van Hooff et al., 2005).

According to Geenhaus and Beutell (1985), time-based conflict occurs when work demands produce pressures to participate extensively in the work role making time pressures incompatible with the demands of the other domain's roles. These multiple roles in educators' work lives competed with educators' time. Time spent on activities within their work role (e.g., heavy workload, lack of resources, difficult educational circumstances) generally could not be devoted to activities within their personal life role.

Consistent with this reasoning, educators experienced that their demanding work life caused them to have no time to spend with their families, spouses, children or themselves (personal time). The participants stated it as follow: *“...and then also your workload. This influences you a lot. Because if your workload is too much then you don't have time for your family”; “I don't really have time for myself, that is about it,...it is sometimes frustrating that you can't do things for yourself or you don't have time for yourself because of this things”.*

It should be noted that no males reported time-based conflict with their family lives. This corresponds with the results that particularly women with (young) children experience more negative interaction between ‘work’ and ‘personal life’ compared to women without children as well as compared to men (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004).

Similar to the above results, educators also mentioned that work demands (e.g., attendance to workshops during holidays, sports on weekends and preparations or marking of tests)

produced pressures to participate extensively in the work role making time pressures incompatible with the demands of their personal lives (e.g., spending quality time with family). Some of the responses in this regard, were: *"I feel the holidays that we receive, because we don't receive leave as any other companies, we don't have those leave days that we are entitled to, we have the school holiday with the children. That is also taken from us because we have to attend workshops and stuff in holidays and so forth and this is for me a time when you can release all stress. But this time is also taken from us"*.

The perception of the last respondent also indicated that educators experienced no periods of rest from work during holidays because of school obligations. Sonnentag (2001) indicates that vacations and other breaks bring some relief from negative experiences at work. These are periods of rest from work that is of particular importance for maintaining well-being at work. Therefore, educators may need additional opportunities for recovery because recovery is necessary to prevent an ongoing deterioration in mood and performance in the long run.

Another theme that emerged from the data was that teaching consumed educators' lives. Educators stated that: *"A person's whole life actually becomes education"*; *"...the work then my family and then the church. Not reversed or different"*. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) substantiate the basic assumption that the centrality of a particular domain in one's life may increase the amount of time and effort devoted to that domain, as well as mental preoccupation when the demands in that domain are not fulfilled. This possibly creates difficulty to devote time to and become engaged in activities that are required in that other domain (Frone, 2002). Supporting this, educators also mentioned that time devoted to work live made it difficult to devote time to their families and to church. As a result educators placed family second and church third in life.

In conclusion, it can be stated that time-based conflict in educators' lives develops when the time devoted to work obligations makes it physically impossible to meet obligations in the personal life domain (e.g., when time spend doing work-related activities interferes with participation in family activities). Apart from the time-based conflict that educators experienced, it was also found that educators' experienced strain-based conflict when strain developed at work was transferred to the personal life domain (e.g., when people had difficulty relaxing at home after a stressful workday) (Carnicer et al., 2004; Van Hooff et al., 2005).

Theme 4: Strain-based conflict between work and personal life

There is considerable evidence that work stressors can produce strain symptoms such as tension, anxiety, fatigue, depression apathy and irritability. Strain-based conflict occurs when strain in one role affects one's performance in another role. The roles are incompatible in the sense that the strain created by one makes it difficult to comply with the demands of another (Geenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

One of the most frequently found strains reported in literature that was also experienced by the educators were physical consequences of fatigue (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004), psychological consequences including: work-related stress and to a lesser extent general psychological strain (Geurts & Dijkers, 2002) and anger (Bruke, 1998) all reporting a negative interaction between work and personal life. Consistent with these findings educators experienced strains (e.g., dejection, frustration, anger, stress, and fatigue) created by the participation in the work domain (role) that made it difficult for them to comply with the demands from their personal life domain (another role) (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

The most frequently mentioned strain by participants was feelings of frustration because of undisciplined children and feelings of not succeeding. Participants stated: *"...and then of course your children that you work with. They are not angels. And there one also has a lot of frustration"*; *" and you see, that frustrates a person sometimes and quite a lot because em, a person thinks you succeed, but because they don't want to learn, you don't succeed"*.

Apart from the feelings of frustration educators also mentioned feelings of dejectedness caused by undisciplined children. The following responses were made in this regard: *"A persons' hands are chopped off in a lot of ways"*; *"If you get home you feel so dejected, then you try to put something together and think about plans, about how you are going to work around this child's social circumstances to help the child to work in class"*.

Literature indicates that the third strain that educators experience, stress, plays a significant role in the resignation and absenteeism of educators (Jackson & Rothmann, 2006). Furthermore, it was found by Boyle, Borg, Fazon, and Baglioni (1995) that at least one third of educators could be seen as suffering from stress because of high workloads.

Educators stated that demanding aspects in their work environment caused stress and tension. These aspects included lack of communication: “...and all these stuff, we know all this stuff, a lack of communication, it leads to tension”, stress for not completing their work: “what can be stressful, ...then comes the stress for not completing with your work” and the children: “try putting one guy with 30 impossible children for one Friday afternoon in a class. It is something to die off. It is stressful”.

The perception of the educators was also that the stress and tension caused by their demanding work environment affected their participation in their personal lives. Some of the responses in this regard were: “In the past I went home with this stress and then normally when you get home, and then you are so itchy, that you actually take it out on your family. My children are yelled at”.

In the same way that stress affected educators’ personal life, educators also reported that anger directly affected their participation in their personal lives. This feeling of anger was prominent in the response: “You get angry and then you stay angry and then you fight with someone at home that does not deserve it”.

The last strain-based conflict that educators experienced was feelings of frustration. According to Demerouti, Geurts, and Kompier (2004), inadequate recovery from demanding aspects of the work and the home situation may lead to feelings of fatigue or psychosomatic health complaints. It was found in the interviews that the strain (fatigue) educators experienced in their demanding work environment (especially workload) intruded into and interfered with participation in their personal lives (Carnicer et al., 2004). A participant stated: “...and then also your workload. This influences you a lot. Because if your workload is too much then you don’t have time for your family because when you get home you are tired because you had too much work to do and to complete in one day”.

The participants showed no behavioural consequences regarding their WPLI like an increase in consumption of stimulants like coffee, cigarettes and alcohol.

Theme 5: Facilitating factors of work-personal life interaction

We have seen that educators experienced a demanding work environment and educators experience time and strain-based conflicts. In this theme educators experienced certain aspects that facilitated their interaction between their demanding work environment and personal lives.

The first aspect that was found to facilitate educators' interaction between their work and personal lives was support and understanding from the work (e.g., headmaster and colleagues) and personal life (e.g., spouses). Similar to the findings of Grzywacz and Marks (2000) respondents indicated that their social support at the workplace and support from their spouses seemed to contribute to positive interaction between both domains. This support and understanding was prominent in some of the responses like: *"If they decide that one of them wants to study further, then his colleagues help him, you know, they go out of their ways, to help him"*; *"When an educator is married to an educator it makes the house circumstances a lot better. They know the same daily routine, programme and a person understands each other's circumstances better"*.

As indicated by the interviews the support educators experienced from their spouses was from spouses in the same field of work (education). The perception was that spouses understood the educational circumstances and gave advice or assisted with the workload. Consistent with this reasoning it was found that social support was also viewed as a significant resource that could promote effective coping and enhance employee well-being in the face of work-personal life stress (Repetti, 1989; Weiss, 1990). Consequently, this support from work and family could reduce demanding aspects of a job and simultaneously increase their willingness to do so (Demerouti, Geurts, Bakker, & Euwema, 2004).

Apart from the support and understanding educators experienced, the interviews also indicated that educators' work satisfaction facilitated WPLI. One of the participants indicated: *"I enjoy it incredibly, I am mad about education and I like to educate and I like children"*. This suggested that educators experienced work satisfaction because of their fondness of education, teaching and working with children. As a result educators' work satisfaction seemed to facilitate the interaction between their work (demanding work environment) and their personal lives. This is, however, in contrast with the findings of Geurts and Dikkers

(2002) who found that among the attitudinal consequences, job satisfaction is most frequently related to work-family conflict.

Contributing to the aspect of work satisfaction also was educators' experience of teaching as a calling: *"Teaching is not an occupation it is a calling"*. Because educators perceived teaching as a calling they also stated that their salaries were of no importance but of importance was the intrinsic motivation from the children (feelings of helping them succeed). The following quotations related to this: *"The salary is not much but it is not what teaching is about"*; *"The only place that you get something back is from the children"*; *"The nice thing about it all is that when one of them finished studying or if they go studying and they come and show you that they are accepted..., but I just want to tell you, thank you for always being with me. That is for me in itself the acknowledgement as educator"*.

As a result of the work satisfaction and the experience of teaching as a calling, educators stated that they got used to the teaching environment and accepted the educational circumstances. The participants stated: *"A person get used to the situation here. At this stage it doesn't bother you anymore"*; *"It is almost part of our job description, you take it as it comes, basically"*.

Consistent with the reasoning of support and understanding as facilitating aspects of educators' WPLI, the educators also indicated that experience and planning helped them to cope with demanding aspects of their work. Educators' experience allowed them to collect material aids and gain knowledge and learning experience in their subjects to help cope with the demanding aspects of their work environment. Participants made the following remarks: *"Because of longer experience, we laugh at others that we see cannot handle it"*; *"I have a whole bank of tests and exam papers that a person builds up through the years, which you use and then change a little"*.

Apart from work experience, educators perceived planning to be an essential part of facilitating work and personal life. The following quotations confirmed this: *"A person must do good planning. This is how you cope in your house and your personal life and with all your children and with all your schoolwork handle everything, you do good planning"*; *"So, you plan your stuff to fit in with your personal life and your personal life to fit in with your work life"*.

Another essential aspect that formed part of educators' planning was that some educators tried to keep work and personal life apart: *"If a thing happens here no matter what it is, I don't take it home. Certain things that happen here (school) have nothing to do with my family"*. According to Montgomery, Panagopoulou, Peeters, and Schaufeli (2005), these educators follow a segregation-style of interaction since they arrange their lives in such a way that home and work are two distinct domains. From the interviews it could be seen that educators perceived this segregation-style as helping to facilitate interaction between their work and personal lives.

In conclusion, it seemed that educators experienced demanding work and personal lives. When their demanding work and personal lives are in interaction with each other, they experienced time and strain-based conflict. They, however, also experienced facilitating aspects helping them to cope with their WPLI.

DISCUSSION

The general objective of this research was to examine how Afrikaans-speaking educators experienced WPLI. To attain the general objective, more specific objectives were developed, namely 1) to determine what the domains in Afrikaans-speaking educators' lives were that could interact with one another; 2) to determine what the main antecedents and consequences of WPLI for Afrikaans-speaking educators were; and 3) to investigate which strategies Afrikaans-speaking educators used to deal with WPLI issues.

To answer the first objective of this study it is essential to look more closely at the demands in educators' work environment and personal lives. It was clear that educators experienced their workload, the lack of resources and the educational circumstances as demanding aspects in their work environment. Accordingly, the dimensions of educators' work environment could be identified. The first noticeable dimension in educators' work lives that could be deduced from educators' experience of heavy workload was extramural activities (e.g., sport, meetings, parental meetings, musicals). The second dimension that educators experienced was the educational department as could be seen from the comments about the lack of resources (e.g., unorganised new curriculum, a lack of communication and planning from the department, a lack of material aids, large amount of administration, low salaries, and no

acknowledgements). Children were the third dimension in the difficult educational circumstances. Because educators experienced no parental involvement as a demanding aspect, the parents could also be seen as a dimension in educators' work lives. The last dimension could be inferred from one of the facilitating aspects that educators experienced namely support and understanding from important others (headmaster and colleagues). Therefore educators' support system could also be seen as a dimension. Therefore, the following were identified as dimensions in educators' work lives; extramural activities (including sports, meetings and other activities), the department of education, the children, the parents, and their support system. All these dimensions in educators' work lives interacted with educators' personal lives.

Although the personal lives of educators were not as clearly explained, there were however definite aspects that educators perceived as demanding. The family life of the educator could not simply be considered as leisure or spare time, because this also involved (similar to the work domain) obligations and responsibilities (e.g., household activities, care-giving responsibilities and their church or religious responsibilities). The only leisure or spare time activity that formed part of the educators' personal lives was their hobbies and friends. It could therefore be concluded that the dimensions in educators' personal lives consisted of family life, more specifically their spouses and children, their religion and their hobbies and friends.

Therefore, educators had both dimensions in their work and personal life that could be perceived as demanding. These dimensions suggested that educators had multiple obligations and responsibilities both in their work and in their personal life domains. To combine these responsibilities, an educator's work and the personal life domain could no longer be seen as separated domains, but as highly interrelated (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Therefore the interaction between educators' work and personal lives could be described as the process whereby the functioning (and behaviour) in their personal life domain was influenced by demands from their work domain (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

Next, the various possible antecedents of interaction between educators' work and personal lives could be classified into work-related factors, personal life-related factors, and attitudes. Among the work-related factors, particularly demanding aspects of the job seemed to be responsible for negative interaction between educators' work and personal lives. One of these

antecedents was in particular the high workload that the educators experienced. According to Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997), among job demands, work overload is consistently found to be the most robust antecedent of interference from the work situation. The second antecedent that was identified was the amount of time required by educators' work. The amount of time required by the work has frequently been studied as an antecedent of negative work-family conflict and obviously particularly of time-based conflict between the two domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Consistent with this reasoning, educators experienced time-based conflict because of their time being occupied by doing work-related activities that directly affected their personal life.

In contrast with the previous mentioned antecedents, the last antecedent was found to have a more positive effect on educators' WPLI. Social support and understanding that educators received from the headmaster and colleagues was found to have a more positive effect on educators' WPLI. This finding was in accordance with the findings of Grzywacz and Marks (2000), indicating that higher levels of social support at the workplace seems to contribute to higher levels of positive interaction between both domains. Similar, social support at the workplace is negatively associated with work-family conflict or negative work-family spill over.

Regarding personal life-related factors, social support and understanding was, similar to work-related factors, also found to be a major antecedent. Spouses' support and understanding was found to have a facilitating effect on educators' WPLI. Among motivational aspects in the family situation, spouse support is most frequently studied. The empirical findings quite consistently support the beneficial effect of spouse support in enabling individuals to combine work and personal life demands (Parasuraman, Purohit, Godschalk, & Beutell, 1996).

With respect to personal attitudes, educators placed their work central and as a result, educators' whole lives became teaching. There is some support for this assumption that high involvement in one domain (e.g., work life) is associated with conflict originating from that domain (i.e., work life to personal life), due to (too) much time and effort devoted to the most central domain (Frone et al., 1997). The centrality of educators' work lives increased the amount of time and effort devoted to that domain, as well as mental preoccupation when the demands in that domain were not fulfilled (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This caused that

educators found it difficult to devote time to and become engaged in activities that were required in their personal life domain. Frone et al. (1997), showed a positive relationship of work time commitment (i.e., the amount of time devoted to the work domain) with work-family interaction. Therefore, the possible antecedents of educators work-personal life could be seen as high workload, time required by educators' work, social support and understanding from the headmaster and colleagues (work-related factor) but also social support and understanding from spouses (personal life-related factor), and the centrality of educators' work lives (attitudes).

The list of the possible consequences related to various dimensions of the WPLI is increasing. Partly, these consequences, particularly of “conflict” between the two domains, parallel the outcomes of comparable experiences, such as “stress”. However, the consequences of WPLI go beyond stress-related and organisational outcomes and also to a great extent spread to one’s personal life (Geurts & Dijkers, 2002). The consequences of educators’ interaction between their work and personal life were found to be the effects of time and strain-based conflict.

Time required by educators' work lives caused educators to have no time to spend on family activities or time for themselves (personal time). Because of this amount of time occupied by educators’ work, the work lives of educators’ affected their family lives in one of the most obvious ways that occupational life affects family life (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004).

Educators' demanding work environment consequently created pressures in the educators' personal lives. These pressures were the time pressures experienced from the work domain. The educator’s fulfilment of the role of educator made it physically impossible to meet the demands from the personal life domain. This also resulted in the educators experiencing a preoccupation with their role as educators even when they were physically attempting to meet the demands of their personal life roles (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). This could also be seen when the role of educator required educators to spend time on school activities during the holidays and weekends therefore making it impossible to meet the demands of their personal lives (family time and personal time). Another consequence of the time-based effect was that educators' demanding work environment influenced their life in such a way that their whole

lives revolved around education. Therefore it could be seen that a definite consequence of educators' WPLI was that they had no time for personal life activities.

The consequences related to the strain-based conflict between educators' work and personal lives referred more to the strain (e.g., frustration, stress, anger, fatigue) created by the participation in one domain (role) that made it difficult to comply with the demands from the other domain (another role) (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). The educators' demanding work environment created strain, making it difficult for the educators to comply with demands from their personal life domains. These strains built up during their working hours, spilled over to their personal life domains, and drained their energy resources for personal life activities. Some of the most frequently found strains reported in literature also experienced by the educators were, physical consequences of fatigue (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004; Geurts et al., 1999); psychological consequences including work-related stress and to a lesser extent general psychological strain (Geurts & Dijkers, 2002) and anger (Bruke, 1988). All these strains reported a negative interaction between work and personal life. Apart from these, educators also cited feelings of dejection and frustration as consequences of the interaction between their work and personal lives. The participants showed no behavioural consequences (e.g., increase in consumption of stimulants like coffee, cigarettes and alcohol) or organisational outcomes (e.g., turnover intentions) regarding their WPLI (Geurts & Dijkers, 2002).

The next specific objective of this study was to investigate which strategies Afrikaans-speaking educators used to deal with WPLI issues. Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) indicated that active attempts to change the structural and/or personal definition of one's roles were more effective in dealing with work-personal life conflict than more passive and reactive role behaviour. One of the active attempts of educators to lessen the conflict was by planning. Educators found planning as an essential part for their work and personal lives to be in harmony with each other. The other active attempt was that educators tried to keep their work and personal lives apart.

Apart from these two strategies, facilitating aspects were found that enabled educators to deal effectively with WPLI. These facilitating factors included support and understanding from others, work satisfaction, acceptance of teaching environment, experiencing teaching as a

calling and experience in the educational field. There were no organisational strategies indicated by the educators.

In conclusion, a model was developed to indicate how Afrikaans-speaking educators experienced WPLI. The figure below clearly indicates that educators experienced certain aspects as demanding in both their work environment and in their personal lives. As a result of educators' demanding work environment they experienced time and strain-based conflict between their work and personal lives. However, educators had various factors that facilitated their WPLI.

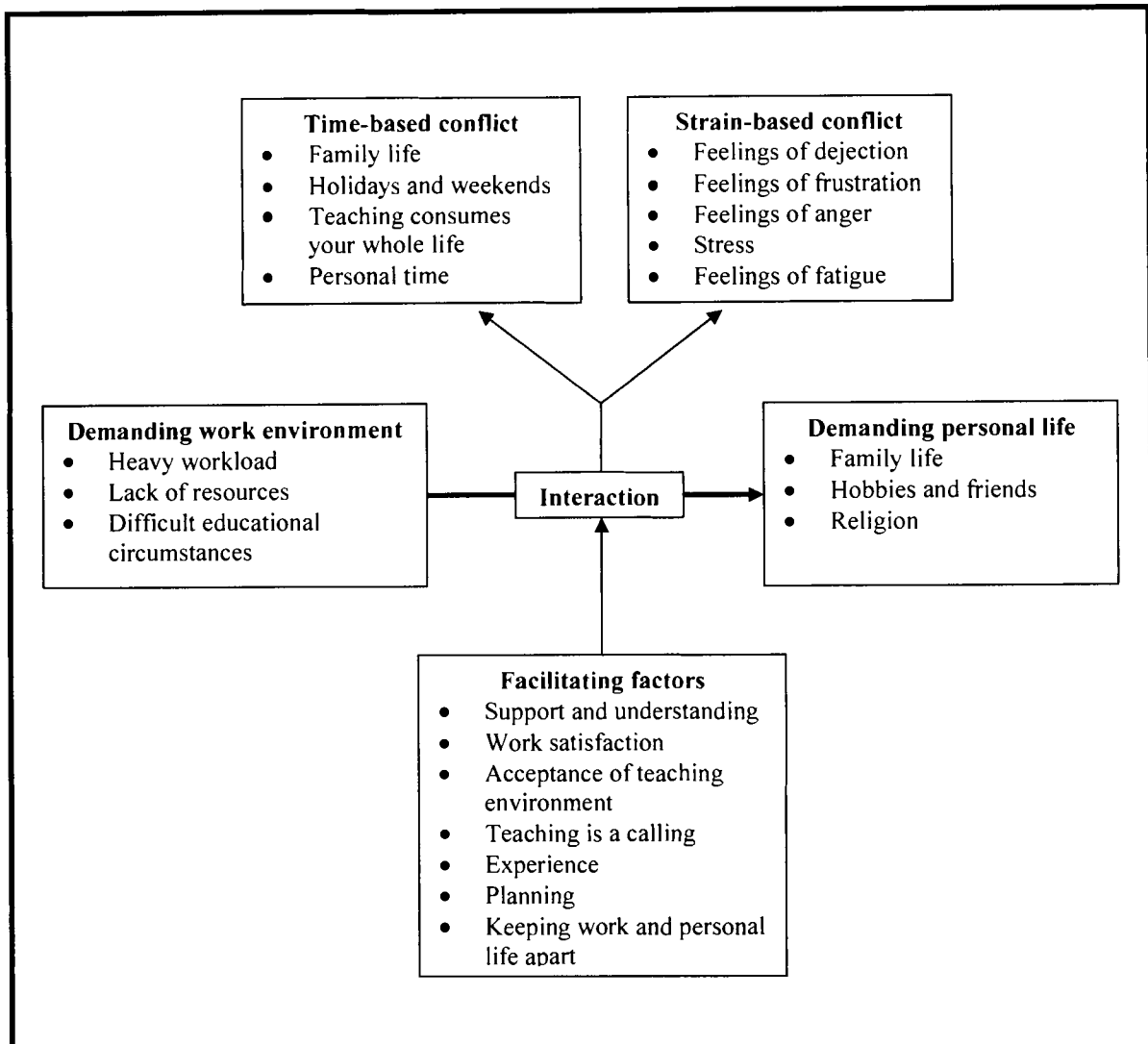


Figure 1. A model indicating the experience of educators' work-personal life interaction.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the research showed promising results, it is also important to note some limitations of this study. The first limitation was regarding the use of a qualitative research design, which made it difficult to obtain co-operation from participating educators because of their limited amount of time. Participants were also found to be uncomfortable with the tape-recorder and some participants did not trust the confidentiality statement completely. This all might have influenced the outcome of the results. Secondly, the use of a homogeneous sample namely, Afrikaans-speaking educators only from the district in the North West Educational Department made the study's ability to generalise to other contexts or professions limited. There were also conceptual limitations regarding the understanding of the words "interaction" and "personal life".

Despite these limitations, this study has important implications for organisations and for future research. It is recommended that the department of education, headmasters and educators are made aware of what it means for work and personal life to be integrated and be made aware of the consequences of leading an unbalanced life. Furthermore, it is recommended that work-oriented intervention (e.g., teaching educators to deal more effectively with experienced demands from their work and personal lives) and secondary-level interventions (e.g., time management, conflict resolution techniques, and coping strategies) be implemented to improve the relationship between educators and the workplace (school). It can also be recommended that organisations implement preventative organisation-based strategies to tackle high job demands and the lack of resources.

The most important recommendation for future research is that a quantitative study is done designing an assessment instrument using this qualitative information obtained in this study as base. It is recommended that this instrument focus on helping individuals to create healthy WPLI and also to identify the possible consequences of work and personal life that is not integrated in the South African context. Further, it is also recommended that future research must focus more on a longitudinal design. Information from partners, adolescents, children or supervisors must also be used as to gain new insights and perspectives to the relationship between work and personal life. Finally, future research must focus on all the cultural and language groups in South Africa. More professions must be made aware of what the meaning is that South Africans attach to WPLI. Apart from this, future research must be directed at cross-national comparative studies.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, conclusions regarding the results of the empirical study of the research article are given according to the general and specific objectives. The limitations of this research are discussed, followed by recommendations for the organisation and future research.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

The general objective of this study was to investigate how Afrikaans-speaking educators experienced work-personal life interaction (WPLI). The first objective of this study was to determine what the domains in Afrikaans-speaking educators' lives were that could interact with one another. In order to answer this objective it was essential to look more closely at the demands in educators' work environment and personal life. It was clear that educators experienced their workload, the lack of resources and the educational circumstances as demanding aspects in their work environment. Accordingly, the dimensions of educators' work environment could be identified. The first noticeable dimension in educators work life that could be deduced from educators' experience of heavy workload was extramural activities (e.g., sport, meetings, parent meetings, musicals). The second dimension was the department of education's lack of resources (e.g., unorganised new curriculum, a lack of communication and planning from the department, a lack of material aids, large amount of admin, low salaries, and no acknowledgements) that educators experienced. Children were identified as the third dimension in the difficult educational circumstances. Because educators experienced the lack of parent involvement as a demanding aspect, the parents could also be seen as a dimension in educators' work lives. The final dimension identified from one of the facilitating aspects by educators, was the lack of support and understanding from important others (headmaster and colleagues). Therefore, educators' support system could also be seen as a dimension. The following were therefore identified as dimensions in educators' work lives; extramural activities (including sport, meetings and other activities), the department of education, the children, the parents, and educators' support system. All these dimensions in educators' work lives interacted with their personal lives.

Although the personal lives of educators were not as clearly explained, there were however definite aspects that educators perceived as demanding. The family life of the educator could not simply be considered as leisure or spare time, because this also involved (similar to the work domain) obligations and responsibilities (e.g., household activities, care-giving responsibilities as well as their church or religious responsibilities). The only leisure or spare time activity that formed part of the educators' personal lives was their hobbies and friends. It could therefore be concluded that the dimensions in educators' personal lives consisted of family life, more specifically their spouses and children, their religion and their hobbies and friends.

Therefore, educators had both dimensions in their work and personal lives that could be perceived as demanding. These dimensions suggested that educators had multiple obligations and responsibilities both in their work and in their personal life domains. To combine these responsibilities, an educator's work and the personal life domain could no longer be seen as separated domains, but as highly interrelated (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Therefore, the interaction between educators' work and personal lives could be described as the process whereby the functioning (and behaviour) in their personal life domain was influenced by demands from their work domain (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

The second objective of this study was to determine the main antecedents and consequences of WPLI for Afrikaans-speaking educators. The various possible antecedents of educators' interaction between their work and personal life could be classified into work-related factors, personal life-related factors, and attitudes. Among the work-related factors, particularly demanding aspects of the job seemed to be responsible for negative interaction between educators' work and personal lives. One of these antecedents was in particular the high workload that the educators experienced. According to Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997), among job demands, work overload is consistently found to be the most robust antecedent of interference from the work situation. The second antecedent that was identified was the amount of time required by educators' work. The amount of time required by the work has frequently been studied as an antecedent of negative work-family conflict and obviously particularly of time-based conflict between the two domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Consistent with this reasoning, educators experienced time-based conflict because of their time being occupied by doing work-related activities that directly affected their personal lives.

In contrast with the previous mentioned antecedents, the last antecedent was found to have a more positive effect on educators' WPLI. Social support and understanding that educators received from the headmaster and colleagues was found to have a more positive effect on educators' WPLI. This finding was in accordance with the findings of Grzywacz and Marks (2000), indicating that higher levels of social support at the workplace seems to contribute to higher levels of positive interaction between both domains. Similar, social support at the workplace is negatively associated with work-family conflict or negative work-family spill over.

Regarding personal life-related factors, social support and understanding was, similar to work-related factors, also found to be a major antecedent. Spouses' support and understanding was found to have a facilitating effect on educators' WPLI. Among motivational aspects in the family situation, spouse support is most frequently studied. The empirical findings quite consistently support the beneficial effect of spouse support in enabling individuals to combine work and personal life demands (Parasuraman, Purohit, Godschalk, & Beutell, 1996).

With respect to personal attitudes, educators placed their work central and as a result, educators' whole lives became teaching. There is some support for this assumption that high involvement in one domain (e.g., work life) is associated with conflict originating from that domain (i.e., work life to personal life), due to (too) much time and effort devoted to the most central domain (Frone et al., 1997). The basic assumption is that the centrality of a particular domain in one's life may increase the amount of time and effort devoted to that domain, as well as mental preoccupation when the demands in that domain are not fulfilled (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This may make it difficult to devote time to and become engaged in activities that are required in the other domain. Frone et al. (1997), showed a positive relationship of work time commitment (i.e., the amount of time devoted to the work domain) with work-family interaction.

Therefore, the possible antecedents of educators work-personal life could be seen as high workload, time required by educators' work, social support and understanding from the headmaster and colleagues (work-related factor) but also social support and understanding

from spouses (personal life-related factor), and the centrality of educators' work lives (attitudes).

The consequences of WPLI for Afrikaans-speaking educators were found to be the effects of time and strain-based conflict. Time required by educators' work life caused educators to have no time to spend on family activities or time for themselves (personal time). Because of this amount of time occupied by educators' work, the work lives of educators' affected their family lives in one of the most obvious ways that occupational life affects family life (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004).

Educators' demanding work environment consequently created pressures in the educators' personal lives. These pressures were the time pressures experienced from the work domain. The educator's fulfilment of the role of educator made it physically impossible to meet the demands from the personal life domain. This also resulted in the educators experiencing a preoccupation with their role as educators even when they were physically attempting to meet the demands of their personal life roles (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). This could also be seen when the role of educator required educators to spend time on school activities during the holidays and weekends therefore making it impossible to meet the demands of their personal lives (family time and personal time). Another consequence of the time-based effect was that educators' demanding work environment influenced their lives in such a way that their lives revolved around education. Therefore, it could be seen that a definite consequence of educators' WPLI was that they had no time for personal life activities.

The consequences related to the strain-based conflict between educators' work and personal lives referred more to the strain (e.g., frustration, stress, anger, fatigue) created by the participation in one domain (role) that made it difficult to comply with the demands from the other domain (another role) (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). The educators' demanding work environment created strain, making it difficult for the educators to comply with demands from their personal life domains. These strains built up during their working hours, spilled over to their personal life domains, and drained their energy resources for personal life activities. Some of the most frequently found strains reported in literature also experienced by the educators were, physical consequences of fatigue (Demerouti et al., 2004; Geurts, Rutte, & Peeters, 1999); psychological consequences including work-related stress and to a lesser extent general psychological strain (Geurts & Dijkers, 2002) and anger (Burke, 1988). All

these strains reported a negative interaction between work and personal life. Apart from these, educators also cited feelings of dejection and frustration as consequences of the interaction between their work and personal lives. The participants showed no behavioural consequences (e.g., increase in consumption of stimulants like coffee, cigarettes and alcohol) or organisational outcomes (e.g., turnover intentions) regarding their WPLI (Geurts & Dijkers, 2002).

The next specific objective of this study was to investigate which strategies Afrikaans-speaking educators used to deal with WPLI issues. Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) indicated that active attempts to change the structural and/or personal definition of one's roles were more effective in dealing with work-personal life conflict than more passive and reactive role behaviour. One of the active attempts of educators to lessen the conflict was by planning. Educators found planning as an essential part of their work and personal lives to be in harmony with each other. The other active attempt was that educators tried to keep their work and personal lives apart.

Apart from these two strategies, facilitating aspects were found that enabled educators to deal effectively with WPLI. These facilitating factors included support and understanding from others, work satisfaction, acceptance of teaching environment, experiencing teaching as a calling and experience in the educational field. There were no organisational strategies indicated by the educators.

In conclusion, a model was developed to indicate how Afrikaans-speaking educators experienced WPLI. It was found that educators experienced certain aspects in both their work environment and in their personal lives as demanding. As a result of educators' demanding work environment they experienced time and strain-based conflict between their work and personal lives. However, educators had various factors that facilitated their WPLI.

3.2 LIMITATIONS

The first limitation of the study was regarding the use of a qualitative research design. Interviews are exceedingly time-consuming and educators had limited time and busy schedules, it was difficult to get hold of the educators to participate in the study. It was also difficult to obtain co-operation from the participating schools since they argued that they participate in research studies too often. The respondents were also found to be uncomfortable talking with a tape-recorder present. There is a possibility that some participants who participated in the research did not completely trust the confidentiality statement as was set out in the covering letter accompanying the research process and as indicated in the interviews by the researcher. All the afore-mentioned factors might have influenced the outcome of the results.

The second limitation was that the study was conducted in a homogeneous sample consisting of individuals of one profession and one language group, namely, Afrikaans-speaking educators. It should also be noted that the data was collected only from the district in the North West Educational Department and this could have influenced the participants' responses in that the educational situation could differ from those of other districts. This limits the study's ability to generalise the findings and to develop a comprehensive conceptual model that can be applicable to a variety of job settings and groups of workers. Since the study generally included educators who were married, the generalisation of findings to educators who are not married can also be questioned. The implication is that the results cannot be generalised to other contexts or professions.

The last limitation was regarding the use of the concept of work-personal life integration. Most participants found the concept of integration difficult to understand. It was also found that participants connected a different meaning to the word "personal life". This had the effect that the experience educators had regarding their interaction and their understanding of their personal life domain was not as clearly described by participants as intended.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite these limitations, the current study has important implications for organisations and future research.

3.3.1 Recommendations for the organisation

Striving to integrate work and personal life roles poses a great challenge for organisations. Work and personal life issues are viewed as affecting company competitiveness and are therefore not only a problem for employees but also for organisations (Hall & Mirvis, 1995). Schools suffer considerable losses due to illness and poor productivity of teachers. Absenteeism or the inability to perform consistently at a high level also affects a school (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002).

The positive side of WPLI was not that prevalent and therefore it must be noted that not only the Educational Department but also the headmasters of schools need to have a clear understanding of what it means for work and personal life to be integrated. There must also be an acute awareness of the possible consequences of leading an unbalanced life and of the effect that negative or positive spill over may have on educators' work as well as their home environment. Furthermore, it is recommended that a work-oriented intervention be implemented to improve the relationship between an individual and the workplace (school) (Jackson & Rothmann, 2006). These interventions must be aimed at teaching educators to deal more effectively with experienced demands from their work and personal lives. It can also be recommended that secondary-level interventions (e.g., time management, conflict resolution techniques, and coping strategies) be implemented to assist educators who are already showing signs of problematic WPLI. It can also be recommended that organisations implement preventative organisation-based strategies to tackle high job demands and the lack of resources. It was found that educators experienced an extremely demanding work environment including a lack of resources and that this had the effect of problematic interaction between their work and personal lives.

3.3.2 Recommendations for future research

In order to overcome the limitations in future research, certain recommendations can be made for future studies. The most important recommendation for future research is that a qualitative study, such as this one, can serve as the basis of a quantitative study. Often, themes that result from qualitative studies can be used effectively as hypotheses that researchers can test in a quantitative study (Newman & Benz, 1998). Translating these themes into measurable variables will be a promising next step for researchers to design

assessment instruments. Further, it is recommended that these instruments focus on helping individuals to create healthy WPLI and in identifying the possible consequences of work and personal life that are not integrated in the South African context.

The next recommendation that can be made is the use of longitudinal designs. Although longitudinal designs are important, Montgomery, Peeters, Schaufeli, and Den Ouden (2003) suggest that they be reserved for circumstances when their considerable research power can be used to maximum advantage instead of being wasted on exploratory investigations in new research domains. Demerouti et al. (2004) suggest that, although the relationship between work and personal life can be seen as a relatively new research domain, there is need for longitudinal studies within this research domain.

It is furthermore recommended that information from partners, adolescents, children or supervisors also be used to gain new insights and perspectives to the relationship between work and personal life. In addition, a new focus for research within the WPLI domain can be the examination of the relationship between dispositional or personality variables and work-personal life conflict. To date, only a few studies have considered dispositional influences and personality traits (Bruck & Allen, 2003).

The last recommendation concerns the need for investigation of various occupations and their job characteristics and family situations. Since working conditions are unique within different occupations – but still related to WPLI – the investigation of heterogeneous populations is important. Future research must also focus on all the cultural and language groups in South Africa. Also more professions have to understand what the meaning is that South Africans attach to WPLI. Apart from this, future research must also be directed at cross-national comparative studies.

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