

**THE WORK-HOME INTERACTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN
WORKING FEMALES**

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COMMENTS

The reader should keep the following in mind:

- 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 Campus, to use the APA style in all scientific documents as from January 1999.
- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article. The editorial style specified by the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (which agrees largely with the APA style) is used, but the APA guidelines were followed in constructing tables.

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ABSTRACT

Title: The work-home interaction of South African working females

Key terms: Work-home interaction, demographic characteristics, working females

The general objectives of this study were to determine the work-home interaction of South African working females, to investigate the prevalence of work-home interaction and to determine if differences concerning work-home interaction exist between different demographical groups. An availability sample ($n = 500$) was taken from working females within six provinces of South Africa. The SWING and a demographical questionnaire were administered. Structural equation modelling (SEM) showed that a four-factor model, that measures both the direction (work-home interaction and home-work interaction) and the quality (positive or negative) of interaction, fitted the data best. All four factors were reliable, according to the Cronbach alpha coefficients. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to establish differences between work-home interaction and different demographic characteristics. Statistically significant differences exist between demographic groups based on race, language, occupation, parental status, household situation and freedom to arrange circumstances.

Recommendations were made for further research.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Die werk-huis interaksie van Suid-Afrikaanse werkende vrouens

Sleuteltermes: werk-huis interaksie, demografiese eienskappe, werkende vrouens.

Die algemene doelwitte van hierdie studie was om die werk-huis-interaksie van Suid-Afrikaanse werkende vrouens te bepaal, om die algemene voorkoms van werk-huis-interaksie te bepaal en of daar verskille rakende werk-huis-interaksie tussen verskillende demografiese groepe bestaan. 'n Beskikbaarheids steekproef ($n = 500$) is uit ses provinsies van Suid-Afrika geneem onder werkende vrouens. Die SWING en 'n biografiese vraelys is gebruik. Strukturele vergelykingsmodellering (SVM) het getoon dat 'n vierfaktormodel – wat beide die rigtings (werk-huis-inwerking en huis-werk-inwerking) sowel as die kwaliteit (positief of negatief) van die interaksie meet– die data die beste pas. Al vier die faktore is as betroubaar bewys deur die Cronbach alfakoëffisiënte. Meerveranderlike variasieontleding (*MANOVA*) en eenrigting-variasieontleding (*ANOVA*) is gebruik om die verskille tussen werk-huis-interaksie en verskeie demografiese karaktereenskappe te bepaal. Die resultate het statisties betekenisvolle verskille aangetoon tussen demografiese groepe wat gebaseer was op ras, taal, beroep, ouerstatus, huislike situasie en vryheid om omstandighede te beplan.

Aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsing is aan die hand gedoen.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation focuses on the work-home interaction of South African working females, and the possible differences that may exist in terms of work-home interaction based on demographical differences. This chapter contains the problem statement and a discussion of the research objectives, in which the general objectives and specific objectives are set out. The research method is explained and the division of chapters is given.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

During the last decades, a large number of new female workers have been added to the labour force. According to Sekaran and Leong (1992), women will make up a larger percentage of the paid labour force in the immediate future than in previous years. Furthermore, individuals are starting to face greater pressures at work and at home, mainly because of the increasing number of dual-earner couples as well of changes and pressures in the nature of the workplace (Sekaran & Leong, 1992).

The traditional South African household (where the man was the sole earner and the woman took care of the children) is also to a large extent being replaced by working couple families (Gerber, 2000; Schreuder & Theron, 2001). Globally, the traditional role of a woman as the main caretaker of the family has also changed dramatically. Women nowadays strive to contribute as both paid worker and as productive family caretaker (Sekaran & Leong, 1992). Traditionally, it was expected of a woman to stay at home, raise the children and take care of household chores. Women were isolated, stereotyped and alienated from the workplace, and perhaps were not as aware of the working world as they are today. Often, they were not given the chance to prove themselves worthy of contributing to the world of work outside the home. Nowadays, a large proportion of new job openings is likely to be filled by women, because more and more women are now becoming educated and trained to take up professional, technical, and service occupations (Sekaran & Leong, 1992). As a result, declining numbers of families now adopt the traditional model of fathers who work and mothers who remain at home to take care of children and/or the elders.

The dual-role and all the expectations that come with it could influence women's relationship between work and non-work. Work here refers to a set of prescribed tasks that an individual performs while occupying a position in an organisation, whereas non-work refers to activities and responsibilities within the family domain, as well as activities and obligations beyond one's own family situation (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). In general, the relationship between work and non-work is described as a conflict between work and family. Work-family conflict, according to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), is a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. Work-family conflict has also been linked to various stress related, work-related and non-work-related outcomes (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Frone, 2003, Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

The form of work-family conflict experienced can be based on role characteristics that have an effect on time involvement, strain, or behaviour in one domain that is in opposition to fulfilling the role in the other domain (work vs. family). According to Geurts and Demerouti (2003), three types of work-family conflict can be identified, namely (1) time-based conflict (when work and family roles compete for time, e.g., time that is devoted to one role cannot be devoted to the other); (2) strain-based conflict (e.g., when strain in one role affects performance in another role) and (3) behaviour-based conflict (e.g., when certain patterns of role behaviour may well be in conflict with the expectations of behaviour in other roles).

Researchers agree that it is clearly identifiable that workers who are unable to balance their responsibilities and commitments, connected with both roles, are faced with potential conflict between the work and family roles, or so called "work-home interaction" (WHI) (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrin, 1996). Dealing with multiple roles can also have a positive effect. However, there remains a lack of in-depth knowledge about the processes that may underlie the interaction between work and private life.

Barnett (1996) and Kirchmeyer (1993) have found that employees may also benefit from participating in multiple roles, and these benefits may outweigh the difficulties. For instance, marital quality is an important buffer for job-related stress (Barnett, 1996), and working mothers compared to working women without children, seem to experience greater happiness and better health (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2000). Based on this assumption, work

can interfere with family life in both a negative and positive way. Geurts and Demerouti (2003) define work-home interaction as an interactive process in which a worker's functioning in one domain (e.g., home) is influenced by load reactions (negative or positive) that have built up in the other domain (e.g., work). Therefore, WHI occurs in both directions and can thus occur from work to home, as well as from home to work (Bakker & Geurts, 2004). According to Geurts et al., (2005), four types of interaction can be distinguished, namely 1) *negative work-home interference (WHI)*, referring to a situation in which negative load effects built up at work hamper functioning at home; (2) *negative home-work interference (HWI)* referring to negative load effects that have built up in the home situation and interfere with functioning at work; (3) *positive WHI*, defined as positive load effects built up at work that facilitate functioning at home; and (4) *positive HWI*, referring to positive load effects developed in the home domain that facilitate functioning at work. The fundamental assumption is that work-family conflict can influence work-home interaction in a negative or positive way.

Some limitations unfortunately remain regarding the literature on work-life interaction. Research focus is almost exclusively conducted on the negative impact of work on the home situation. Although much research has been done on the negative effect of work on the home situation, little research has been done on the negative impact of home on the work situation (Bakker & Geurts, 2004). Instruments that also measure positive interaction between both domains are largely absent (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

An instrument that measures both positive and negative interference between work-home and home-work should be utilised in research to overcome the above-mentioned limitations. Recently, a four-dimensional work-home interaction measuring instrument (i.e., the Survey Work-home Interaction-NijmeGen; SWING) was developed by Geurts et al., (2005) to measure work-home interaction. This instrument is based on the Effort-Recovery model of Meijman and Mulder (1998) and gives a full theory-guided conceptualisation of the work-home interface by encompassing both its negative and positive side as well as measuring the direction of influence (i.e., work-to-home interference and home-to-work interference). It therefore seems important to investigate whether the SWING can indeed measure four dimensions of work-home interaction (i.e., negative and positive WHI and negative and positive HWI).

It is also important to know which dimensions of work-home interaction are more prevalent. Research in the area of WHI shows that negative influence from work (negative WHI) is more prevalent than negative influence from home (negative HWI) (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998; Burke & Greenglass, 1999; Eagle, Miles, & Icenogle, 1997; Frone et al., 1992; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Leiter & Durup, 1996). However, studies have shown that positive HWI is more often found than positive WHI (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004; Kinnunen, Feldt, Geurts, & Pulkkinen, 2006). Grzywacz and Marks (2000) suggest that positive spillover more often originates from the family than from the work domain. This is confirmed by Geurts et al., (2005) who report that positive influence appeared to originate more often from the home than from the work domain.

Demographic, personality, family and job characteristics can be classified as possible antecedents of work-home interaction (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). It can be understood that demographic characteristics play a vital part as one of the major causes of work-home interaction. Factors such as marital status and the presence or absence of children can dramatically influence women's work-home interaction. For example, Bersoff and Crosby (1984) find that married, employed women with children are more satisfied with their jobs than single employed women or married employed women without children. The fact that both male and female employed adults report work-family conflict three times more frequently than family-work conflict is established by Frone et al., (1992). According to Crouter (1984) and Grzywacz and Marks (2000), there are suggestions that predominantly women with (young) children experience more negative interaction between 'work' and 'family', when compared to women without children.

Furthermore, it is imperative to look at how various demographic variables influence work-life interaction. Because of the growing number of dual-income families, employees of both sexes are now juggling with care-giving and household responsibilities that were once managed by a stay-at-home spouse. Research also links high work-life conflict to marital problems, reduced family and life satisfaction, and an increased incidence of perceived stress, burnout, depression and stress-related illnesses (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001). Often, employees with families miss career opportunities when they need to put their family responsibilities ahead of their work. Women (irrespective of their involvement in paid work) are also significantly more likely than men to bear primary responsibility for home chores and childcare (Statistics Canada, 2000), which could cause higher work-family conflict in

women than in men. The parental responsibilities of working couples are strongly linked to the incidence of work-life conflict (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001). Non-parent couples can act relatively independently as they do not have the constraints of caring for children. The addition of the parent role complicates the couple's life situation; however, as it places greater demands on them at the same time as it adds constraints.

A variety of research findings has shown that work-home/home-work interaction is linked with serious consequences for the individual (including depression, psychosomatic complaints and reduced marital satisfaction) and the organisation (reduced job and life satisfaction, low organisational commitment and increased intention to quit, stress and burnout, low levels of job performance and the prevalence of accidents) (Allen et al., 2000; Jamal, 1981; Kandonlin, 1993; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Monk & Folkard, 1985). It is clear that interference between work and non-work has various implications for organisations and employees. Consequently, it seems necessary to examine the relationship between work-home interaction and demographic characteristics. For the purpose of this study, several demographic groups will be included (i.e., career phase, race, language, occupation, marital status, parental status, education level, flexibility, use of annual leave, freedom to choose arrangements at work and a partner's contribution to the household income).

The following research questions emerge from the above-mentioned problem statement:

- How is work-home interaction conceptualised in the literature?
- Is work-home interaction best characterised as a four-dimensional construct that distinguishes between the quality of influence (negative vs. positive) and the direction of influence (work-home vs. home-work)?
- What is the prevalence of various types of work-home interaction?
- Are there differences regarding work-home interaction between different demographic groups in terms of career phase, race, language, occupation, marital status, parental status, household situation, education, flexibility, use of full annual leave, freedom to arrange circumstances and partner's contribution to the household?
- What recommendations can be made regarding future research and practice?

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives can be divided into a general objective and specific objectives.

1.2.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is to investigate possible differences that may exist in terms of work-home interaction, based on demographical differences in a sample of South African working females.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

- To conceptualise work-home interaction from the literature.
- To determine if work-home interaction is best characterised as a four-dimensional construct that distinguishes between the quality of influence (negative vs. positive) and the direction of influence (work-home vs. home-work).
- To determine the prevalence of various types of work-home interaction.
- To determine the differences regarding work-home interaction between different demographic groups in terms of career phase, race, language, occupation, marital status, parental status, household situation, education, flexibility, use of full annual leave, freedom to arrange circumstances and a partner's contribution to the household.
- To make recommendations for future research and practice.

1.3 PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

According to Mouton and Marais (1992), a certain paradigm perspective, that includes the intellectual climate and the market of intellectual resources, directs the research.

1.3.1 The intellectual climate

The intellectual climate refers to the range of non-epistemological value systems/beliefs that are underwritten in any given period in a discipline. It relegates to a collection of beliefs, values and assumptions that do not deal with the epistemological views of the scientific

research practice directly because it normally originates in a non-epistemological context (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

This research falls within the boundaries of the behavioural sciences and more specifically of Industrial Psychology. Industrial Psychology refers to the scientific study of people within their work environment. This implies scientific observation, evaluation, optimal utilisation and influencing of normal and to a lesser degree, deviant behaviour in interaction with the environment (physical, psychological, social and organisational) as manifested in the world of work (Munchinsky, Kriek, & Schreuder, 2002).

The sub-disciplines of Industrial Psychology that are focused on in this research are Career Psychology and Occupational Health Psychology. Career Psychology focuses on people thinking about careers, preparing for occupations, entering the world of work, pursuing and changing occupations, and leaving the world of work to devote what knowledge and energies they have to leisure activities that may resemble in content the work that they did for pay or which may involve quite different types of knowledge and skill (Vondracek, 2001). Since this research investigates the hypothesis that different demographical factors (career phase, race, language, occupation, marital status, parental status, education level, flexibility, use of leave, freedom and partners' financial contribution to the household) may have differential effects in terms of working females' experience of work/home interaction, it links closely to Career Psychology.

Occupational Health Psychology is concerned with psychological factors that contribute to occupational health and well-being. It deals with psychological reactions to physical and non-physical work conditions, as well as with behaviour that have implications for health (Spector, 2006). The implication for this research is that different demographical variables may relate to the experience of work/home interaction differently, and as such link this research to Occupational Health Psychology.

1.3.2 Meta-theoretical assumptions

Two paradigms are relevant to this research. Firstly, the literature review is done within the positivistic paradigm and secondly the empirical study is done within the functionalistic paradigm. The functionalist paradigm holds a view of the social world which regards society

as ontologically prior to man [sic] and seek[s] to place man and his activities within that wider social context (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Burrell and Morgan (1979) also define a positivistic paradigm as an epistemology which seeks to explain and predict what happens in the social world by searching for regularities and causal relationships between its constituent elements.

1.3.3 Literature review

The positivistic theory is a theoretical and general scientific position that emphasises parsimony and operationalism in data and language and disdains theorising and inference – in short, any method that produces positive knowledge (Lundin, 1996).

1.3.4 Empirical study

Functionalism is a view that is characterised by a concern for providing explanations of the status quo, social order, consensus, social integration, solidarity, need satisfaction, and actuality (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). It approaches those general sociological concerns from a standpoint which tends to be realist, positivist, determinist, and nomothetic (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Functionalism is based on a conception of science that emphasizes the possibility of objective inquiry capable of providing true explanatory and predictive knowledge of an external reality (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Functionalists tend to assume the standpoint of the observer, attempting "to relate what *they* observe to what *they* regard as important elements in a wider social context" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 107).

1.3.5 The market of intellectual resources

The market of intellectual resources refers to that collection of beliefs that directly involves the epistemological status of scientific statements. The two main types of epistemological beliefs are the theoretical beliefs and the methodological beliefs (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

1.3.6 Theoretical beliefs

Theoretical beliefs can be described as all beliefs that can make testable judgments regarding a social phenomenon. These are all judgments regarding the 'what' and 'why' of human

phenomena and include all conceptual definitions and all models and theories of the research (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

A. Conceptual definitions

The relevant conceptual definitions of work-family conflict, work-life interaction and coping are given below.

During the last few years the views on work and family have changed and developed extremely fast. According to the literature, work and family are regarded as two conflicting domains – work conflicts with family and family conflicts with work. As a result, the most commonly cited definition of work-family conflict states that it is “a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77).

Geurts and Demerouti (2003) define work-home interaction as an interactive process in which a worker’s functioning in one domain (e.g., home) is influenced (negatively or positively) by load reactions that have built up in the other domain (e.g., work).

B. Models and theories

A model is aimed at ways of answering questions. It tries to reproduce the dynamics of an occurrence through the relation between the main elements in a process and to represent it in a simplified way (Mouton & Marais, 1992). A theory is defined as a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

Under normal circumstances, these reactions are reversible. When during a certain amount of time no or little appeal is made to the psychobiological systems that are used for task performance at work, these systems will stabilize to a certain baseline level during the nonworking period and individuals will recover from negative load effects that have built up

at work. However, if opportunities for recovery after being exposed to a high workload are insufficient, the psychobiological systems are activated again before they have had a chance to stabilize. The person, still in a sub-optimal state, will have to make additional (compensatory) effort. This may result in an increased intensity of the load reactions, which in turn will make higher demands on the recovery process. As a result, an accumulative process may yield a draining of one's energy and a state of breakdown or fatigue (Sluiter, 1999; Ursin, 1980). Under unchanged conditions, these symptoms may develop into manifest health problems (Kompier, 1988; Sluiter, 1999). The central idea of negative load effects that build up in an unfavourable work situation (characterized by high job demands, little job control, and little job support), and that spill over to the home situation, makes the theoretical perspective offered by the E-R model relevant for studying negative work-home interaction. From this perspective, a similar process can be expected in a home situation that is characterized by high home demands (e.g., extensive household tasks) and little control and support possibilities: negative load effects will develop in the home situation, spill over to, and hamper functioning in the work domain. This theoretical framework may not only help us to understand negative interaction between 'work' and 'home', but may also contribute to our understanding of positive work-home interaction.

1.3.7 Methodological beliefs

Methodological beliefs can be defined as beliefs that make judgments regarding the nature and structure of science and scientific research (Mouton & Marais, 1992). The empirical study is presented within the functionalistic framework, which posits that psychological phenomena can be measured and described in an objective fashion. In this regard, the work-life interaction and demographic characteristics of working females are investigated.

1.4 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method consists of a literature review and an empirical study. The results obtained are presented in the form of a research article. The reader should note that a brief literature review is compiled for the purpose of the article. The empirical section focuses on aspects relevant to the empirical study that is conducted and will consist of the research design, participants, the measuring battery and the statistical analysis.

1.4.1 Research design

A cross-sectional survey design is used to collect the data and to attain the research objectives. When using a cross-sectional design, one group of people is observed at one point of time, over a short period, such as a day or a few weeks (Du Plooy, 2001). The design is also used to assess interrelationships among variables within a population and will thus help to achieve the various specific objectives of this research (Struwig & Stead, 2001). One advantage of cross-sectional research is that it is more economical (time and cost-wise) than other designs. For the participants, there is only one period for data collection, and the researcher is not faced with the difficulty and costs of maintaining contact with subjects over a long period of time. There are, however, significant disadvantages for the study of developmental issues regarding the cross-sectional designs, namely the inability to directly assess intra-individual change and the inferences to group averages (Baltes, Reese, & Nesselroade, 1988).

1.4.2 Participants and procedure

An availability sample ($n = 500$) is taken from working females in the Eastern Cape, the Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, the North West and Western Cape provinces. The questionnaires are distributed amongst different female occupation groups, including nurses, female managers, administration personnel (e.g., cashiers, administration assistants, secretaries, etc.), females who work with people in people work (e.g., educators, academics, psychologists, teachers, consultants, supervisors, etc.) and a diverse group of typical female workers (e.g., hairdressers, beauticians, librarians, designers, administrative assistants and secretaries). A letter requesting participation is given to each individual prior to the administration of the measuring battery. The measuring battery is compiled and a letter requesting participation is included in the test books. Ethical aspects and a motivation regarding the research are discussed with the participants before the questionnaires are handed out. The questionnaires are handed to individuals to be completed in their own time. Participants will be given three weeks to complete the questionnaires, after which these will be personally collected at an arranged date.

1.4.3 Measuring battery

The Survey Work-home Interaction-NijmeGen (SWING, Geurts et al., 2005) and demographical questionnaire are used in the empirical study.

The *Survey Work-Home Interaction – NijmeGen* (SWING) (Geurts et al., 2005) is used to measure work-home interaction. The SWING is a 22-item work-home interference measure and measures four types of work-home interference, namely (1) negative WHI (eight items, e.g., “you do not have the energy to engage in leisure activities with your spouse/family/friends because of your job?”); (2) positive WHI (five items, e.g., “do you fulfil your domestic obligations better because of the things you have learned on your job?”); (3) negative HWI (four items, e.g., “do you have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic matters?”); and (4) positive HWI (five items, e.g., “do you take your responsibilities at work more seriously because you are required to do the same at home?”). All items are scored on a 4-point frequency rating scale, ranging from “0” (never) to “3” (always). Pieterse and Mostert (2005) confirm the four-factor structure of the SWING in a sample of workers employed in the earthmoving equipment industry in South Africa and have obtained the following Cronbach alpha coefficients for the SWING: Negative WHI: 0,87; Negative HWI: 0,79; Positive WHI: 0,79; Positive HWI: 0,76.

A *Demographical Questionnaire* is also used to establish the demographical characteristics of the working females. The demographical characteristics that are measured in this questionnaire are gender, language, career phase, race, occupation, educational level, marital status, household situation (e.g., single, without children living at home/married/living with a partner without children), working hours, permanent and part-time employment, use of annual leave and the contribution that the partner makes to the total household income.

1.4.4 Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis is carried out with the SPSS program (SPSS Inc., 2005) and the Amos program (Arbuckle, 2005). Descriptive statistics (e.g., means and standard deviations) are used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients are used to assess the reliability of the measuring instrument (Clark & Watson, 1995).

The construct validity of the SWING is tested by comparing four competing models for the relationships among the 22 items, using structural equation modelling (SEM) methods as implemented by Amos (Arbuckle, 2005). The following goodness-of-fit-indices are used as adjuncts to the χ^2 statistics: a) χ^2/df ratio; b) The Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI); c) The Incremental Fit Index IFI; d) The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI); e) The Comparative Fit Index (CFI); and f) The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).

Paired-samples *t*-tests are used to determine the prevalence of work-home interaction. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) is used to determine the significance of differences between the work-home interaction levels of different demographic groups. MANOVA tests whether mean differences among groups on a combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In MANOVA, a new dependent variable that maximises group differences is created from the set of dependent variables. Wilk's Lambda is used to test the likelihood of the data under the assumption of equal population mean vectors for all groups, against the likelihood under the assumption that the population mean vectors are identical to those of the sample mean vectors for the different groups. When an effect is significant in MANOVA, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine which dependent variables have been affected. Because multiple ANOVA's are used, a Bonferroni-type adjustment is made for inflated Type 1 error. The Games-Howell procedure is used to determine whether there are statistical differences between the groups.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

In Chapter 2 the relationship between work-home interaction and different demographic characteristics are discussed. Chapter 2 also deals with the empirical study. Chapter 3 deals with the discussion, limitations and recommendations of this study.

1.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a discussion of the problem statement and research objectives. Furthermore, the measuring instruments and the research method were explained, followed

by a brief overview of the chapters that follow. The research article will be presented in Chapter 2.

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

WORK-HOME INTERACTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WORKING FEMALES

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ABSTRACT

The general objectives of this study were to determine the work-home interaction of South African working females, to investigate the prevalence of work-home interaction and to determine if differences concerning work-home interaction exist between different demographic groups. An availability sample ($n = 500$) was taken from working females within six provinces of South Africa. The SWING and a demographical questionnaire were administered. Structural equation modelling (SEM) showed that a four-factor model, that measures both the direction (work-home interaction and home-work interaction) and the quality (positive or negative) of interaction, fitted the data best. All four factors were reliable, according to the Cronbach alpha coefficients. Statistically significant differences exist between demographic groups based on race, language, occupation, parental status, household situation and freedom to arrange work circumstances regarding work-life interaction.

OPSOMMING

Die algemene doelwitte van hierdie studie was om die werk-huis-interaksie van Suid-Afrikaanse werkende vroue te bepaal, om die algemene voorkoms van werk-huis-interaksie te bepaal en of daar verskille rakende werk-huis-interaksie tussen verskillende demografiese groepe bestaan. 'n Beskikbaarheidssteekproef ($n = 500$) is uit ses provinsies van Suid-Afrika onder werkende vroue geneem. Die SWING en 'n biografiese vraelys is gebruik. Strukturele vergelykingsmodellering (SVM) het getoon dat 'n vierfaktormodel, - wat beide die rigtings meet (werk-huis-inwerking en huis-werk-inwerking) en die kwaliteit (positief of negatief) van interaksie meet, die data die beste pas. Al vier die faktore is betroubaar, soos aangedui deur Cronbach alfakoëffisiënte. Statisties betekenisvolle verskille is aangetoon tussen demografiese groepe wat gebaseer was op ras, taal, beroep, ouerstatus, huislike situasie en vryheid om werksomstandighede te beplan, rakende werk-huis-interaksie.

A growing number of individuals are challenged to combine substantial domestic responsibilities and work obligations (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998). According to Peeters, Montgomery, Bakker, and Schaufeli (2005), changes in family structures, increasing participation by women in the workforce and technological changes (e.g., mobile phones and portable computers) that enable job tasks to be performed in a variety of locations, have blurred the boundaries between job and home life. Furthermore, it is not just because of workplace changes that a huge number of female workers have been added to the labour force. Women nowadays strive to contribute as both paid worker and as a productive family caretaker (Sekaran & Leong, 1992). The traditional role of women to stay at home, raise the children and take care of household chores is also starting to change. A survey carried out in European Union countries in 1998, which examined the work preferences of couples with small children, found that only one in ten couples supported the traditional male-only breadwinner model (Jaumotte, 2005). These demographic and structural changes in the workforce and family structure have affected work and family roles, and their interrelation (Bond et al., 1998; Ferber, O'Farrell, & Allen, 1991).

Throughout the last three decades, large increases have been seen in the number of women entering the paid labor force. For instance, in the United Kingdom, from 1971 to 1990, the number of married women going out to work has risen from 50% to 71% (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, UK, 1991, in Noor, 2003). Further, in 1997, women accounted for over 49,5% of the total work force, and according to government projections this percentage is expected to rise until the year 2006 (Employment Service, 1998; UK, in Noor, 2003). Whereas the work responsibility is perceived to be a man's primary area, women are still mainly responsible for the home and children (Doucet, 2000; Lundberg, Mardberg, & Frankenhaeuser, 1994; Windebank, 2001). As such, employed women have to manage with the demands from work together with family roles to a greater extent than employed men. Confirmation of more women adapting their traditional roles and moving to the workforce is also noticeable in South Africa. Since the election in 1994, more women, representatives of all races and dual-earner couples make up the South African labour force (Schreuder & Theron, 2001). After the 1994 election, new legislation such as the Employment Equity Act and the Skills Development Act gave rise to the fact that the South African work force began to comprise more women. These changes resulted in an increased number of women and working couple families entering the workforce, changing the traditional role men once held (Brink & De la Rey, 2001; Gerber, 2000; Schreuder & Theron,

2001; Theunissen, Van Vuuren, & Visser, 2003; Wallis & Price, 2003). The incorporation of work and family has become vital for employees as they are ever more forced to deal with family and work demands simultaneously.

Because of women adapting their traditional roles and taking on the world of work, more pressure is being put on them. The work and family domains are extremely interconnected, and any separation is highly theoretical. For many workers, the situation described above has created the potential for interference, or conflict, to occur between their work and non-work lives (Hill, Miller, Weiner, & Colihan, 1998). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985, p. 77) define work-home conflict as “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible, such that participation in one role makes it difficult to participate in the other”. This definition implies a bidirectional dimension in that work can interfere with home (work-home interference; WHI) and home can interfere with work (home-work interference, HWI; Frone, 2003).

Geurts and Demerouti (2003) define work-home interaction as an interactive process in which a worker’s functioning in one domain (e.g., home) is influenced by (negative or positive) load reactions that have built up in the other domain (e.g., work). Previously, an exclusive focus was being placed on *negative* work-home interaction with a rare reference to *positive* work-home interaction (Barnett, 1998; Carlson, Dacxmar, & Williams, 2000; Stephens & Sommer, 1996). However, several scholars have argued that workers may also benefit from combining “work” and “family” and that these benefits may outweigh the costs (Hochschild, 1997; Kirchmeyer, 1993). Regrettably, a very small number of studies have addressed the prevalence and correlates of positive interaction between work and private life (Frone, 2003; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). The assumption that work might influence functioning at home (as well as the other way around) in both a positive and a negative way has been empirically tested only recently (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Grzywacz, Almeida, & McDonald, 2002; Sumer & Knight, 2001).

The SWING (Survey Work-Home Interaction Nijmegen, Geurts et al., 2005) was developed to measure both negative and positive interaction between work and home domains. This questionnaire is theoretically based on the Effort-Recovery (E-R) Model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998), and designed to enhance and extend the existing knowledge on work-home interaction. The E-R model postulates that effort disbursement (e.g., task performance at

work) is related with specific load reactions that build up in the individual. These load reactions can contain psychological, behavioural and subjective responses such as changes in hormone secretion, energy levels and mood. Typically, these load reactions are reversible if recovery occurs after the effort had been invested and time had been taken for the psychobiological systems to stabilise. This shows that high demands from the one domain will not have unfavourable health consequences as long as adequate recovery takes place during or after these periods.

The SWING differentiates between the direction (work to home; and home to work) and the quality of influence (negative and positive). Geurts et al., (2005) provided evidence for the validity of the internal structure of the questionnaire. Their results showed that the questionnaire reliably measures four empirically distinct types of work-home interaction, and that this four-dimensional structure was largely invariant across the five samples as well as across relevant subgroups, providing evidence regarding its robustness across a wide variety of workers. Comparable results were obtained in two South African studies. Using principal component analysis with a direct oblimin rotation, Pieterse and Mostert (2005) obtained four factors in a sample of workers in the earthmoving industry. They also demonstrated construct equivalence for two language groups, although three problematic items had to be removed. In a sample of nurses, Van Tonder (2005) also found that the four-factor structure of the SWING fitted their data significantly better than alternative models.

Another important factor to look at is the influence of demographic variables in determining individual differences in work-life interaction. Duxbury and Higgins (2001) found that women are more likely than men to report high role overload, and men more likely to report high levels of work to family conflict. While married employees are at greater risk of high work to family interference than those who are single, the differences between parents and non-parents are not as marked as the one observed with respect to role overload. Whilst those with pre-school children tend to experience the highest levels of overload, high interference from work to family appears to peak when children are at school. Job type may also act as a surrogate measure for other important variables such as education, income, commitment, and identification with the work role, which are, in turn, linked to work-life conflict and stress (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001).

In view of the above discussion, the objectives of this study are therefore 1) to investigate the psychometric properties of the SWING, which conceptualises work-home interaction as a four-dimensional construct that distinguishes between the quality and direction of influence; 2) to determine the prevalence of work-home interaction; and 3) to determine if demographic groups differ with regard to work-home interaction.

The work-home interface

Work-home interaction is defined by Geurts et al., (2005, p. 322) as “an interactive process in which a worker’s functioning in one domain (e.g., home) is influenced by (negative or positive) load reactions that have built up in the other domain (e.g., work)”. Difficulties in combining work and family roles may either arise from time demand that makes it physically impossible to be in two places at the same time (time-based conflict), from the spillover of strain from one domain to the other (strain-based conflict), or from the incompatibility of behaviours requested in each domain (behaviour-based conflict) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

According to Geurts et al., (2005), four dimensions of work-home interaction are present, namely (1) *negative work-home interference (WHI)*, referring to circumstances in which negative load reactions, built up at work, hinder functioning at home; (2) *negative home-work interference (HWI)*, referring to negative load reactions developed at home that hamper functioning at work; (3) *positive WHI*, defined as positive load reactions built up at work that facilitate functioning at home; and (4) *positive HWI*, occurring when positive load reactions developed at home facilitate functioning at work. These four dimensions of work-home interaction were captured by using 27 (including 13 self-developed) items. Geurts et al., (2005) stated that as confirmatory factor analysis strongly supported the proposed four-dimensional structure of the SWING across the various theoretically relevant subgroups (e.g., career phase, language, occupation, and marital status), it provided evidence regarding sturdiness and generalisability. Based on these results, it can be hypothesised that the SWING can be best characterised as having a four-dimensional structure (e.g., negative WHI, positive WHI, negative HWI and positive HWI) (*Hypothesis 1*).

The prevalence of work-home interaction

A range of research and empirical studies revealed that interference from work (negative WHI) is more prevalent than interference from home (negative HWI) (Bond et al., 1998; Frone, 2003; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Montgomery, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Den Ouden, 2003). According to these findings, researchers suggested that workers are more prone to coordinate work over family matters. This causes less involvement at home rather than at work. This perhaps suggests that the home domain is more adaptable than the work domain (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Gutek, Klepa & Searle, 1991). Consequently, it is expected that negative WHI will be more prevalent than negative HWI (*Hypothesis 2a*).

In addition, positive HWI was found more frequently than positive WHI (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier; 2004, Kinnunen, Feldt, Geurts, & Pulkkinen, 2006). Geurts et al., (2005) found that positive influence was more often derived from the home than from the work domain. It was also established by Grzywacz and Marks (2000) that positive spillover more often originated from the family than from the work domain. Derived from these results, it is likely that positive HWI will be more prevalent than positive WHI (*Hypothesis 2b*).

Demographical differences and work-home interaction

A further objective of this study is to consider whether differences exist between certain demographic groups and the kind of impact it will have on work-home interaction. The demographic groups that will be focussed on in this study are employees in different career phases, those of different racial/ethnic groups, from different occupation groups and with different marital status. Further demographical variables that will be considered are employees' parental status (i.e., with children, without children), their level of educational attainment, the level of flexibility they enjoy in planning their work activities, their use of annual leave and their partners' contribution to the household income.

The career phase in which an employee finds herself may also be related to the age of the employee. An early, middle and late career phase can be distinguished. The assumption is that a person in her middle career phase (roughly between the ages of 33–45) could experience more negative WHI and positive HWI, because of domestic obligations. This is

typically the age where people establish families. With regard to age, most studies found no relationship between different age groups (Frone, Russel & Cooper, 1997; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005) and work-home interaction. However, Grzywacz and Marks (2000) found that younger women reported more positive spillover from work to home and more negative spillover from home to work than older women did. Duxbury and Higgins (2001) reported participants between the ages of 36 and 55 to experience more interference from work to home. It therefore can be expected that different age groups, as indicated by participants' career phases, may differ with regard to their experiences of work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 3a*).

A comparatively small number of studies incorporated race/ethnicity as a variable relevant to work-home interaction. Frone et al., (1997) found no long-term relationship between race and conflict in either the home or work domain. On the other hand, Van Tonder (2005) found statistically significant differences between Caucasian and African nurses concerning home-work interference, with the former experiencing more negative HWI, but also more positive HWI, when compared to their African counterparts. Hence, it may be expected that participants' racial group, as an indicator also of cultural values, may act to influence their experiences of work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 3b*).

There is a vast lack of research regarding the impact of language on work-home interaction. Pieterse and Mostert (2005) found no differences between different language groups in their research. Based on this single previous investigation, the hypothesis (*Hypothesis 3c*) seems to suggest that language groups will not differ with regard to their work-home interaction.

Research by Duxbury and Higgins (2001), conducted in 1991 and 2001, found that the percentage of employees in their sample with high job stress increased, while the percentage with high job satisfaction and high organisational commitment declined. The degree of the change was, however, dependent on the type of occupation the employee was pursuing. In both the 1991 and 2001 samples, professional employees reported higher work-life interference than non-professionals. Professional women experienced the highest levels of role overload and work to family conflict, whereas the non-professional women were less likely to report high work to family interference (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001). Therefore, it seems that the type of occupation a woman has will influence the degree of work-life interference she will experience (*Hypothesis 3d*).

The influence of marital status on work-home interaction has evidently not been researched widely. However, in considering marital status as a demographic variable, single men and women report less negative spillover from work to home than their married counterparts. In addition it was found that being single was also strongly related to less positive spillover from home to work (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Demerouti et al., (2004) found that individuals who lived with a significant other reported less negative influence from home than those who lived alone. It therefore seems that married participants will experience higher levels of negative WHI than unmarried participants, whereas unmarried participants will experience lower levels of positive HWI (*Hypothesis 3e*).

Studies on parental status revealed that the age of children as well as the number of children living at home has an influence on WHI, in both directions (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Higgins, Duxbury, & Lee, 1994; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). Higgins et al., (1994) reported that working women with children younger than 12 years of age experience more negative spillover between both domains compared to working women with older children. Geurts et al., (2005) found that working parents reported higher levels of positive HWI than parents without children. Contrastingly, Grzywacz and Marks (2000) reported that working parents with children also experience higher levels of negative HWI than working parents without children. It can thus be hypothesised that there will be differences based on parental status (*Hypothesis 3f*).

Concerning education, lower levels of education and income are strongly connected with a lower level of positive spillover from work to home among women (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Rost (2006) indicated that employees with a tertiary qualification (in this specific case, a Technikon diploma), were exposed to significantly higher levels of positive WHI than employees with a post-graduate degree. Mostert and Oldfield (in press) also found that individuals possessing tertiary education would appear to experience lower levels of negative WHI and HWI compared to individuals possessing secondary education, who in turn experience more positive HWI. Thus it can be hypothesised that individuals with dissimilar educational levels will vary with regard to work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 3g*).

Flexibility is related to factors such as choosing when to start working, when to stop working, the employee choosing her own projects and working flexitime. Duxbury and Higgins (2001)

suggest that managers and professionals are more liable to engage in occupations that afford more flexibility and personal control over the timing of their work. This increases their control and facilitates the commitments of parenting and other non-work activities for those in professional jobs. Duxbury and Higgins (2001) also found that professionals may have an advantage in balancing work and home life as their jobs offer greater extrinsic rewards (e.g., salary) that can make up for some of the “costs” that demanding jobs entail (i.e., allow those with higher incomes to purchase goods and services to help them cope). Non-professional employees, by contrast, are more prone to work in high demand, low control jobs. Influential work by Karasek (1979) indicates that employees in these types of positions typically report higher levels of stress and poorer physical and mental health. It thus stands to reason that there will be differences in terms of work-life interaction, based on employees’ work-related experience of flexibility (*Hypothesis 3h*).

Other demographic characteristics that seem important to investigate include employees’ use of full annual leave and freedom to arrange leave as circumstances require – for example for a family emergency. However, given the scant amount of research on the relationship between these variables and work-home interaction, no hypotheses could be formulated. Similarly, little information is presented on the difference of work-home interaction based on a partners’ contribution to the household income. This variable, however, seems imperative to be integrated in this study, since a greater contribution may facilitate more flexibility for the other partner to manage the home situation (by for example working part-time).

METHOD

Participants and procedure

An availability sample ($n = 500$) was taken from working females in the Eastern Cape, the Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, the North West and the Western Cape provinces. The questionnaires were distributed amongst different female occupation groups, including nurses, female managers, administrative personnel (e.g., cashiers, administrative assistants, secretaries), females who work with people in human service occupations (e.g., educators, academics, psychologists) and a diverse group of typical female workers (e.g., hairdressers, beauticians, librarians, designers). The measuring battery was compiled and a letter requesting participation was included in the test books. Ethical aspects and a motivation

regarding the research were discussed with the participants before the questionnaires were handed out. The questionnaires were handed to individuals to be completed in their own time. Participants were given three weeks to complete the questionnaires, after which these were personally collected. Table 1 gives an indication of the characteristics of the participants included in this study.

Table 1
Background Information of the Participants (n = 500)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Language	Afrikaans	206	41,2
	English	135	27,0
	African languages	154	30,8
Race	White	243	48,6
	Black	169	33,8
	Coloured	80	16,0
Career Phase	Early career (age 18 –32)	152	30,3
	Middle career (age 33 – 45)	208	41,6
	Late career (age 46 – 65)	131	26,2
Marital Status	Married	293	58,6
	Single	185	37,0
Parental Status	With Children	306	61,2
	Without Children	136	27,2
Education	School education	154	30,8
	Higher education	292	58,4
Occupation	Female Managers	120	24,0
	Nurses	138	27,6
	Admin	91	18,2
	People work	127	25,4
	Diverse	24	4,8
Household	Single without children	57	11,4
	Single with children	92	18,4
	Married without children	79	15,8
	Married with children	214	42,8
	Living with parents	36	7,2
Choose When To Start Work	Yes	155	31,0
	No	323	64,6
Partners' Contribution To Income	Less than 25 %	38	7,6
	Approximately 25%	41	8,2
	Approximately 50%	97	19,4
	More than 50%	123	24,6

Table 1 shows that most of the participants were married (58,6%). Of the total sample, 61,2% had children and 58,4% had a tertiary education. The majority of the females were white (48,6) and black (33,8%), and spoke Afrikaans (41,2%) and African languages (30,8%). With regard to their career phase, most of the participants were in their middle career phase (between the ages of 33 and 45). In total, 22,4% of the participants worked full time, and 50,2% of the participants did not use their full annual leave the previous year. For the majority (50,2%) of the sample it was possible to arrange unexpected leave. Regarding the flexibility to choose when to start working, the majority (64,6%) could *not* choose when to start a working day. A percentage of 19,4 of the females said that their partners contribute more than 50% to their total household income.

Measuring battery

The following questionnaires were used in the empirical study:

The *Survey Work-Home Interaction – NijmeGen* (SWING) (Geurts et al., 2005) was used to measure work-home interaction. The SWING is a 22-item work-home interference measure and measures four types of work-home interference, namely (1) negative WHI (eight items, e.g., “you do not have the energy to engage in leisure activities with your spouse/family/friends because of your job”); (2) positive WHI (five items, e.g., “you fulfil your domestic obligations better because of the things you have learned on your job”); (3) negative HWI (four items, e.g., “you have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic matters”); and (4) positive HWI (five items, e.g., “you take your responsibilities at work more seriously because you are required to do the same at home”). All items are scored on a 4-point frequency rating scale, ranging from “0” (never) to “3” (always).

A *Demographical Questionnaire* was also used to establish the demographic characteristics of the working females. The demographic characteristics that were measured in this questionnaire were gender, language, career phase, race, occupation, educational level, marital status, household situation (e.g., single or married, living with or without children at home), working hours, employment status (permanent or part-time), use of annual leave and the contribution that the partner makes to the total household income.

Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out with the SPSS program (SPSS Inc., 2005) and the Amos program (Arbuckle, 2005). Descriptive statistics (e.g., means and standard deviations) were used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to assess the reliability of the measuring instrument (Clark & Watson, 1995).

The construct validity of the SWING was tested by comparing four competing models for the relationships among the 22 items, using structural equation modelling (SEM) methods as implemented by Amos (Arbuckle, 2005). The following goodness-of-fit indices were used as adjuncts to the χ^2 statistics: a) χ^2/df ratio; b) The Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI); c) The Incremental Fit Index (IFI) ; d) The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI); e) The Comparative Fit Index (CFI); and f) The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).

Paired-samples *t*-tests were used to determine the prevalence of work-home interaction. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine the significance of differences between the work-home interaction levels of different demographic groups. MANOVA tests whether mean differences among groups on a combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In MANOVA, a new dependent variable that maximises group differences is created from the set of dependent variables. Wilk's Lambda was used to test the likelihood of the data under the assumption of equal population mean vectors for all groups, against the likelihood under the assumption that the population mean vectors are identical to those of the sample mean vectors for the different groups. When an effect was significant in MANOVA, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine which dependent variables had been affected. Because multiple ANOVAs were used, a Bonferroni-type adjustment was made for inflated Type 1 error. The Games-Howell procedure was used to determine whether there were statistical differences between the groups.

RESULTS

Construct Validity

The construct validity of the SWING (Geurts et al., 2005) was tested by comparing four models for the relationships among the 22 items. *Model 1* proposes that all 22 items load on the same underlying latent dimension, assuming that the items cannot be distinguished on the basis of direction or quality of influence. *Model 2* ('direction model') is a two-factor model, and distinguishes between items that refer to either influence from work or influence from home (irrespective of its quality). *Model 3* ('quality model') also distinguishes between two factors. The first factor includes all items referring to positive interaction and the second factor includes all items referring to negative interaction (irrespective of the originating domain). Lastly, *Model 4* ('hypothesised model') represents the four-factor model and distinguishes between the four expected dimensions: negative WHI, positive WHI, negative HWI, and positive HWI. Table 2 presents the fit-statistics of the four competing factorial models that were tested.

Table 2

Goodness-of-fit Statistics for the Comparison of Factorial Models

Model	χ^2	χ^2/df	GFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
M ₁ One-factor	1879,52	8,99	0,65	0,49	0,43	0,49	0,13
M ₂ Two-factor ("direction model")	1568,45	7,51	0,72	0,59	0,54	0,58	0,11
M ₃ Two-factor ("quality model")	982,63	4,70	0,82	0,76	0,74	0,76	0,09
M ₄ Four-factor ("hypothesised model")	748,14	3,58	0,88	0,84	0,82	0,84	0,07
M ₅ Four-factor ("final model")	469,54	2,51	0,92	0,91	0,90	0,91	0,05

From Table 2 it was clear that Model 1 did not fit well to the data ($\chi^2 = 1879,52_{(n = 500)}$, $df = 209$, $p < 0,001$; GFI, IFI, TLI and CFI $< 0,90$ and RMSEA $> 0,08$). Model 2 ("directional model") and Model 3 ("quality model") explained the associations among the items significantly better than Model 1 (M2 vs. M1: $\chi^2 = 311,07_{(N = 500)}$, $df = 1,00$, $p < 0,001$; M3 vs. M1: $\chi^2 = 896,83_{(N = 500)}$, $df = 1,00$, $p < 0,001$). However, both these models still fell short of what was satisfactory. The four-factor hypothesised model, which distinguished between the four proposed dimensions of work-home interaction, explained the associations among the items significantly better than the other three competing models (M4 vs. M1: $\chi^2 = 1131,38_{(N = 500)}$, $df = 1,00$, $p < 0,001$; M4 vs. M2: $\chi^2 = 814,31_{(N = 320)}$, $df = 1,00$, $p <$

0,001; M4 vs. M3: $\chi^2 = 234,49$ ($N = 500$), $df = 1,00$, $p < 0,001$).

Although Model 4 explained the associations among items significantly better than the other models, the GFI, IFI, TLI and CFI lower than 0,90 were indicative of failure to confirm the hypothesised model. To pinpoint possible areas of misfit, modification indexes were considered, which revealed that the two positive (Positive WHI and Positive HWI) and the two negative (Negative WHI and Negative HWI) latent factors should be correlated. Considering the high covariances (M.I. of Positive WHI and Positive HWI = 111,79; M.I. of Negative WHI and Negative HWI = 70,16), it was decided to re-specify the model, allowing these factors to correlate. Furthermore, inspection of the standardised regression weights, modification indices and standardised residual covariances revealed that one item seemed to be problematic (“How often do you feel that after a pleasant working day/working week, you feel more in the mood to engage in activities with your spouse/family/friends?”), and it was therefore decided to omit this item from further analyses.

It can be seen in Table 2 that Model 5 fitted the data significantly better than Model 4 (M_5 vs. M_4 : $\chi^2 = 278,60$ ($N = 500$), $df = 22,00$, $p < 0,01$). From a practical perspective, it also seemed that the re-specified model indicated relatively good fit ($\chi^2/df < 5,00$; GFI, IFI, TLI and CFI $> 0,90$; RMSEA $< 0,08$). Since this model fit was satisfactory and the results agreed with the theoretical assumptions underlying the structure of the SWING, no further modifications of the model were deemed necessary. Based on these results, it appears that the SWING has a four-dimensional structure that distinguishes between the direction (work-to-home and home-to-work) and quality (negative and positive) of influence, providing support for *Hypothesis 1*.

Descriptive statistics, reliability and the relationship between dimensions

The descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha and correlations between the four SWING dimensions are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients and Correlation Coefficients of the SWING

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	NWHI	PWHI	NHWI
Negative WHI	1,21	0,63	0,86	-	-	-
Positive WHI	1,35	0,66	0,70	-0,02	-	-
Negative HWI	0,58	0,55	0,76	0,39 ⁺	0,00	-
Positive HWI	1,73	0,72	0,75	-0,01	0,51 ⁺⁺	-0,10 [*]

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0,01 level

+ Correlation is practically significant, $r > 0,30$ (medium effect)

++ Correlation is practically significant, $r > 0,50$ (large effect)

From the results in Table 3, all four scales had acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients compared to the guideline of $\alpha \geq 0,70$ (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), providing evidence for the internal consistency of the SWING (*Hypothesis 1b*). Regarding the relationship between the work-home interaction scales, Negative WHI was moderately correlated with negative HWI ($r = 0,39$, $p < 0,01$) and positive WHI was strongly correlated with positive HWI ($r = 0,51$, $p < 0,01$). This would suggest that alteration in one variable would indefinitely cause a simultaneous and/or congruent alteration in the other. There were no significant relationships between the negative and positive scales.

Prevalence

Regarding the prevalence of work-home interaction, paired-samples *t*-tests revealed that employees reported more negative WHI ($M = 1,21$) than negative HWI ($M = 0,58$, $t_{(500)} = 21,38$, $p < 0,01$) and more positive HWI ($M = 1,73$) than positive WHI ($M = 1,35$, $t_{(500)} = -12,48$, $p < 0,01$). The results also indicated that individuals experienced significantly more

positive WHI ($M = 1,35$) than negative WHI ($M = 1,21$, $t_{(500)} = -3,23$, $p < 0,01$) and more positive HWI ($M = 1,73$) than negative HWI ($M = 0,58$, $t_{(500)} = -26,82$, $p < 0,00$).

Differences between demographic groups

Next, MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) was used to determine differences between demographic groups with regard to work-home interaction. Demographic groups included were career phase, race, language, occupation, marital status, parental status, household situation, education level, flexibility at work, use of full annual leave, freedom to arrange circumstances and the partner's contribution to the household situation (financially). Results were first analysed for statistical significance using Wilk's Lambda statistics. ANOVA was used to determine specific differences whenever statistical differences were found. The results of the MANOVA analyses are given below in Table 4.

Table 4

MANOVA – Differences in Work-Home Interaction Levels of Demographic Groups

Variable	Value	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Career phase	0,99	0,39	8	0,92	0,00
Race	0,90	6,74	8	0,00*	0,05
Language	0,92	5,51	8	0,00*	0,04
Occupation	0,88	4,02	16	0,00*	0,31
Marital status	1,00	0,60	4	0,67	0,01
Parental status	0,97	3,98	4	0,00*	0,04
Household situation	0,94	1,80	16	0,03*	0,02
Education	0,98	1,97	4	0,10	0,02
Flexibility	1,00	0,81	4	0,52	0,01
Use of full annual leave	0,98	1,08	8	0,38	0,01
Freedom to arrange circumstances	0,88	3,90	16	0,00*	0,03
Partners' contribution to the household	0,94	1,51	12	0,12	0,02

* $p < 0,05$ = statistically significant

In an analysis of Wilk's Lambda values, statistically significant differences ($p < 0,05$) regarding work-home interaction levels were found between all the variables, except for the participants' career phase, marital status, education, flexibility, use of full annual leave and

their partners' contribution to the household income. The relationship between work-home interaction and the demographic variables levels that showed a statistically significant difference (including race, language, occupation, parental status, household situation, freedom to arrange circumstances) was further analysed using ANOVA. Because sample sizes were different, the Games-Howell procedure was used to determine whether there were any statistical differences between the groups. These results led to the acceptance of the hypotheses regarding race, language, occupation, parental status, household situation and freedom to arrange circumstances, based on their statistical significance. It also led to the rejection of the hypotheses regarding career phase, marital status, education, flexibility and use of full annual leave and partners' contribution to the household, as the p-values for these variables proved non-significant.

The results of the ANOVA based on *Race* are given below in Table 5.

Table 5

ANOVA - Differences in Work-Home Interaction Levels Based on Race

Item	White	Black	Coloured	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Negative WHI	1,23	1,16	1,21	0,50	0,00
Positive WHI	1,20 ^a	1,52 ^b	1,43 ^b	0,00*	0,05
Negative HWI	0,61	0,55	0,52	0,31	0,01
Positive HWI	1,51 ^a	1,96 ^b	1,91 ^b	0,00*	0,09

* Statistically significant difference: $p < 0,05$

^a Group differs statistically significantly from type (in row) where ^b is indicated

Table 5 showed statistically significant differences between levels of Positive WHI and Positive HWI. Black and Coloured participants experienced higher levels of Positive WHI compared to White participants. Black and Coloured participants also experienced higher levels of Positive HWI than White participants did.

The results of the ANOVA based on *Language* are given below in Table 6.

Table 6

ANOVA - Differences in Work-Home Interaction Levels Based on Language

Item	Afrikaans	English	African	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Negative WHI	1,19	1,32	1,15	0,06	0,01
Positive WHI	1,31 ^b	1,20 ^b	1,52 ^a	0,00*	0,04
Negative HWI	0,60	0,59	0,56	0,80	0,00
Positive HWI	1,72	1,47	1,94	0,00*	0,06

Statistically significant difference: $p \leq 0,05$

* Group differs statistically significantly from type (in row) where ^b is indicated

Table 6 showed that there were statistically significant differences between levels of Positive WHI and Positive HWI based on Language. It seemed that the African group experienced statistically significantly higher levels of Positive WHI and Positive HWI compared to Afrikaans and English-speaking employees. Regarding Positive HWI, all three groups differed statistically significantly from each other, where African individuals experienced the highest Positive HWI and English employees the lowest levels of Positive HWI.

The results of the ANOVA based on *Occupation* are given below in Table 7. In the table, “Managers” indicates employees that are in managerial positions. Nurses are employed by either private or public hospitals. “Admin” refers to female employees who perform typical administrative duties, such as being office assistants or secretaries. “People” refers to females who work with people on a daily basis for instance, teachers, psychologists or consultants, and “Diverse” indicates a group consisting of a variety of workers, for example binders, messengers, caterers or librarians.

Table 7

ANOVA - Differences in Work-Home Interaction Levels Based on Occupation

Item	Managers	Nurses	Admin	People	Diverse	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Negative WHI	1,36 ^a	1,20	1,06 ^b	1,19	1,30	0,01*	0,03
Positive WHI	1,21 ^a	1,45 ^b	1,44	1,30	1,25	0,02*	0,02
Negative HWI	0,64 ^b	0,41 ^a	0,69 ^b	0,61 ^b	0,71 ^b	0,00*	0,04
Positive HWI	1,50 ^a	1,88 ^b	1,79 ^b	1,77 ^b	1,56	0,00*	0,04

* Statistically significant difference: $p \leq 0,05$

^a Group differs statistically significantly from type (in row) where ^b is indicated

According to Table 7, statistically significant differences were found for different occupational groups for all four dimensions. Managers showed higher levels of Negative WHI than the administration group and lower Positive WHI compared to the nurses. Nurses also experienced statistically significantly lower levels of Negative HWI compared to the other groups. Furthermore, managers experienced statistically significantly less Positive HWI than the nurses, administration and females who worked with people.

The results of the ANOVA based on *Parental Status* are given below in Table 8.

Table 8

ANOVA - Differences in Work-Home Interaction Levels Based on Parental Status

Item	With Children	Without Children	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Negative WHI	1,23	1,14	0,18	0,00
Positive WHI	1,38	1,26	0,07	0,01
Negative HWI	0,60	0,52	0,15	0,01
Positive HWI	1,79	1,53	0,00*	0,03

* Statistically significant difference: $p \leq 0,05$

Table 8 indicated that statistically significant differences existed for participants with children compared to those without children regarding levels of Positive HWI. According to the results, participants with children experienced higher levels of Positive HWI, while participants without children experienced lower levels of Positive HWI.

The results of the ANOVA based on *Household Situation* are given below in Table 9.

Table 9

ANOVA - Differences in Work-Home Interaction Levels Based on Household Situation

Item	Single Without Children	Single with Children	Married without Children	Married with Children	Living with Parents	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Negative WHI	1,15	1,29	1,14	1,21	1,24	0,56	0,01
Positive WHI	1,22	1,44	1,28	1,35	1,40	0,30	0,01
Negative HWI	0,64	0,59	0,44	0,61	0,70	0,11	0,02
Positive HWI	1,47 ^b	1,89 ^a	1,58 ^b	1,75	1,87	0,00 [*]	0,04

* Statistically significant difference: $p \leq 0,05$

^a Group differs statistically significantly from type (in row) where ^b is indicated

Table 9 indicated that statistically significant differences existed in the level of Positive HWI. According to the results, people that were single with children experienced statistically significantly higher levels of Positive HWI compared to participants that were single and without children, as well as participants who were married without children.

Table 10 showed the differences in work-home interaction based on *Freedom to arrange circumstances*. Differences were determined based on the possibility to take a day off from work or to work from home when something unexpected happened at home (e.g., when a child got ill or a repairperson came to the house).

Table 10

ANOVA - Differences in Work-Home Interaction Levels Based on Freedom to Arrange Circumstances

Item	Very Easy to Arrange	Easy to Arrange	Possible to Arrange	Difficult to Arrange	Impossible to arrange	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta Squared
Negative WHI	0,92 ^a	1,02 ^a	1,23 ^b	1,48 ^b	1,55 ^b	0,00 [*]	0,09
Positive WHI	1,42	1,42	1,32	1,16	1,37	0,06	0,02
Negative HWI	0,47	0,58	0,59	0,60	0,71	0,29	0,01
Positive HWI	1,63	1,80	1,75	1,64	1,72	0,52	0,01

* Statistically significant difference: $p \leq 0,05$

^a Group differs statistically significantly from type (in row) where ^b is indicated

As can be seen in Table 10, statistically significant differences were only found between groups for Negative WHI. In relation to the results, participants who felt that it was very easy

or easy to arrange a work schedule, experienced statistically significantly lower levels of Negative WHI compared to employees for whom it was possible or impossible to make such arrangements.

DISCUSSION

The objectives of this research were to describe the work-life interaction of South African working females, to determine the prevalence of work-home interaction and to determine whether various demographic groups differed in terms of work-home interaction levels.

The first objective was to establish the construct validity of the SWING (e.g., whether work-home interaction can be considered as a four-dimensional construct that distinguishes between the direction and quality of influence). It was hypothesised that a four-factor model (negative WHI, negative HWI, positive WHI, and positive HWI) would fit the sample data better than a one-factor or two-factor model. To achieve this objective, four models were tested and compared. The first model was a one-factor model, proposing that all 22 items on the SWING load on the same fundamental latent dimension. For that reason, it was supposed that the items could not be distinguished on the basis of direction (work-to-home and home-to-work) or quality (negative vs. positive) of influence. Structural equation modelling showed that the one-factor model did not fit the data at all. The second model was branded the “directional model” and assumed that all items measuring work-to-home interference (regardless of whether these were positive or negative items) would form one factor, and all items measuring home-to-work interference would form another factor. A poor overall fit was also found for this model. The third model (the so-called “quality model”) believed that all positive items would load on a factor and all negative items would load on the second factor. This model also fell short of an acceptable fit. The hypothesised model (Model 4) represented a four-factor model and distinguished between the four expected dimensions (negative WHI, negative HWI, positive WHI, and positive HWI). This model explained the associations among the items significantly better than the other three competing models. However, the fit indices indicated that the model could be improved. Deletion of one item (“How often do you feel that after a pleasant working day/working week, you feel more in the mood to engage in activities with your spouse/family/friends?”) translated to good fit of the hypothesised model.

In addition, it was vital to establish whether all four scales of the SWING were reliable. Examination of the Cronbach alpha coefficients indicated that all the scales were reliable. Pieterse and Mostert (2005) have also established the four-factor structure of the SWING in a sample of workers employed in the earthmoving equipment industry in South Africa, and have found the scales to be reliable (Cronbach alpha coefficients for the SWING were: Negative WHI: 0,87; Negative HWI: 0,79; Positive WHI: 0,79; Positive HWI: 0,76). Based on these results, it seems that the SWING is a reliable instrument for measuring work-home interaction for this sample of South African working females.

The second objective of this study was to determine the prevalence of work-home interaction within South African working females. The results revealed that female employees reported more negative work-home interaction than negative home-work interaction. Work characteristics such as unplanned overtime, shift work, job pressure and not experiencing enough support from supervisors are highly stressful (Violanti & Aron, 1995), and perhaps the experience of high levels of negative work-home interaction could be attributed by the working women in this sample to these factors. These findings also seem in line with other empirical studies (Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Montgomery, Panagopoulou, & Benos, 2002). According to Gutek, Searle & Klepa (1991), it is due to the forced structure and obligatory nature of work that workers are more inclined to prioritise work over private or family matters, and to reduce their effort investment at home rather than at work, leading to more interference from work to home than the other way around.

Moreover, the results indicated that the working women experienced more positive home-work interference than positive work-home interference. According to Geurts et al., (2005), the home domain may offer more promise to adjust behaviour to one's need for recovery than the work domain. For example, if certain home resources (e.g., a household help, household appliances, a babysitter, family) are present in a person's life, it may be easier for that person to handle the challenging aspects of her home domain. According to Demerouti et al., (2004); Geurts and Demerouti (2003), and Grzywacz and Marks (2000) it may be connected with positive load effects or spillover from home to work, facilitating one's functioning at work. The results appear to uphold previous studies (Demerouti et al., 2004; Kinnunen et al., 2006).

The third and last objective of this study was to investigate the role of demographical differences with regard to work-life balance of individuals. Working females' race, home

language, occupational status, parental status, household situation, and the freedom they enjoy in arranging their own circumstances showed significant differences. The hypotheses with regard to career phase, marital status, education level, flexibility, use of full annual leave and partners' contribution to the household were could not be accepted on the grounds that no statistically significant differences were found.

Differences based on *race* indicated that Black and Coloured participants experienced higher levels of positive work-home inference compared to White participants. Possible reasons for this finding may be the way in which each of us perceives the world around us. As we can see each culture has distinguishing attributes and these affect the way in which we interpret situations and circumstances. According to Oldfield (2005), a possible explanation could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic culture where distinct boundaries for work and home interaction exist, whereas the Setswana culture is a more collective one where people are more socially orientated and more often the boundaries between work and home become diffused. For example, a situation that may be considered worthless or even detrimental by one person/culture may be perceived as challenging and/or promising by another. Black and Coloured participants also experienced higher levels of positive home-work interference than White participants did. With regard to the higher positive home-work interference of African and Coloured participants, perhaps White participants' home situation was less favourable than that of the Black and Coloured participants' home situation. In a more collective culture, such as that of African participants, the family is always there to help with the caring responsibilities. The generally individualist orientation of White participants may lead them to lack the necessary social support structures to facilitate dealing with home-work interaction.

With regard to *language*, it seems that the African language-speaking group experienced significantly higher levels of positive work-home interference and positive home-work interference, when compared to Afrikaans and English-speaking employees. Regarding positive home-work interference, all three groups differed significantly from each other, where African individuals experienced the highest positive home-work interference and English employees the lowest levels of positive home-work interference. These findings seem to reflect those made for participants' racial grouping, and reiterated the findings of Grzywacz and Marks (2000) and Van Tonder and Mostert (in press). These findings are in contrast with the findings of Kinnunen and Mauno (1998), Frone et al., (1997) and Pieterse

and Mostert (2005), who have found no differences with regard to work-home interaction for different language groups.

Significant differences were found for different occupational groups for all four dimensions of work-life interaction. Managers showed higher levels of negative work-home interaction than females who performed work as office assistants or secretaries, and lower positive work-home interference compared to nurses. Nurses also experienced significantly lower levels of negative home-work interference compared to the other groups. Furthermore, managers experienced significantly less positive home-work interference than nurses, females involved with administration or who work with people. It may be that managers' work is more demanding and less flexible than the admin group, causing them to experience more negative work-home interference. Considering that nurses may be working in an environment characterised by sick, suffering or dying people, it is understandable that they experienced significantly lower levels of negative home-work interaction. Rather, the home situation may serve as a positive resource in dealing with the emotional load of their work (Geurts et al., 2005).

Significant differences exist between participants with children compared to those without children regarding levels of positive home-work interaction. Participants with children experienced higher levels of positive home-work interference, while participants without children experienced lower levels of positive home-work interference. This is in agreement with Demerouti et al., (2004) and Geurts et al., (2005), who refer to the role enhancement hypothesis, which assumes that managing multiple roles (in this case that of an employee, spouse and parent) may create energy and provide extra resources that contribute to positive interaction from the home to the work sphere.

In relation to *household situation*, significant differences exist in the level of positive home-work interference. According to the results, employees who were single with children experience statistically significantly higher levels of positive home-work interference compared to participants that are single and without children, as well as participants who were married without children. This is a somewhat unexpected finding, as children may indicate greater responsibility on the part of the parent. This responsibility could in turn aid greater negative home-work interference. The presence of children is here rather suggested as

a rewarding experience in the home situation, and parenting may be seen as a positive resource.

Not surprisingly, there were differences regarding *freedom* to arrange circumstances (for example to take a day off from work or to work from home in the event of unforeseen circumstances at home). Significant differences were found between groups for negative work-home interference. Participants who felt that it was easy to arrange a work schedule, experienced significantly lower levels of negative work-home interference compared to those employees for whom it was only possible, or completely impossible, to make such arrangements. It is consequently obvious that the freedom an employee experiences at work with regard to making alternative arrangements in the event of unforeseen difficulties at home has an effect on the negative spillover from work to home. Especially women with young children who experience difficulty to arrange time off may experience this negative spillover.

Limitations of this study should also be noted. The results have been obtained exclusively by self-report questionnaires, and the use of cross-sectional design can be a limitation. These factors limit the relationships between the variables, and the understanding of the consequences of work-home interaction over a period of time. Prospective longitudinal studies and quasi-experimental research designs are needed to further studies concerning work-home interaction. Even though it was one of the objectives of this study, it should be noted that a further limitation is that this research was conducted in a homogeneous sample of only females. Unique relationships probably exist between working and work-life interaction for males as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to the results obtained from this study, the SWING is recommended as a measuring instrument to measure work-home interaction in the South African workplace among women. It is, however, suggested that the functioning of one item is not above suspicion. Research within South Africa, and more specifically for working females, should focus on helping them align their work and home demands in such a way that their work and home domains do not influence each other in a negative way. An imperative recommendation

for future research would also be the use of longitudinal research designs, as the validation of hypothesised causalities and relationships is then made possible.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter comprises conclusions regarding the literature review and the empirical study according to the specific objectives. The limitations of the research are discussed, followed by recommendations for the research problem in the organisation. Lastly, suggestions are made for future research.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions are reached based on the specific objectives set for this study. The first objective was to conceptualise work-home interaction from the literature. Work-home interaction is conceptualised by Geurts et al., (2005, p. 322) as “an interactive process in which a worker’s functioning in one domain (e.g., home) is influenced by (negative or positive) load reactions that have built up in the other domain (e.g., work)”. Difficulties in combining work and family roles may either arise from time demand that makes it physically impossible to be in two places at the same time (time-based conflict), from the spillover of strain from one domain to the other (strain-based conflict), or from the incompatibility of behaviours requested in each domain (behaviour-based conflict) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The second objective set for this research was to determine if work-home interaction is best characterised as a four-dimensional construct that distinguishes between the quality of influence (negative vs. positive) and the direction of influence (work-home vs. home-work). It was found that a four-factor model (negative WHI, negative HWI, positive WHI, and positive HWI) fitted the sample data better than a one-factor model or two-factor models. This model explained the associations among the items significantly better than the other three competing models. However, the fit indices indicated that the model could be improved. Deletion of one item (“How often do you feel that after a pleasant working day/working week, you feel more in the mood to engage in activities with your spouse/family/friends?”) translated to a good fit of the hypothesised model.

In addition, it was established that all four scales of the SWING were reliable, by examining the Cronbach alpha coefficients. Pieterse and Mostert (2005) have also established the four-factor structure of the SWING in a sample of workers employed in the earthmoving equipment industry in South Africa, and found the scales to be reliable (Cronbach alpha coefficients for the SWING were: Negative WHI: 0,87; Negative HWI: 0,79; Positive WHI: 0,79; Positive HWI: 0,76). Based on these results, it seems that the SWING is a valid and reliable instrument for measuring work-home interaction for this sample of South African working females.

In addressing the third objective of this research, it was necessary to determine the prevalence of various types of work-home interaction. Results indicated that female employees reported more negative work-home interaction than negative home-work interaction. Work characteristics such as unplanned overtime, shift work, job pressure and not experiencing enough support from supervisors are highly stressful (Violanti & Aron, 1995), and perhaps the experience of high levels of negative work-home interaction could be attributed to similar factors by the working women in this sample. These findings also seem in line with other empirical studies (Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Montgomery, Panagopoulou, & Benos, 2002). According to Gutek, Searle, and Klepa (1991), it is due to the forced structure and obligatory nature of work that workers are more inclined to prioritise work over private or family matters, and to reduce their effort investment at home rather than at work, leading to more interference from work to home than the other way around. In addition, the results indicated that the working women experienced more positive home-work interference than positive work-home interference. According to Geurts et al., (2005), the home domain may offer more promise to adjust behaviour to one's need for recovery than the work domain. For example, if certain home resources (e.g., a household help, household appliances, a babysitter, family) are present in a person's life, it may be easier for that person to handle the challenging aspects of her home domain.

Considering the fourth research objective, the effects of different demographic variables (career phase, race, language, occupation, marital status, parental status, household situation, education, flexibility, use of full annual leave, freedom to arrange circumstances and a partner's contribution to the household) were considered to have possible differential effects in working females' experiences of work-home interaction. It was found that differences based on *race* indicated that Black and Coloured participants experienced higher levels of

positive work-home inference compared to White participants. Possible reasons for this finding may be the way in which each of us perceives the world around us. As we can see, each culture has distinguishing attributes and these affect the way in which we interpret situations and circumstances. According to Oldfield (2005), a possible explanation could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic one where distinct boundaries for work and home interaction exist, whereas the Setswana culture is a more collective one where people are more socially orientated and more often merge boundaries between work and home become diffused. For example, a situation that may be considered worthless or even detrimental by one person/culture may be perceived as challenging and/or promising circumstances by another. Black and Coloured participants also experienced higher levels of positive home-work interference than White participants did. With regard to the higher positive home-work interference of African and Coloured participants, perhaps White participants' home situation has been less favourable than that of the Black and Coloured participants home situation. In a more collective culture, such as that of African participants', the family is always there to help with the caring responsibilities. The generally individualist orientation of White participants may lead them to lack the necessary social support structures to facilitate dealing with home-work interaction.

With regard to *language*, it seems that the African language-speaking group experienced significantly higher levels of positive work-home interference and positive home-work interference, when compared to Afrikaans and English-speaking employees. Regarding positive home-work interference, all three groups differed significantly from each other, where African individuals experienced the highest positive home-work interference and English employees the lowest levels of positive home-work interference. These findings seem to reflect those made for participants' racial grouping, and reiterated the findings of Grzycwacz and Marks (2000) and Van Tonder and Mostert (in press). These findings are in contrast with the findings of Kinnunen and Mauno (1998), Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1997) and Pieterse and Mostert (2005), who have found no differences with regard to work-home interaction for different language groups.

Significant differences were found for different occupational groups for all four dimensions of work-life interaction. Managers showed higher levels of negative work-home interaction than females who performed work as office assistants or secretaries, and lower positive work-home interference compared to nurses. Nurses also experienced significantly lower levels of

negative home-work interference compared to the other groups. Furthermore, managers experienced significantly less positive home-work interference than nurses, females involved with administration or who work with people. It may be that managers' work is more demanding and less flexible than that of the admin group, causing them to experience more negative work-home interference. Considering that nurses may be working in an environment characterised by sick, suffering or dying people, it is understandable that they experienced significantly lower levels of negative home-work interaction. Rather, the home situation may serve as a positive resource in dealing with the emotional load of their work (Geurts et al., 2005).

Significant differences existed between participants with children compared to those without children regarding levels of positive home-work interaction. Participants with children experienced higher levels of positive home-work interference, while participants without children experienced lower levels of positive home-work interference. This is in agreement with Demerouti, Geurts, and Kompier (2004) and Geurts et al., (2005), who refer to the role enhancement hypothesis, which assumes that managing multiple roles (in this case employee, spouse and parent) may create energy and provide extra resources that contribute to positive interaction from the home to the work sphere.

In relation to *household situation*, significant differences existed in the level of positive home-work interference. According to the results, people that are single with children experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive home-work interference compared to participants that are single and without children, as well as participants who are married without children. This is a somewhat unexpected finding, as children may indicate greater responsibility on the part of the parent. The expectation of this study was that having children would aid in greater negative home-work interference. However, the presence of children is regarded rather as a rewarding experience in the home situation, and parenting may be seen as a positive resource.

Not surprisingly, there were differences regarding *freedom* to arrange circumstances (for example to take a day off from work or to work from home in the event of unforeseen circumstances at home). Significant differences were found between groups for negative work-home interference. Participants who felt that it was easy to arrange a work schedule, experienced significantly lower levels of negative work-home interference compared to those

employees for whom it was only possible, or completely impossible, to make such arrangements. It is consequently obvious that the freedom an employee experiences at work with regard to making alternative arrangements in the event of unforeseen difficulties at home has an effect on the negative spillover from work to home. Especially women with young children who experienced difficulty to arrange time off may experience this negative spillover.

3.2 LIMITATIONS

A range of limitations of this study should be noted. Firstly, the results were obtained exclusively by self-report questionnaires. On the other hand, few other methodologies were available in dealing with the problem of self-report questionnaires. Research is therefore required to offer more objective forms of measurement to prevail over this problem.

Secondly, the use of a cross-sectional design can be a limitation, limiting the relationship and consequences of work-home interaction over a period of time. Prospective longitudinal studies and quasi-experimental research designs are needed to further studies concerning work-home interaction. However, since the aim of this study was merely to investigate the possible differences that may exist regarding work-home interaction for different demographical groups, cross-sectional data seemed adequate. The translation of experienced negative or positive interaction in outcomes (such as stress or physical and psychological health), should ideally be studied longitudinally.

A third limitation was that this research was conducted on a homogeneous sample of only females. However, since women are most likely to hold the dual roles of family caretaker and career according to this research, and thus most likely to experience work-home interaction, it actually seemed that having a relatively large sample of females only was a strength of this study. It should also be kept in mind that in the South African context where little research regarding the work-home interaction phenomenon has taken place, access to a good sample of representative working females fills an important gap. However, future research should also investigate this phenomenon among South African working males.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Next, the recommendations to solve the research problems as described in Chapter 1 are discussed. This is followed by recommendations for future research.

3.3.1 Recommendations for future practice

Balance between work and home roles poses an enormous challenge to females in practice. Work and home interaction research made known that work-life initiatives have a positive effect on the practice as well as the wellbeing of individuals as well as their families (Barnett, 1998; Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998; Ferber, O'Ferrell, & Allen, 1991; Greenhaus, 1988; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999).

A variety of outcomes of work-home interaction is found, including personality characteristics, family characteristics, and job characteristics (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). These outcomes can be greatly interactive and may be equally damaging to the practice, the individuals and their families. The consequence may comprise psychological, physical, attitudinal, behavioural and organisational outcomes. Work-related stress, burnout and a lack of engagement (Frone et al., 1997; Väänänen et al., 2004) are a small part of the largely familiar consequences, which pressure the individual and their families on top of the practice. Physical penalties include headaches, backache, upset stomach, fatigue, dizziness, and pain in the chest (Geurts, Rutte, & Peeters, 1999). The expenditure on stimulants, for instance alcohol, cigarettes and coffee may also increase as a result (Burke, 1988; Frone et al., 1997). Every one of the above may reduce general health (Frone, 2002; Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999). Conversely, there can, in addition, be positive consequences such as job satisfaction, which will have a positive influence on the work and home domains (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutten, 2000).

The conflict for balance will continue between work and home; consequently it is vital for practices, working females as well as individuals to understand work-home interaction and the cost of interference between the different roles in the work and home domains. This enhanced understanding and knowledge may help practices, working females and individuals in perceiving problematic areas and developing programmes intended for general wellness.

The SWING, although a fairly new measuring instrument, will add to the acceptance of work-home interaction problem areas. If practices have the skill to increase an alertness of these interactions, it can improve the habitual work and family lives of the working females and their families.

Research from this study shows that negative WHI is more prevalent than negative HWI and that positive HWI is more prevalent than positive WHI for working females. This finding has implications for organisations and working females. According to Duxbury and Higgins (2001), their respondents that were experiencing high role overload and high work to family interference were significantly less committed to their employer and tended to be less satisfied with their jobs. In addition, they reported much higher levels of job stress, were more frequently absent from work, made more use of employee assistance programmes, and more frequently gave serious consideration to quitting their job. These employees reported greater negative spillover from work to family, lower family satisfaction, and a greater tendency to miss family activities due to work demands. Employers could offer their employees, especially those faced with the demanding task of managing a family, increased control and flexibility concerning when and where they work. This can possibly decrease work to family and family to work interference.

With regard to women with children/without children, Duxbury and Higgins (2001) report that non-parents can act relatively independently as they do not have the constraints of caring for children. The addition of the parent role complicates their life situation. It places greater demands on them while at the same time adding additional constraints. To reduce this family to work interference, the employees should raise work-life balance issues in their discussions within the workplace and within the community. They should take advantage of the supportive policies available within their practices. If there are no policies in place they should recommend the installation of family policies to the practices.

According to Bailyn and Harrington (2004), it is possible to organise work in such a way that employees can be productive and at the same time be able to deal with their families. Nevertheless, this would require the redesigning of ethical and work structures. As Geurts and Demerouti (2003) state, the focus should not only be on *formal* policies (e.g., by offering flexible working hours, compressed work schedules, childcare facilities, parental leave), but also on the *informal* work environment. Even though organisations may have policies in

place that provide for family responsibility leave, an environment needs to be created where employees feel at ease in utilising such policies without being (or feeling) uncomfortable.

Furthermore, initiatives may be introduced to increase an employee's sense of control, possibly through better use of self-directed work teams, promoting meaningful employee participation in decision making and increasing and improving information sharing between management and employees (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001). Duxbury and Higgins (2001) also suggest devoting more resources to improving "people management" practices within the workplace. Employees who work for a supportive manager – one who is a good communicator and focuses on output as opposed to hours worked – report a greater ability to balance work and family than those who have a non-supportive manager. Additional skills that are needed for the managers, especially in South Africa due to the presence of many different cultural groups, are to manage the "people" from all the different races. They must be made aware of cultural differences for example vocabulary that is appropriate in certain circumstances and what is not appropriate, dress code, time management and religion.

Duxbury and Higgins (2001) suggest that work-life policies may be more effective for women in certain job categories (i.e., more acceptable to use them, more available to women in certain types of jobs, unions having a positive impact on these sorts of jobs). Additional research is needed to determine how exactly a professional or non-professional occupation influences work-family interference, for instance, to determine if work to family interference has declined for non-professional women but has increased for professional women. There is a huge need for research within South Africa concerning language differences in this regard. Seeing that the mainstream of the respondents have English as a second or third language, questionnaires for future research regarding work-life balance should be translated into a language other than English (for example Afrikaans, Sepedi, Setswana or isiZulu). This would help to reduce research stumbling blocks regarding the influence of language on work-life interference.

3.3.2 Recommendations for future research

Research within South Africa and more specifically on working females should focus on helping these females align their work and home demands in such a way that their work and home domains do not influence each other in a negative way and to keep the implications of

negative interaction to a minimum. For instance, cultural differences should be taken into account, as well as the age of the working mothers children. The progress in the direction of more refined hypothetical models as well as structural equation modelling that goes beyond the stress-strain relationship could be of fundamental advantage for future research. Future research could be directed to structural equation modelling of the negative work-home interference with other relationships.

An imperative recommendation for future research would also be the use of longitudinal research designs, as the validation of the hypothesised causalities and relationships is then made possible. With longitudinal data, it would be achievable to examine whether these relationships hold true over time. Regardless of the reality that work-home interaction is a recently researched domain; a need for longitudinal studies within this field of study has been expressed (Demerouti et al., 2004).

Derived from the results of the current study, it is suggested that in the South African environment the SWING may be used to assess work-home interaction. Even though one item was problematic (“How often do you feel that after a pleasant working day/working week, you feel more in the mood to engage in activities with your spouse/family/friends?”), the four scales of the SWING can be used to provide information on the interaction between work and home, and vice versa. This problematic item could be reformulated to improve understanding. Seeing that the majority of the respondents have English as a second or third language, a vital recommendation, in particular for South Africa, would be the translation of the SWING into other official South African languages, and then studying construct equivalence.

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