

**EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK AND
NON-WORK ROLES OF PARENTING MALES AT A HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTION**

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COMMENTS

The reader should bear 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.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Exploring the relationship between work and non-work roles of parenting males at a higher education institution.

Key terms: Work roles, non-work roles, non-work-to-work spillover, positive spillover, negative spillover, antecedents, consequences, working fathers, accumulation of multiple roles, academic staff, and higher education institution.

In today's society, there are two very important domains in the life of an employed individual, namely work and home. Within the home (or non-work) domain, different life roles emerge. These roles differ from one person to the next. Since both work and non-work roles encompass the individual's whole life, it is necessary to investigate what the different life roles are and how they influence an individual's multiple roles, whether positively or negatively. The objective of this study was to investigate the different roles that working fathers experience, to identify how these fathers experience the interaction between multiple roles, and the consequences of being involved in multiple roles.

Since the dramatic changes within the economic, political and social climate has give rise to more women entering the workforce, a large amount of research has been dedicated to investigate the consequence of these changes within different spheres of life. However, this study focussed on the different roles fulfilled by the parental male, specifically investigating working fathers at a higher education institution.

A research design from a qualitative experimental approach was used to conduct this study. The participants consisted of 10 working fathers, who are lectures at a specific higher education institute and who differ with regard to age as well as educational and socio-economic status. Semi-structured interviews with the selected participants were used to collect the necessary data. Content analysis was used to analyse, reduce and interpret the data obtained from the participants. The results indicated that the working fathers in this study has specific non-work (home domain) roles, namely roles regarding leisure, spirituality, leadership roles in the community, family (parental, extended family, spousal) as well as a work role and being a financial provider. Most of them fulfil all of the above-mentioned

roles, which help them, for example, to buffer stress, to clear their thoughts by doing some type of sport, to be more patient in various aspects of their life, and to help them with better communication at home as well as at work. The interaction within these multiple roles does however also affect them negatively, for instance participants find it difficult to place all of their focus on their family when the workload is heavy. Some of them were used to taking work home, but since they have children, time after hours is too limited to work. The working fathers also mentioned that it is difficult to concentrate at work when there is tension at home or when finance is a concern.

Recommendations for future research were made.

OPSOMMING

Titel: 'n Ondersoek na die verhouding tussen werk en nie-werksrolle van manlike ouers by 'n hoër opvoedkundige instelling.

Sleutelwoorde: Werksrolle, nie-werksrolle, nie-werk-tot-werkoorvloei, positiewe oorvloei, negatiewe oorvloei, voorafgaande faktore, nagevolge, werkende vaders, veelvuldige rolakkumulاسie, akademiese personeel, hoër onderwysinstelling.

In vandag se samelewing is daar twee baie belangrike domeine in die lewe van 'n werkende individu: werk en huis. In die domein van die huis (of nie-werk) kom verskillende rolle na vore. Hierdie rolle verskil van persoon tot persoon. Aangesien 'n individu se lewe beide werk en nie-werksrolle behels, is dit noodsaaklik om ondersoek in te stel na die verskillende lewensrolle en die wyses waarop dit die individu se veelvuldige rolle beïnvloed, hetsy positief of negatief. Die doelwit van hierdie studie was om insae te kry in die verskillende rolle wat werkende vaders ervaar, om te identifiseer hoe die werkende ouers die interaksie tussen veelvuldige rolle ervaar en die gevolge van betrokkenheid in veelvuldige rolle.

Die dramatiese veranderings in die ekonomiese, politiese en sosiale klimaat wat veroorsaak dat meer vroue die werksmag betree, het gelei tot 'n groot toename in navorsing gerig op die effek wat genoemde veranderings op die verskillende lewensfere het. Hierdie studie het egter op die verskillende rolle wat deur die werkende vader vervul word, gefokus, met besondere klem op werkende vaders by 'n hoër onderwysinstelling.

'n Navorsingsontwerp vanuit 'n kwalitatiewe eksperimentele benadering is vir die uitvoering van die studie gebruik. Die deelnemers het bestaan uit 10 werkende vaders, naamlik manlike lektore by 'n spesifieke hoër onderwysinstelling wat verskil het ten opsigte van ouderdom asook opvoedkundige en sosio-ekonomiese status. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met die gekose deelnemers is gebruik om die data te versamel. Inhoudsanalise is gebruik om die data (wat van die onderskeie deelnemers verkry is), te analiseer, te reduseer en te interpreteer. Die resultate toon dat die werkende vaders in hierdie studie wel spesifieke nie-werksrolle het, naamlik rolle ten opsigte van ontspanning, die geestelike lewe, leierskapsrolle in die gemeenskap, rolle in die gesin (ouerskap, uitgebreide gesin, eggenoot), asook 'n werksrol en

om 'n finansiële voorsiener te wees. Die meeste van die werkende vaders vervul al die bogenoemde rolle, wat onder andere help om hulle teen stres te beskerm, om hul gedagtes te vernuwe deur aan die een of ander sport deel te neem, om meer geduldig te wees in verskeie aspekte van hul lewens, maar ook om hulle te help om beter by die huis sowel as by die werk te kommunikeer. Dit beïnvloed hulle egter ook op 'n negatiewe manier. Die werkende vaders vind dit moeilik om hulle totale fokus en aandag op hul gesin te vestig wanneer hulle 'n hoë werkslading het. Party van die werkende vaders was daaraan gewoond om saans werk huis toe te neem, maar vandat hul kinders het, beperk dit hulle produktiwiteit nauurs. Daar is bevind dat die werkende vaders dit moeilik vind om by die werk produktief te wees wanneer daar wrywing by die huis is of wanneer hulle finansiële bekommernisse het.

Aanbevelings vir verdere navorsing is gemaak.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation focusses on the different roles that working fathers fulfil, in order to identify how these fathers experience the interaction between multiple roles, and what the consequences of being involved in multiple roles are. In this chapter, the problem statement is discussed. This is followed by the research objectives and specific objectives. The research design and research method are explained, and these are then followed by the chapter layout and the chapter summary.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since South Africa's first democratic election in April 1994, immense changes have occurred in the composition of the South African workforce, as well as in the nature of work itself (Schreuder & Theron, 2001). The traditional South African household, in which the man was the only breadwinner and the woman took care of the children at home, is increasingly being replaced by dual-career couples (Lewis & Cooper, 2005). This has an influence on the dynamics of the non-work and work life of employed individuals (Marais, Mostert, Geurts & Taris, 2009). Lewis and Cooper (2005) mention that more men and women are working longer hours and therefore report increasing demands at their workplaces. Furthermore, Sulsky and Smith (2005) found that these demographic and structural changes in the workforce as well as in the non-work structure have affected both non-work roles and work roles and their interrelation with each other.

To motivate people to engage in their work role is a common problem in any organisation, complicated by the existence of multiple roles due to the spillover of one's attitude, behaviour and emotion associated within one role towards the other (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Rothbard (2001) maintains that people are increasingly being challenged to actively engage in multiple roles, as careers have become more complex than in the past. Today people have no other choice but to engage in both work roles and non-work roles and the consequence of non-work engagement on work is of prime importance (Rothbard, 2001).

Edwards and Rothbard (2000) and Greenhaus and Powell (2006) note that organisational researchers have recently been paying increased attention to the relationship between work roles and non-work roles. Geurts and Demerouti (2003) define *non-work roles* as “activities and obligations beyond an individual’s family situation as well as activities and responsibilities within the family domain,” whereas *work roles* signify “a set of tasks an individual performs while occupying a position in an organisation”. These definitions suggest that the work and non-work domains entail different roles. According to Frone (2003), a distinction can be drawn between home roles (e.g. family roles, religious roles, roles in the community and leisure roles) and work roles (e.g. employee, manager and union representative) (Geurts et al. 2005) while Small and Riley (1990) also identify multiple life roles, namely that of parental, spousal or partner, and roles regarding elder care, home care and leisure. Many studies limit their investigation to three main roles, that of spouse, parent and employee (cf. Hall, 1992; Hunt & Annandale, 1993). However, other roles have also been identified, such as caregiver, volunteer, teacher, and then there are instrumental roles, leisure roles, social roles, and being an adult child (i.e. caring for a dependent parent) (Bourne, Wilson, Lester & Kickul, 2009; Matthews & Power, 2002; Westman & Piotrkowski, 1999). Role identities are important sources of psychological well-being as the role requirements attached to each role give purpose, meaning and direction to one’s life (Thoits, 1983).

The relationship, and more specifically the spillover process between non-work and work domains, has developed into an enormous amount of attraction of academic interest, more than was the case several years ago (Stevens, Minnotte, Mannon & Kiger, 2007). *Spillover* is generally defined as “a process in which emotion, mood and behaviour in one domain (family or workplace) accumulate within a person to be transferred into the other domain” (Leiter & Durup, 1996; Roehling, Moen & Batt, 2003; Westman, 2005). It can involve the fluctuation of emotions from one role to another. Both positive (i.e. satisfaction) and negative (i.e. tension) spillover can occur between the two roles (Geurts et al., 2005). The demand for research on the specific interactions between different roles is imperative (Demerouti, Geurts & Kompier, 2004). Research clearly indicates that employees find it difficult to combine work and domestic obligations, and that work roles and home roles could influence each other in a negative way (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Van Hooff et al., 2005). Krause (2003) states that a substantial amount of evidence suggests that the

conflict experienced due to balancing multiple roles, particularly those involved within the work and family domains, contribute to negative psychological and physical well-being of individuals.

Negative spillover is a form of inter-role conflict that involves the extent to which individuals feel that the demands of paid work and family roles are incompatible so that participation in either role is difficult because of the other role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Nomaguchi, 2009). According to Voydanoff (2004), the demand–resource perspective suggests that people experience greater work–family conflict when demands of paid work and family responsibilities are high, while resources that help them manage such demands are less, or perceptions of demands that they feel they must fulfil are higher.

According to Geurts and Demerouti (2003), negative work–family spillover could be based on role characteristics that affect time involvement, strain or behaviour in one domain that is incompatible with fulfilling the role in the other domain. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) distinguish three types of work–family conflict:

- 1) time-based conflict (time pressures associated with one role prevent a person from fulfilling the expectations in another role);
- 2) strain-based conflict (strain experienced in one role intrudes into and interferes with participation in another role); and
- 3) behaviour-based conflict (specific behaviours required in one role are incompatible with behaviour expectations within another role).

Time and strain-based conflict become visible when the fulfilment of demands in one domain is difficult owing to the time devoted to and strain produced in the other domain (Geurts et al., 2005).

Negative spillover takes place when problems and conflicts in the work drain and preoccupy individuals, impacting negatively on their behaviour and experiences regarding their non-work roles (Roehling et al., 2003). A study by Galinsky, Johnson and Fredman (1993) indicated that 83% of working mothers and 72% of working fathers reported that they experience conflict between their job demands and their need to spend more time with their families. Research also indicates that parental involvement is negatively affected by workplace demands (Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean & Hofferth, 2001).

Although most of the research on spillover has focussed on the negative side of spillover (Stoddard & Madsen, 2007), studies have shown that positive spillover does occur between the non-work and work domains (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne & Grzywacz 2006; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Positive spillover takes place when satisfaction and stimulation in the work role translate into high levels of energy and satisfaction in the non-work role (Carlson et al., 2006; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Roehling et al., 2003). According to Frone (2003) as well as Greenhaus and Powell (2006), positive spillover asserts that experiences in either role generate resources that may be profitably used in the other role, thereby enhancing the quality of life.

Grzywacz and Marks (2000) suggest that the impact of family on work life is evaluated positively more often than negatively by both male and female workers. They also note the possibility that involvement in multiple roles can have a positive impact on well-being through exposure to more than one source of satisfaction and/or support, which can in turn be harnessed to spill over to other domains. More recent research findings show that by participating in multiple roles, individuals can gain various benefits and this can increase the quality of their daily lives (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Nordenmark, 2002). Positive spillover from the non-work domains to the work domain seems just as strong, and therefore also deserves recognition (Kirchmeyer, 1992b). Demerouti et al. (2004) state that the non-work domain is the one domain that has failed to receive recognition for its positive impact on the work role. Kirchmeyer (1992b) maintains that parenting helps in developing self-management skills such as patience and time management. She also found that work in the community was said to develop one's managerial abilities such as teamwork, delegation and presenting ideas. Difficulties with regard to balancing work and family demands can also influence leisure activities, parent-child relationships and home management (Stoner, Robins & Russell-Chapin, 2005; Weigel, Weigel, Berger, Cook & DelCampo, 1995).

It appears that involvement in multiple roles have negative and positive consequences (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Bourne et al. (2009) point out that taking part in multiple roles leaves one emotionally exhausted as a result of all the various demands made by both work and non-work roles. Alternatively, multiple roles may influence the gradient in psychological distress when other resources are limited (for example, among single parents or those on low incomes) (Khlat, Sermet & LePape, 2000). Multiple role accumulation might contribute to a

complex cognitive representation of the self that in turn can moderate the outcomes of stress (Linville, 1987).

Negative family–work spillover has also been shown to have relation to family outcomes, for example, family–work conflict was related to marital and parental dissatisfaction (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). In a study by Geurts et al. (2005), negative interaction between home and work domains was associated with a higher level of fatigue; therefore, interference from both domains hamper recovery, which yields negative load reactions.

Nomaguchi (2009) suggests that having young children may be related to higher work–family conflict because young children demand parents’ intensive commitment. Moreover, dissatisfaction with either family or work roles can have a negative spillover consequence on parents’ other multiple roles (Williams & Alliger, 1994). Involved fathers have become the ideal fatherhood, although breadwinning remains central in men’s definitions of a good father (Winslow, 2005). In recent years, fathers pursuing both ideals have often expressed a great deal of conflict between the desire to spend more time with their children and the demands of earning a living (Townsend, 2002).

Benefits gained from performing several roles may increase an individual’s privileges and resources in his/her social environment, act as a steppingstone for problems or failures in any single life domain, assist in establishing social and economic status and security and enhance feelings of self-worth (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). People who therefore participate in multiple roles appear to have the best health and mental well-being, which emphasises the benefits of multiple role involvement (Geurts et al., 2005). Participation in multiple roles might therefore provide the individual with a larger number of opportunities and resources, which can be applied to promote growth and better functioning in other life domains (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Work and family role accumulation enhances social networks and resources that are instrumental to balancing work and family commitments (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Sieber (1974) classifies the positive outcomes of multiple role accumulation as follows:

- 1) role privileges (the greater the number of roles accumulated, the larger the number of privileges that can be enjoyed);
- 2) status security (a supportive family was regarded as being helpful in overcoming difficulties and disappointments at work);
- 3) status enhancement (the by-products of one role, such as personal contacts, are also invested in other roles), and
- 4) enrichment of the personality. In this regard, Crouter (1984) found that workers reported the skills and attitudes acquired in the family domain, for example, to be useful on the job.

More recently, Grzywacz and Marks (2000) again focussed on the fact that holding more roles is associated with advanced self-esteem and greater job satisfaction in the case of employed women, and it is not related to overall life stress. The authors also found that positive spillover from family to the work role is associated with better mental health and more positive psychological well-being. Benefits of multiple role involvement may also lead to gratification, more positive self-esteem as well as a positive emotional response to that role (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Rothbard, 2001; Wayne, Musisca & Fleeson, 2004). Positive spillover from family to the work domain is also associated with a lower risk of depression and problem drinking (Grzywacz & Bass, 2003).

One's mood is a potential mechanism that may explain spillover, where a satisfying or dissatisfying job is expected to lead to positive affect and negative consequences respectively, which in turn, could influence satisfaction in another role through their influence on role engagement and performance (Heller & Watson, 2005; Rothbard, 2001). Various empirical reports show that spouse support and having the opportunity to discuss work problems at home might enable workers to cope better with the pressures at work (Demerouti et al., 2004; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinley, 2005; Gattiker & Larwood, 1990; Voydanoff, 2004). As individuals increasingly gain resources through ongoing participation in one role (i.e. family or work), their emotional state and mood in that specific role increase; this can subsequently help their performance in the other role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

An important limitation regarding current work–home interaction (Emslie, Hunt & Macintyre, 2004) is that the experience of the interaction between various roles has been largely ignored in the case of working fathers. Most of the work–home interaction literature tends to focus on employed women and their demands, having both work and family responsibilities (Jones & McKenna, 2002; Marais & Mostert, 2008; Morrison, 2005; Thompson, Kirk & Brown, 2005). The roles of the father in the family are a growing concern and reflect current re-examining of the male role. However, in the case of working fathers, the impact of the participation in multiple roles is not yet well understood (Aryee, Srinivas & Tan, 2005).

De Klerk and Mostert (2010) point out that the various demographic and structural changes in the workforce and family structure have affected both work and family roles. Different life options for men and for women prescribe the internalisation of gender role ideology. For women, it implies a prioritisation of family over work, whereas for men, this life option implies a prioritisation of work/family over family (Aryee et al., 2005). Rajadhyaksha and Bhatnagar (2000) report that woman in India are less committed to the work role than men. This has implications for the way men and women assign their time and energy resources to work and family roles. Men will automatically be motivated to invest more time and resources to enhance their performance in the work role, given that men identify with the work role more than the home/family role (Aryee et al., 2005).

A father performs his role in a more sequential manner, i.e. a father's various roles (spouse, worker, parent and self) become salient at different times; however, men would forego family activities in favour of work commitments (e.g. working late at the office) (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer & Robinson, 2000). In the non-work domain (consisting of activities such as parenting, recreation and work in the community), parenting has been recognised for contributing favourably to the worker role (Byron, 2005).

Although male dignity is nowadays linked to success at work, men are becoming more involved with their families, and their priorities may perhaps even be shifting away from work (Theunissen, Van Vuuren & Visser, 2003). Men are praised for short-range family commitments, even though it is more difficult for them to take advantage of family policies on a long-term basis (O'Connor, 2005). Apart from all the workplace pressures, men continue

to conform to traditional gender roles in order to obtain the benefits of being male. Although men are contributing more to family life, studies confirm that mothers generally still do more of the basic housework (O'Connor, 2005; Voydanoff, 1988). However, results from South African studies consistently show that males experience higher levels of negative work–family interaction (Marais & Mostert, 2008; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005; Rost & Mostert, 2007). Studies showed that men who have an eldest child of younger than five years experience more positive spillover from work to family roles than men who have no children whatsoever (Grzywacz & Butler, 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Furthermore, parents without children appear to have lower levels of negative work–family interaction than parents with children, but at the same time parents with children experience higher levels of positive family–work interaction than couples who have no children (Marais & Mostert, 2008). Grzywacz and Marks (2000) found that men reported less positive spillover from work to family roles than women.

The higher education landscape in South Africa is also changing. The post-apartheid government of South Africa has been aiming to redress consequences of the apartheid era and to move towards a democratic society. Since the realities of globalisation require of higher education institutions to become internationally competitive (Du Toit, 2000), the educational system has become one of the focus areas of redress (Coetzee & Rothmann, 2005). Kinnunen, Feldt, Geurts and Pulkkinen (2006) maintain that the roles of occupational and socio-economic status, both of which correlate with education, have been studied rarely in international research. The main issue for academics is work intensification and the need for a university-wide workload planning system, which realistically reflects the time such academics spend on their roles and responsibilities (Doherty & Manfredi, 2006). There is evidence that workers involved in high levels of personal interaction as lecturers are particularly vulnerable to occupational stress (Tytherleigh, 2003), which could spill over into the non-work domain.

From a historical perspective and in contrast to other types of organisations, working in an academic sphere has generally been considered relatively stress-free and highly satisfying (Willie & Stecklein, 1982). Watts et al. (1991) found that 75% of university workers who reported work overload, long working hours and lack of support were still satisfied with their jobs. Doyle and Hind (1998) found that 40% of academic personnel at universities in their

sample who reported long working hours and high levels of burnout still found their jobs intrinsically motivating, pleasing and potentially rewarding. A possible explanation for the above-mentioned might be the differences in the work context factors, for example, higher levels of autonomy and a collegiate culture, which emphasises consensual decision-making and shared values (French, Caplan & Harrison, 1982).

Lacy and Sheehan (1997) and Molnnis (1996, 1999) assert that there is a difference in the ways academics experience their working conditions. Their disciplines and related teaching and research tasks motivate the academics intrinsically. An international survey of academic professions was conducted, using data from 14 countries, of which the results show that significant changes had taken place in higher education (Altbach, 1996). Seldin (1991) found that the stress levels of academic and administrative personnel have increased and are likely to worsen. Lacy and Sheehan (1997) found that the job satisfaction levels experienced by academics in Australia, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Mexico, Sweden and the United Kingdom showed that less than 50% of British academics were generally satisfied with their jobs.

Currently, no South African studies could be found with regard to the experience and consequences of the involvement in multiple roles of working fathers in the academe. Therefore, a qualitative exploratory approach will be used to explore the complexity of the connections between the different life roles of working fathers at a higher education institution as well as the understanding of their personal viewpoints (Kvale, 1996). A qualitative exploratory approach is especially beneficial to this study since participants are allowed to describe what is meaningful or important to them in their own words rather than being restricted to predetermined categories regarding non-work and work life interaction. With this strategy, the true essence of a person's experiences can be realised (Rothmann, Gerber, Lubbe, Sieberhagen & Rothmann, 1998). According to Franks, Schurink and Fourie (2006) as well as McClellan and Uys (2009), there is a limited amount of qualitative studies focussing on South African working fathers; consequently, very little is known about the specific way in which working fathers at a higher education institution within a South African context experience the interaction between their multiple roles. More in-depth qualitative research involving working fathers, who are currently career- and family-focussed and engaged in full-time work, is needed in order to obtain knowledge of how they experience

and attach meaning to their different life roles and the way they manage it in their everyday life situation.

In the light of the preceding discussion, the objective of this study was to gain in dept knowledge of these working fathers from a higher education institution and the effect that their different life roles have on their lives.

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

- What are the different roles employed individuals fulfil according to literature?
- What are the different roles that working fathers fulfil?
- How do working fathers experience the interaction between multiple roles?
- What are the consequences of being involved in multiple roles?
- What recommendations can be made for 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 study was to gain in dept knowledge of these working fathers from a higher education institution and the effect that their different life roles have on their lives.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the research were the following:

- to gain understanding regarding the different roles employed individuals experience according to literature;
- to determine what the different roles are that working fathers fulfil;
- to identify how working fathers experience the interaction between multiple roles;

- to identify what the consequences are of being involved in multiple roles; and
- to make recommendations for future research and practice.

1.3 PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

The intellectual climate and the market of intellectual resources, which directed the research, included a certain paradigm perspective (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

1.3.1 The intellectual climate

Intellectual climate refers to a collection of beliefs, values and assumptions that do not directly deal with the epistemological views of the scientific research practice because it normally originates in a non-epistemological context. It refers to the variety of non-epistemological value systems/beliefs that are underwritten in any given period in a discipline (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

This research falls within the boundaries of the behavioural sciences and more specifically Industrial Psychology. Industrial Psychology refers to the scientific study of people within their working surroundings. The above-mentioned 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).

Occupational Health Psychology and Career Psychology are the sub-disciplines of Industrial Psychology on which the focus will fall in this research. Occupational Health Psychology is concerned with psychological factors, which contribute to occupational health and well-being. It deals with psychological reactions to physical and non-physical work conditions, as well as behaviour, which have implications for health (Spector, 2006). Career psychology, on the other hand, focusses on people –

- thinking about careers;
- preparing for a career;
- entering the world of work;

- pursuing and changing occupations; and
- leaving the world of work to devote whatever knowledge and energies they have, to leisure activities that may resemble in content the work role that they did for pay or which may involve quite different types of knowledge and skill (Vondracek, 2001).

1.3.2 Meta-theoretical assumptions

Two paradigms are relevant to this research. Firstly, the literature review was done within the ecological system theory, and secondly, the empirical study was done within the phenomenological and functionalistic paradigms.

1.3.3 Literature review

By assuming that work–personal life interaction is a joint function of “process”, person, context and time characteristics, the ecological system theory goes beyond the individual and deterministic approach of role theory (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

1.3.4 Empirical study

In the word “phenomenon”, the central idea of the phenomenological paradigm is expressed. The researcher is interested in the meaning a person attributes to his/her experiences of reality, his/her world and his/her relationships, within the phenomenological paradigm. Simply through the person’s cognitive experience, which must be circumscribed and understood, the true essence of the person can be realised (Rothmann et al., 1998).

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, p. 106). Functionalism is a view characterised by a concern for providing explanations of the status quo, actuality, social integration, social order, consensus, need satisfaction and solidarity (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). It approaches those general sociological concerns from a standpoint that tends to be positivist, realist, homothetic and determinist (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 26). Functionalism is based on a conception of science that emphasises 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 collection of beliefs that directly involves the epistemological status of scientific statements refers to the market of intellectual resources. The two main types of epistemological beliefs are theoretical beliefs and methodological beliefs (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

1.3.6 Theoretical beliefs

Theoretical beliefs may be described as all beliefs that can make testable judgments regarding social phenomena. These are all judgments regarding the *what* and *why* of human phenomena and it includes all conceptual definitions and all models and theories of the research (Mouton & Marais, 1992).

1.3.6.1 Conceptual definitions

Below is the appropriate conceptual definition of work–personal life interaction:

During the last few decades, the outlook on family and work have evolved and developed considerably. In most of the studies, the work and family roles are conceived to be two conflicting domains – family roles conflict with work roles, and work roles conflict with family. The most widely cited definition of work–family conflict describes such conflict as

“... a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. Therefore, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77).

The first efforts to address levels of work–family conflict emphasised balance, and therefore individuals should strive for work–family balance. Difficulties were also encountered with the concept of balance. The possibility that both domains may also influence each other in a positive way by transferring positive attributes is ignored by this conception. Frone (2003) argues that there is no explicit definition of the phrase “work–family balance” or an explanation of what it means for family and work life to be “in balance”. Many researchers point out that work–family balance represents a vague notion that work and family life are somehow integrated or harmonious, or that work–family balance is a lack of conflict of interference between work and family roles. To achieve balance also implies taking away from one sphere and applying balance to the other. It also suggested a similar solution for everyone – a 50/50 investment. A further problem with the word “balance” is that it suggests that work is not a part of one’s life but rather something separate. The balance notion leads to a quick-fix solution to work–family conflict (Lewis & Cooper, 2005).

According to Burke (2004), there are recent writings that emphasise work–family integration, or additional appropriately work–life integration/harmonisation, as a more useful statement of the problem. These terms legitimise a number of different work–family investments or arrangements and apply to single employees without spouses or children, who still work, have families and personal lives outside the working place. Work and family roles can in fact be mutually reinforcing, and some employees can integrate or harmonise their work and family roles by choosing to keep the two domains quite separate (Lewis & Cooper, 2005). Other related terms that are being used in the literature are “work–home interaction” or “work–home interference”.

1.3.6.2 Models and theories

Mouton and Marais (1992) define a *theory* as “a set of consistent 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”. The current research was based on the spillover theory, the multiple role theory, and the role enhancement theory.

The spillover theory suggests that a working spouse's experiences will be transferred into the non-work domain and similarly, the non-work domain experiences can be transferred into the work domain (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). This theory states that the relationship between the affective responses in one's work life and non-work life is mutual, meaning that affective responses are transferred from one domain, e.g. non-work domain to another, e.g. the work domain (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Leiter & Durup, 1996). The spillover theory explains how strain may result from the intersecting relationship of two separate work environments, i.e. work and non-work domain. This model makes it clear that boundaries do exist between home and work role. Up until now, those boundaries are permeable. The model posits that, although acknowledging that work and home roles often have stressful exposures in common, these exposures occasionally "spill over" from one environment to another and can lead to work/non-work conflict that results in negative health outcomes (Frone, Russell & Barnes, 1996; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

The idea is not new that people hold multiple roles; therefore, the management of such roles has important outcomes (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). According to the multiple role theory, there are three theoretical explanations of how multiple roles (e.g. employee, parental, and spousal) may affect health: role strain, the role context approach, and role enhancement (Moen, Dempster-McClain & Williams, 1989). The increase of roles can lead to role strain, because with the enhancement in roles, there are additional demands and obligations that participation in each role entails.

The role context theory proposes that, regardless of the number of roles, the context and characteristics of each particular role are important factors in determining whether the role accumulation produces favourable or negative health consequences. This theory acknowledges that the role of an employee may significantly differ from the role of a parent, spouse or caregiver.

The role enhancement theory states that additional roles can lead to better health outcomes because support, prestige and resources accompany every new role (Moen et al., 1989). Bourne et al. (2009) acknowledge that role accumulation might result in role strain, but they also suggest that it affords individual opportunities for rewards, such as self-enrichment. Marks and MacDermid (1996) suggest that role theories need to acknowledge that individuals

actively organise themselves within their roles and that the construction of roles might explain the negative and positive outcomes of attempts to balance multiple roles.

Barnett (1998) explains that the role enhancement theory suggests that participation in multiple roles provides a larger number of opportunities and resources to the individual, and it can, in turn, be used to promote growth and better functioning in other domains of life. Studying the benefits of multiple roles has been neglected within the work/nonwork domain (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). From the perspective of this theory, multiple roles bring rewards such as income and heightened self-esteem (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). The positive concepts, namely resource enhancement (Kirchmeyer, 1992a), positive spillover (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000) facilitation and enrichment (Frone, 2003) come into general focus. The concepts explained above are used as synonyms that refer to the process by which participation in one role is made easier by a good deal of participation in the other (Frone, 2003).

1.3.7 Methodological beliefs

Mouton and Marais (1992) point out that methodological beliefs can be defined as “beliefs that make judgments regarding the nature and structure of scientific research and science. The empirical study is presented within the phenomenological and functionalistic frameworks.

1.4 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method for this mini-dissertation consisted of a literature review and an empirical study. The results obtained are presented in the form of a research article. This section focusses on the empirical study that consisted of a literature review, research design, participants and data collection method, pilot study, field notes, physical setting, trustworthiness, data analysis and ethical aspects.

1.4.1 Literature review

The literature review comprised research into non-work and work roles, the way these roles influence each other in a positive and negative manner, what the positive and negative

consequences of multiple role occupation were, and how these were experienced by working fathers. Since a separate chapter was not targeted for a literature review, a brief literature review was compiled for purposes of the article.

1.4.2 Research design

A qualitative design from a phenomenological approach was used to conduct the present study. Within this approach, the researcher was interested in the meaning the participants attributed to their subjective experiences of reality, their world and their relationships. A person's cognitive experiences have to be understood and defined because it is only through this that the true essence of a person's experiences can be realised (Rothmann et al., 1998). Through the above, the researcher was able to understand and personal viewpoints of the participants. The objective of this study was to gain in dept knowledge of these working fathers from a higher education institution and the effect that their different life roles have on their lives.

1.4.3 Participants and procedure

In order to select the participants for this study, a higher education institution was used, and it included different faculties, for instance Commerce and Administration, Educational Sciences, Engineering, Economic and Management Sciences, Health Sciences, Human and Social Sciences, Law, Natural Sciences, and Theology. To select male personnel from this higher education institution, a criterion sampling was used. The selection criteria included the following:

- males;
- with children under the age of 10;
- working as academic staff members at the higher education institute;
- in full-time employment of the institute; and
- Afrikaans- or English-speaking.

A letter was handed to the lecturers of the higher education institution requesting permission to conduct research amongst them, explaining the importance the study holds for working fathers and for the university. In this letter, it was made clear what the research objectives

were and what the research procedure would be. The importance of the research as well as the procedure that would be followed was explained to the selected participants. After completion of the study, the participants and the university were informed about the research findings.

1.4.4 Data collection method

Semi-structured interviews with the selected participants were used to collect the necessary data. The selected participants were requested to sign informed consent forms after being notified of the importance and the objective of the study. An interview schedule was designed and evaluated before conducting any interviews. By asking a number of pre-determined questions, this schedule had to enable the researcher to gather the correct information from the selected participants. The questions that were asked were formulated in such a way that they enabled the participant to contribute freely to the conversation. The formulation of these pre-determined questions was determined by means of a pilot study that had been conducted beforehand. The pilot study assisted the researcher in formulating clear and understandable questions. Any potential problems regarding the manner of questioning would have been identified and corrected by means of the pilot study. The data of all the conducted interviews were recorded on audiotape and then transcribed verbatim and checked by independent researchers. The participants had been informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage throughout the interviews.

The non-verbal response SOLAR technique (Egan, 2002) (i.e. face squarely, open body posture, leaning slightly forward, eye contact, relatively relaxed) was used during the interviews. Other interview techniques (communication) were also used during the interviews and include the following:

- a) paraphrasing (a verbal response in which the researcher enhanced meaning by stating the participant's words in another form but with the same meaning);
- b) minimal verbal response (a verbal response that correlated with occasional nodding to show the participant that the researcher was listening);
- c) summarising (summarising the participant's ideas, feelings and thoughts verbalised during the interview, to show that the researcher understood what the participant was saying);

- d) probing (deepening the response to a question that the researcher posed to the participant);
- e) reflecting (reflect over something important that the person said in order to get him to expand on the idea); and
- f) clarification (to embrace the technique that was used to get clarity on unclear statements, e.g. “Could you tell me more about ...”).

1.4.5 Pilot study

A pilot study is normally small in comparison with the main experiment and therefore can provide only limited information on the sources and magnitude of variation of response measures (Lancaster, Dodd & Williamson, 2004). A pilot study can reveal deficiencies in the design of a proposed experiment or procedure and these can then be addressed before time and resources are expended on large-scale studies (Lancaster et al., 2004). A pilot study was conducted beforehand to enable the researcher to identify potential unforeseen problems which could occur during the main research. Conducting the pilot study allowed for the gain of practical knowledge and insight into potential problems. Consequently, the researcher was able to make the required modifications to the data-gathering methods. An interview schedule was designed and evaluated. By asking a number of pre-determined questions, this schedule had to enable the researcher to gather the correct information from the selected participants.

1.4.6 Field notes

Field notes are a written account of the things the researcher hears and sees in the course of the interview (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane, 2002). This included the manner in which the participants acted or reacted when answering the questions as well as their behaviour during the interview (e.g. being distant when asked questions, long pauses in between the conversations and starrng outside the window). Other notes reflected on what the participants said during the interview, to compensate on the researcher’s listening skills when reflecting, summarising, and clarifying on what the participant had said. Field notes helped the researcher to remember what she experienced during the interview. It included both

interpretation and empirical observations. The researcher wrote down her preconceptions, emotions, expectations and prejudices after each interview.

1.4.7 Physical setting

All interviews took place where it best suited the participant in order to meet his demands. To ensure that the participant was relaxed and focussed at all times, attention was given to the *climate/atmosphere* of the venue. It was important for the researcher to make sure that the setting for the participant was private, comfortable and disturbance-free.

1.4.8 Trustworthiness

According to Van Niekerk (2002), there is a growing opinion among researchers that qualitative research does not yield the desired results and is not trustworthy. However, there are clear rules and criteria to comply with (Van Niekerk, 2002). Guba's (1981) strategies for qualitative research were applied in this study to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings:

- firstly, credibility was obtained by checking field notes, triangulation, peer examination and independent coding;
- secondly, transferability was obtained through comparison of adequate descriptive data as well as dense description of the data;
- thirdly, dependability was gained by means of an audit, keeping unprocessed material, giving a clear and full description of the research method used, and lastly applying the same procedure throughout triangulation, peer examination and code–decode procedure and;
- fourthly, conformability was attained by maintaining an appropriate distance therefore to influence the research, but also triangulation and code–decode procedure (Krefting, 1991).

1.4.9 Data analysis

According to Patton (2001), qualitative research studies are unique and they therefore demand unique strategies for analysis. Qualitative data analysis consists of identifying, coding, and categorising patterns found in the data (Patton, 2001). Data analysis is a process

of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making. Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains (Creswell, 2003).

The audiotapes of the interviews were transliterated verbatim. The central task was to identify common themes in people's descriptions of their experiences of diversity by means of content analysis (Leady & Ormrod, 2001; Struwig & Stead, 2001). Content analysis was used to analyse, quantify and interpret the research data systematically and objectively. The process of interpretative phenomenological analysis started with reading through all the data to obtain a general sense of the information (Creswell, 2003). Thereafter, initial coding took place. After the coding of the categories, the interview material was structured. The transcriptions were adapted to the study. This included distinguishing between essential and non-essential material as guided by the objective of this study, and the underlying presuppositions. Thereafter meanings of the transcriptions were paraphrased into scientific statements or themes. Both the understanding of the participants and the researcher's perspective have been incorporated into these themes. Next, shared themes were identified, coded and grouped into categories of meaning. These themes were also checked and verified by an industrial psychologist to confirm or criticise to ensure validity. Lastly, the occurrence of themes between the participants was compared, in order to compare the experiences of each participant's life roles to each other (Bauer, 2000; Creswell, 2003; Flick, 2002; Kvale, 1996; Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999). In this study, the exact words of the participants were reported.

1.4.10 Ethical aspects

Conducting research is an ethical enterprise (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Ethics can be described as "system of moral, behaviours and rules. Research ethics provide researchers with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct research in a morally acceptable way" (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Firstly, there are the researcher's qualifications and competence to undertake a particular research project. Secondly, it is also important to ensure that the researcher upholds the standards of his/her profession and that he/she accepts responsibility for his/her actions. Thirdly, it is important to ensure that the welfare of others is the major concern of the

researcher. Lastly, ethical aspects that should be considered by the researcher include the following (Kvale, 1996):

- *Informed consent* – Before any interview takes place, the researcher should ensure that the participants voluntarily agree to take part in the research. Only then should the participants be briefed on the purpose and procedure of the interviews. The researcher should explain who would have access to the interview and should ensure anonymity. Only then should the participants give their informed consent by signing a document.
- *Confidentiality* – The privacy of the participants involved in the research should be highly respected. The anonymity of their participation in the research should be well communicated and explained to them prior to the interviews. The participants should also be informed that the information they provide would be destroyed after the tapes had been transcribed. All the participants have to be ensured though that no names would be linked to interviews recorded.
- *Deception* – The researcher should attempt not to mislead or deceive participants and should at all times be honest, fair and respectful towards the participants. In this study, the interviews were not too long. The participants were fully informed about the goal of the research and interviews, the procedure thereafter, the use of the tape recorder and field notes.

1.5 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The chapters in the mini-dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Research article

Chapter 3: Conclusion, limitations and recommendations

1.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter focussed on the problem statement and research objectives of this study, as well as the research method that was used and the research procedure that was followed. This was followed by a brief layout of the chapters that follow.

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK AND NON-WORK ROLES OF PARENTING MALES AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the different roles that working fathers fulfil; to identify how working fathers experience the interaction between multiple roles; and the consequences of being involved in multiple roles. A research design from a qualitative exploratory approach was used. The participants consisted of 10 working fathers, who are lecturers and who differ with regard to age, education and socio-economic status. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. Content analysis was used to analyse, reduce and interpret the data obtained from the participants. The results indicated the presence of various work and non-work roles within the lives of working fathers. Non-work roles included family, leisure, spiritual, financial provider, and leadership roles in the community, whereas work roles included being a lecturer and a researcher. In addition, positive and negative interactions between work and non-work roles were identified. Being a parent consequently has some consequences on the participants, which they described as demanding and time consuming. Participation in multiple non-work roles leads to the acquirement of certain skills, including learning how to buffer stress, how to clear their thoughts, and patience.

Key terms: Work roles, non-work roles, non-work-to-work spillover, positive spillover, negative spillover, antecedents, consequences, working fathers, accumulation of multiple roles, academic staff, higher education institution.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie was om ondersoek in te stel na die verskillende rolle wat werkende vaders ervaar, om te vas te stel hoe werkende vaders die interaksie tussen veelvuldige meervoudige rolle ervaar, en die gevolge van betrokkenheid by meervoudige rolle. 'n Navorsingsontwerp vanuit 'n kwalitatiewe eksperimentele benadering is gebruik in hierdie studie. Die deelnemers het bestaan uit 10 werkende vaders wat verskil ten opsigte van ouderdom, wat almal lektore was en wat verskil het ten opsigte van opvoedkundige en sosio-ekonomiese status. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude (met die gekose deelnemers) is gebruik om die data te versamel. Inhoudsanalise is gebruik om die data wat van die deelnemers verkry is, te analiseer, te reduseer en te interpreteer. Die resultate het positiewe en negatiewe invloede in die lewens van die werkende vaders ten opsigte van werk- en nie-werkrolle aangedui. Nie-werkrolle sluit in rolle in die gesin, rolle ten opsigte van ontspanning, die geestelike

lewe, rol as finansiële voorsiener en leierskapsrolle in die gemeenskap, terwyl die werkrolle dié van dosent en navorser insluit. Daarbenewens is positiewe en negatiewe interaksie tussen werk- en nie-werkrolle aangedui. Om 'n ouer te wees, het sekere gevolge wat die deelnemers as veeleisend en tydrowend beskryf. Deelname aan veelvuldige nie-werksrolle lei tot sekere vaardighede soos hoe om spanning te verminder, om hulle gedagtes te vernuwe en geduld.

Slutelwoorde: Werksrolle, nie-werksrolle, nie-werk-tot-werkoorvloei, positiewe oorfloei, negatiewe oorfloei, voorafgaande faktore, nagevolge, werkende vaders, veelvoudige rol-akkumulاسie, akademiese personeel, hoëronderrwysinstelling.

On a day-to-day basis, people are generally involved in multiple roles, and the management of such roles commonly has fundamental outcomes (Khlat, Sermet & LePape, 2000). Studies have revealed that there are various roles in which a person may take part, for example, roles in the family, the role of parent or spouse, religious roles, leisure roles, roles in the community, roles regarding household income, household time demands, and elder care. (Frone, 2003; Jennings & McDougald, 2007; Kotzé, 2005; Small & Riley, 1990). Within the context of work–family studies, it is important to specifically study gender and parental roles (Higgins, Duxbury & Lee, 1994), especially since the number of dual-earner couples and of employed persons with care-giving responsibilities is rapidly increasing, changing the face of traditional held views regarding involvement in multiple roles (Gregory & Milner, 2005). These days, family responsibilities are starting to become more important for men – fathers’ increased involvement in the family domain (which includes home chores and child-care) is not only needed, but fathers want to participate more in family life (Mayrhofer, Meyer, Schiffinger & Schmidt, 2008). The study on which this article is based, focussed on the relationship between the different life-roles working fathers at a higher education institution hold.

Greater integration within multiple roles provides flexibility and enables employees to cope with the multiple demands in their lives. In addition, integration reduces the effort needed to transition back and forth between roles (Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000). Taking on multiple roles furthermore requires the fulfilment of multiple obligations and responsibilities toward various others, both in the work domain (e.g. their employer, superior, colleagues and subordinates) and in their non-work domain (e.g. friends, spouse, children and the extended family) (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). The interface between work and family suggests that these two domains cannot be seen as interdependent, and that events in one sphere invade upon the other sphere (Duxbury, 2004; Jones, Burke & Westman, 2006). The invasion of one sphere upon another can have either a positive or a negative impact on a person (Bulger, Matthews & Hoffman, 2007; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The spillover theory provides a sound theoretical perspective regarding the relationship between the different roles or domains in which a person is involved. This theory suggests that spillover takes place when one carries positive or negative attitudes, skills, beliefs, strain, behaviours, moods and emotions from the non-work domain into the work domain, and vice

versa (Almeida, Wethington & Chandler, 1999; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Leiter & Durup, 1996). Geurts and Demerouti (2003) suggest that when one's functioning at home is hampered by demands from the work domain or the other way round, the interaction may be negative. The interaction between both domains can also be positive, for instance, when one's functioning at home is facilitated by demands from the work domain, or the other way round (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Negative spillover therefore occurs when problems and conflicts in one domain drain and preoccupy individuals, negatively influencing their behaviour and experiences within another domain (see Roehling, Moen & Batt, 2003). There are three different types of negative spillover (conflict):

- 1) time-based conflict (time devoted in one role makes it difficult to participate in another role);
- 2) strain-based conflict (strain experienced in one role intrudes upon and interferes with participation in another role); and
- 3) behaviour-based conflict (specific behaviours required in one role are incompatible with behavioural expectation in another role) (Van Hooff et al., 2005; Voydanoff, 2004).

Positive spillover, on the other hand, enhances one's performance in the other domain and occurs when satisfaction at work translates into high levels of energy and satisfaction in the non-work domain (Roehling et al., 2003). The positive emotional responses from engagement in one role may increase engagement in another role (Rothbard, 2001), enhancing the quality of life (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). This is evident in the positive effect that social support from the family life has on work life (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Kinnunen, Fieldt, Geurts & Pulkkinen, 2006). To promote growth and better functioning in other life domains, the role enhancement theory proposes that participation in multiple roles provides a greater number of opportunities and resources to individuals (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). The role enhancement theory is based on a view that, having multiple roles can bring rewards, like an income, a good self-esteem, and opportunities for social relationships (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Managing multiple roles may therefore also create energy (Marks, 1977). From this viewpoint, the benefits of having multiple roles give rise to a positive consequence on well-being and this outweighs the costs associated with such roles, leading to fulfilment rather than strain (Kinnunen et al., 2006; Rothbard, 2001).

Today people are increasingly expected to actively engage in multiple roles since their careers have become more complex (Rothbard, 2001). Strain and conflicts between the demands of work and family can inevitably develop when managing multiple roles such as an employee, parent and spouse (McClellan & Uys, 2009). Consequently, multiple roles may help people to learn how to use their time efficiently so they do not feel overloaded (Kotzé, 2005); and increase their life satisfaction by providing opportunities for greater social involvement and personal achievement (Rothbard & Edwards, 2003). Other benefits of multiple role involvement include role privileges and status, good health, mental well-being, a sense of purpose in life, role privileges, skills and an enhanced self-esteem (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Thoits, 1991; Wayne, Musisca & Fleeson, 2004). Participation in one role is therefore made easier by virtue of participation in another role (Frone, 2003), since participating in multiple roles might provide a greater number of resources and opportunities that could promote growth and better functioning in other domains of life (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

Traditional “two-parent families” regard the mother as the homemaker and nurturer while they see the father as the family breadwinner (Theunissen, Van Vuuren & Visser, 2003). Over the last two decades, these roles have evolved towards a situation where most of the work–non-work interaction literature focusses mostly on how employed women deal with the demands of having work and non-work responsibilities, as well as the consequence of men taking on parenting and household duties (Jones & McKenna, 2002; Morrison, 2005). Nowadays, family responsibilities are becoming more important for men, detracting energy from the work domain (Mayrhofer et al., 2008). It is central for work–family studies to concentrate on the change in parental roles (Gregory & Milner, 2008), since a father’s role in the non-work domain is evidently of increasing concern, needing some re-examination (Baxter, 2007; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

Grzywacz and Marks (2000) state that both genders tend to evaluate the impact of having multiple roles in the non-work domain on the working life positively than negatively. It is assumed by Geurts and Demerouti (2003) that home demands, like domestic obligations, which require a great deal of effort and time and the lack of home resources (e.g. lack of support from the spouse) to fulfil the task requirements will be associated with negative load consequences that hamper one’s functioning in the work domain. On the other hand, when

there are home resources like domestic help or support from the spouse, which enable the individual to deal with the demanding aspects of the home domain, it will be associated with positive load consequences that will increase one's functioning at work (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003).

Non-work-related support, particularly from spouses, makes one's situation less stressful by providing emotional support, instrumental aid, or perhaps providing greater flexibility or control over one's situation (Nasurdin & Hsia, 2008). For men, working many hours to provide a stable income for the family is part of the "good provider" role (Nomaguchi, 2009). Men see their paid work as a major contribution to their families' well-being despite the fact that their paid work may take time away from their families (Bianchi, Robinson & Milkie, 2006). Likewise, the domain-specific antecedents of the non-work domain interfering with work conflict lie within the family domain and include stressors such as low spousal support (Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper & O'Brien, 2001), the number of hours devoted to household work, and parental demands (Fu & Shaffer, 2001). Therefore, when men become more involved in the parenting of their children, there will be an increase in role obligations, and this might have a negative impact on the quality of his relationships with others in both the work and the non-work domain (Smith, 2003).

Considering the above-mentioned arguments, the research objectives of the study being reported here were:

- to investigate the different roles that working fathers fulfil;
- to identify how working fathers experience the interaction between multiple roles; and
- to study the consequences of being involved in multiple roles.

The potential value-add of the study includes the fact that fatherhood received limited attention from social scientists during most of the 20th century (Lamb, 2004). Research on fathers and their role in family functioning has been minimal, as family-process research focussed primarily on mothers' well-being and parenting (Coley, 2001). Furthermore, researchers now recognise that fathers play an important multidimensional role in their children's lives (Lamb, 2004), yet researchers are struggling to capture the complex domain of father involvement with currently available methodologies and data (Coley, 2001). In addition, the study being reported here, focussed specifically on working fathers within the

higher educational system. This will add value to current research since the educational system has become an important focus area of redress for the post-apartheid government of South Africa (Coetzee & Rothmann, 2005), and the realities of globalisation require of higher education institutions to become internationally competitive (Du Toit, 2000). Doherty and Manfredi (2006) found that one of the main issues for academics is work intensification, which reflects the time they spend on their roles and responsibilities. Gregory and Milner (2005) indicated that involvement of a working father in his child's life will enhance the father's academic performance, suggesting that active fathering roles are also good for men personally, productivity at work and relationships with men's spouses.

Using a qualitative exploratory approach, the researcher explored the full complexity of the connections between the different life roles of working fathers at a higher education institution as well as their understanding of their personal viewpoints. Regarding the qualitative exploratory approach, the true essence of a person's experiences can be realised (Rothmann, Gerber, Lubbe, Sieberhagen & Rothmann, 1998). A qualitative approach was especially beneficial to this study since participants were allowed to describe in their own words what is meaningful or important to them rather than being restricted to predetermined categories regarding non-work and work-life interaction. According to Franks, Schurink and Fourie (2006) as well as McClellan and Uys (2009), there is limited amount of qualitative studies, consequently very little is known about the specific way in which working fathers at a higher education institution within a South African context experience the interaction between their multiple roles. Subsequently, the research design will be discussed. This includes the research approach, participants' profile, data collection strategies, approach to analysing the data, and relevant ethical aspects. This will be followed by the findings and a discussion thereof.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research approach

The study on which this article is based, was qualitative by nature and investigated the research questions from a qualitative exploratory approach. Within this approach, the researcher was interested in the meaning that people attribute to their relationships, their world as well as their subjective experiences of reality. A person's cognitive experiences have to be understood and defined because it is only through this that the true essence of a person's experiences can be realised (Rothmann et al., 1998). Through this, the researcher was able to understand and represent personal points of view. The general objective of this study was to gain in dept knowledge of these working fathers from a higher education institution and the effect that their different life roles have on their lives.

A *theory* is defined as “a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomenon” (Mouton & Marais, 1992). The research being reported here, was based on the ecological system theory, the spillover theory, the multiple role theory, the role context theory, and the role enhancement theory. The ecological system theory goes beyond the individual and deterministic approach of role theory by assuming that work–personal life interaction is a joint function of “process”, person, context and time characteristics (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). The spillover theory suggests that a working spouse's experiences will carry over into the non-work domain and similarly, the non-work domain experiences can carry over into a person's work domain (Crouter, 1984; Piotrkowski, 1979). When considering the multiple role theory, three theoretical explanations are given of how multiple roles (e.g. employee, parent, and spouse) may affect health: role strain, the role context approach and role enhancement (Moen, 1991). The role context theory proposes that, regardless of the number of roles, the context and characteristics of each particular role are important factors in determining whether the role accumulation produces favourable or negative health consequences (Moen, 1991). Lastly, the role enhancement theory states that additional roles can lead to better health outcomes because support, prestige and resources accompany every new role and also afford individual opportunities for rewards, such as self-enrichment (Moen, 1991).