Abstract

This paper analyses the relationship between a group of different practices of work-family balance and the employees’ job satisfaction, as well as the relationship between job satisfaction and employee’s organizational commitment. We differentiate this relationship according to the level of work-family (W-F) enrichment and family-work (F-W) enrichment, as well as we analyze the role of work-family (W-F) and family-work (F-W) conflict. We use a sample of 322 employees, and test the relationships with structural equations. The results show that a higher use of work-family practices has more beneficial effects on enrichment and conflict, and that both enrichment and conflict influence employees’ job satisfaction. However, higher levels of interference or stress at work make employees feel less satisfied at work.

The paper highlights the positive role of enrichment in order to improve employee’s job satisfaction as well as to increase his/her organizational commitment.

Keywords: work-family balance practices, conflict, enrichment, job satisfaction, organizational commitment.

JEL codes: M12, M51, M54.
1. Introduction

Employees’ personal and family life balance is a basic social need, having been a theme of discussion for years. Different studies show that many employees have difficulties to balance their work and life-family responsibilities. These studies also highlight absenteeism as a negative output from these difficulties (Heymann, 2006). Therefore, the literature argues for the need to balance employee’s work and family responsibilities, and also for companies to offer family-friendly practices to help those employees in need of work-family balance.

There are quite a few descriptive studies that suggest that the implementation of family-friendly practices beyond those already mandatory by law, may contribute to improve employee’s job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as to increase the attractiveness of the company as a working place. The reasons to justify the adoption of these practices are based on the theoretical argument that family-friendly practices reduce the conflict that some employees may experience to balance their personal and labor life (Kossek et al. 2006; Hornung et al. 2008; Selvarajan et al. 2013). The concerns or problems emerged from the responsibility at the workplace may negatively influence the employee’s and/or family relations (work-family conflict). At the same time, the burden of family responsibilities, such as caring for children or dependent elders, can also negatively influence the development of work at the company (family-work conflict). Although the concept of conflict has been defined and analyzed for many years, the empirical results that try to explain the contribution of the family-friendly practices to employees’ job satisfaction are not so conclusive.

There is a more novel concept that could also help to explain the contribution of the firm’s practices of work-family balance to employees’ job satisfaction, but has been very little empirically developed (McNally et al. 2010a and 2010b). It is the concept of enrichment which, unlike conflict, does not emphasize the fact that sharing activities (work and family) is always a constraint (lack of time, energy, etc.) but enriching, because what the employee learns when developing his/her labor activity and that makes him/her be a better professional, may positively result in his/her family relationship and vice-versa. For example, the fact of having to develop more patience with children may help to have a better relationship with people at work, or the abilities to solve conflicts acquired at work may allow to solve conflicts with children more efficiently, the partner or other family members.

The scarce empirical evidence supports the idea that enrichment and conflict are different phenomena, from both a conceptual and empirical perspective, but could be related to each other (Carlson et al. 2010; McNally et al 2010a and 2010b). The use of the concept of enrichment, without detracting from the importance that already has acquired the concept of conflict, could improve our explanatory knowledge of the contribution made by work-family balance measures to employees’ job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Currently, we are in the stage of developing integrated models (Rode et al. 2007; Baral and Bhargava 2010; McNally et
al. 2010a and 2010b) that are based on assumptions such as the commitment and employee’s job satisfaction may be determined by the interaction between multiple factors, both from the scope of work and the employee’s personal-family environment. However, the reviewed literature separately considers the relationship between work-family balance measures, enrichment, conflict, satisfaction and commitment. The aim of this paper is to go further by analyzing in a single model, different relationships between these variables.

We also want to address the effect of work-family balance with an integrative perspective, as work-family balance measures often have a synergistic effect that is not always taken into account. The reviewed studies only analyze individual measures such as telework or flextime (Frye and Breaugh, 2004; Pérez et al. 2008). However, in our study we analyze the joint effect of the work-family balance measures that are usually available to workers and have synergies that will be justified later. We have studied the following work-family balance measures: telework, flexible hours, intensive day, compressed workweeks, bunch of hours, part-time contracts, job sharing, leaves and short holidays/permissions. The interest of the relationship we are seeking between work-family balance measures and enrichment/conflict is that they may be related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which is very useful for a better management of human resources. Enrichment, because the beneficial effects of the work-family balance; and conflict, because work-family balance may reduce it.

Thus, the contribution of this paper is twofold: first, the study of the combined effect of the work-family balance measures on the various dimensions of enrichment and conflict; and, secondly, the analysis of the relationship between the different dimensions of enrichment and conflict on employee’s satisfaction and commitment. We believe that this analysis can be of great interest to both employees and companies because it offers new arguments to justify the adoption of work-family balance measures and to manage the organizational change process that these measures represent, looking for activities that will improve employees’ enrichment.

The paper is structured as follows. In the next section we develop the theoretical framework and hypotheses to be tested. Then, we present the methodology of the empirical study and the results. Finally we discuss these results and their implications for research and management.

2. Theoretical framework and hypotheses

Work-life balance: measures and synergy

In recent decades, difficulties for balance work and family life have increased, both by the instability of the labor market and because in most families both partners work and have children at older ages, taking responsibility at the same time for children and elderly relatives. There is also been a rise in the number of single-parent families. Hence, the need for work-life balance of employees has increased, and
making more attractive those companies that are family-friendly and explicitly support their employees.

Measures to balance work and family refer to a set of human resource practices, such as flexible hours or telework, which may or may not have been implemented in order to facilitate balance, but which are recognized in the literature as having a positive influence. A work-family balance program is one established with the explicit objective of creating in the company a family-friendly environment (i.e., favoring work-family balance of employees).

Although there are different types of measures of work-family balance, we have focused our study on those that are more related to the organization of work, because we think they are those that allow to better link the causal mechanism of its influence on employee’s satisfaction through enrichment and conflict. We do not include, therefore, those other work-family balance measures financed directly by the company, for example, grants to childcare, home care or dependent elderly, among others.

For study purposes, work-family balance measures will be those that usually deliver a short time or space to employee’s flexibility so that they can meet their family responsibilities. For example, the company may adopt flexible working hours to facilitate the entry or exit of employees who have to drop off and pick up children from school, or may introduce teleworking for people who have difficulty traveling to their usual working center. The bundle of work-family measures that we are going to study in our paper are: telework, flexible hours, intensive day, compress workday, bunch of hours, partial contracts, job sharing, leaves of absence and short holidays/permissions. We may consider that all these measures are potentially work-family friendly, although the purpose of the company to introduce them may respond to other needs, for example, costs reduction.

We think that there is a synergy among these practices that guarantees their empirical relation to enrichment and conflict. Work-family balance measures can mutually reinforce each other, so those studies analyzing individual practices have limitations that the studies themselves recognize (Pedersen and Jeppesen, 2012). Thus, flexitime and bunch of hours can reinforce each other as they could reach a more flexible schedule using the bunch of hours, so that, for example, an employee can increase her bunch of hours available depending on whether he/she arrives earlier or leaves later. Similarly, there are work-family balance measures whose joint use may facilitate the organization of work at the company and thus its beneficial effects on the multiple roles of employees. For example, teleworking and sharing a job can be mutually reinforcing to the extent that they may facilitate the availability of employees in a given time to hold virtual meetings for monitoring and control. The same argument period of can be used to justify the mutual reinforcement of telework and flexible hours as both may facilitate the management of teamwork and other issues. In the same line of argument, job sharing can allow the existence of intensive day, compressing the labor week in less than five days and coexist with part-time contracts. These arguments can be extended to other measures, to justify why we
believe that work-family balance measures are potentially synergistic in order with each other and can be analyzed together and be related to enrichment and conflict.

The use of a joint approach to the study of work-family balance measures that will allow regard them as a construct rather than analyzing them individually, is consistent with the most advanced ideas in the strategic management of human resources. A construct of work-family balance measures can be considered as a group of complementary practices, highly related and even overlapping each other, which can help employees manage their non-work roles. Work-family literature suggests that the type of individual measures that can be part of this type of construct include practices such as flextime or different types of leave for family reasons. However, the overall approach of a construct focuses less on the specific components that comprise it, and more on the extent to which such practices are highly interrelated and are interactive, suggesting a philosophy at the organizational level. As a result, a construct of work-family balance allows taking into account a broader overall effect at company level that would provide the analysis of individual measures. This idea is also consistent with the tradition that exists in the area of human resources to focus on bundles of practices or management measures (Osterman, 1995; Perry-Smith and Blum, 2000).

The analysis of a construct of work-family balance measures, unlike the analysis of individual practices, is also important not only because having a set of work-family balance measures which are interrelated can relieve the employee of non-work concerns, but also because it can be a source of sustainable competitive advantage for the company. According to the theory of resources and capabilities, an internal resource can be a source of competitive advantage for the company when the strategic advantage created is not easily imitable. The synergy created within an interrelated bundle of measures of work-family balance and the more open corporate philosophy that implementing these measures requires, can hinder or discourage imitation by other companies. Such imitation would not be easy or immediate but rather complex and difficult because the company that implements them has had to overcome the organizational difficulties of their joint management. Non-economic barriers may interfere with the adoption of practices, including those involving enterprise-level benefits. It is not surprising therefore that, because of such barriers imitation, interrelated groups of work-family balance measures are not frequent among companies. While certain individual measures of work-family balance are more common than others, an interrelated bundle remains the exception in many sectors.

Theories of work-family interface

As a result of social changes and lifestyles that have taken place over the last decades (couples where both partners work outside the home, single parents, etc.), research on the effects of performing multiple roles in the psychological functioning and job satisfaction of employees, has increased. Although recently alternative
theoretical approaches have begun to be contrasted, the truth is that, since its inception, the theoretical discourse in the field of balancing work and family has been confined to a few dominant theories, especially the theory of roles.

According to this theory (Kahn et al., 1964), the conflicting expectations inherent to the performance of different roles, have negative consequences on the feeling of well-being of people and their associated effects. However, empirical evidence has not always supported this approach and now is already common to find two alternative proposals in relation to the effect of multiple roles. The first is the proposal of stress. The research supporting this more traditional hypothesis indicates that the combined demands of employment and family create a burden greater than many people can bear. As a result, there is a high risk that the different roles conflict, i.e., that work in the company makes home life difficult, or vice versa, what in a medium and long term leads to stress and psychological difficulties that limit job satisfaction. The second proposal in relation to the multiple social roles is the hypothesis of the expansion, arguing that the performance of multiple roles have generally positive effects on the welfare of people which outweigh the possible stressful effects derived from them. In a context of multiple social roles, you may find satisfaction and support in a vital area when problems or difficulties are experienced elsewhere. For many people, the fact of assuming a double commitment, work and family, gives them greater control over their lives, not only emotionally but also economically.

In addition to the theory of roles, there are other theories that focus on the work-family interface, as the theory of externalities (Zedeck and Mosier, 1990). This theory states that work and family influence each other both positively and negatively: time, tasks, attitudes, stress, emotions and behaviors are externalized between work and family. These theories discard from the start that conflict is the only possibility, unlike the theory of roles. Instead, they make it possible to propose different types of relationships and interactions between the two domains (work and family), at the same time as they allow to distinguish the conflict of work on the family from family conflict on the job. Even with its limitations, the theory of externalities has served as the basis for setting the cross effects between family and work in recent studies.

Finally, there are other theories that can be used in a complementary way to analyze certain aspects or contexts of the work-family interface. Social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1985) proposes that individuals classify themselves as members of social groups. Individuals have multiple identities which derive from their interactions with others. Applied to the context of work-family, people can play multiple roles and be satisfied, provided that: (a) the identities in conflict (for example, a man who is an authoritarian manager at work but an affectionate father at home) remain separate, or (b) consistent personal values apply to both identities. That is, assuming that there may be conflict by performing various roles (role theory), individuals can limit the negative effect thereof in terms of the attitude and strategy followed. Similarly, the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) emphasizes social exchanges that occur
beyond the signed contracts. Applied to the work-family interface it would support the possibility that, with work-family balance measures, employees feel forced to make an extra effort at work, in exchange for the additional benefits received by such measures.

In our paper, we will approach the study of the work-family interface according to the most recent perspective that incorporates enrichment as a factor explaining the interface and its influence on job satisfaction, from the proposition of the roles expansion (Kahn et al., 1964) and the theory of externalities (Zedeck and Mosier, 1990).

Research Model

The analysis of the work-family interface has traditionally been focused on conflict, due to the preponderance of the role theory and that conflict analysis seeks to find solutions to the negative situations in which employees are, for which work-family balance measures are designed and implemented. But there is another new perspective in the study of balance and different from the conflict, which is enrichment (Frone, 2003; Aryee et al., 2005). Although enrichment and conflict could perhaps be considered intuitively as opposite sides of the same coin, and thus be negatively related, studies to date are inconclusive as to its relations (Frone, 2003; Grzywacz and Bass, 2003; Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). Therefore, in our paper we adopt a dual perspective to analyze the relationship between work-family balance and work-family interface. Moreover, there is not a general agreement in the literature on how the different work-family balance measures affect enrichment and conflict. Some studies indicate that work-family balance is directly related to enrichment and conflict (Zhang et al, 2012; Selvarajan et al, 2013) whereas others say that they are different concepts and that there are other factors to consider in order to justify the difference between them and why work-family balance measures may relate differently with them (Carlson et al., 2013).

Work-family enrichment (W-F) can be defined as the degree to which the experience in a role or function improves the quality of life, i.e., the performance or effect on another role or function (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed that the enrichment occurs when the gains of the resources obtained in the role A improve individual performance in the role B. More specifically, enrichment occurs when resources (the skills and perspectives, social, physical and psychological capital, and material resources) obtained in a role improve performance, either directly in another role (what is called “path instrumental access”) or indirectly through their influence in the positive affect (the “affective access path”). For example, enrichment can occur when a mother/father who has a leading position in a company, employs in the workplace the same method of dialogue or negotiation that serves to advise his/her son at home, to advise their young subordinates (instrumental route). Or when a commercial agent that returns home happy from
work because he/she has achieved the targeted sales objectives, is more enthusiastic and collaborator in his/her role as parent and spouse (affective route). These and other situations involve an approach in which the accumulation of roles does not constitute a loss of resources or energy for the individual but even a net gain to use it in that role or other (Nicklin and McNally, 2013). These examples further illustrate that, as it has commonly been used for conflict analysis, enrichment can be bidirectional as well (Frone, 2003), so that the benefits can be derived from work and be applied in the family (W-F enrichment) or can be derived from the family and be applied at work (F-W enrichment).

Work-family balance measures can contribute to the enrichment of the work-family interface through the affective path as well as the instrumental path (Lövhöiden et al, 2011; Nicklin and McNally, 2013). On the one hand, measures such as flextime or telework can give employees a greater sense of control over the interface or balance work and family life, thus increasing positive attitudes at work that can be transferred in a more positive affection in the domestic sphere. Moreover, measures of work-family balance usually require the support, not only of the senior management of the company to implement them, but also, very often, the support of line and middle managers so that employees do not perceive that if they use any practice as flextime or telework, it can be detrimental to their career because superiors view them as less committed to the company than those not benefiting from measures that facilitate work-life balance (Eaton, 2003).

Therefore, our first hypothesis seeks to establish a positive relationship between work-family balance measures and enrichment, considering that these measures may potentially save time and managers can contribute to gain resources by performing multiple roles. Work-family balance measures could be considered routine or organizational capabilities that allow the use of human resources (Families and Work Institute, 1998; Lu et al, 2002 and 2009; Brough et al., 2005; Siu and Phillips, 2007) more efficiently and used together and coordinated, they can offer the company sustainable competitive advantages arising from the difficulty to be imitated by other companies. These measures taken by the family-friendly companies can provide enrichment and give employees more control over their schedules or how they work. The psychological state of enrichment would be beneficial for workers, in terms of preventing the work and family responsibilities interfere with each other. Even for those workers who do not use work-family balance measures, the mere existence of family-friendly policies in the company gives the message of a caring organization with its employees, resulting beneficially in behaviors and attitudes that avoid potential conflicts (Siu et al., 2010). Based on these arguments, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1a. The use of work-family balance measures is positively related to W-F enrichment.
H1b. The use of work-family balance measures is positively related to the F-W enrichment.
The perspective of conflict has been studied in the literature for a long time. It can be considered that work-family balance measures reduce the conflict, a priori, of having to split the time between the care of family and labor responsibilities. In fact, there are studies that show that employees working in family-friendly organizations perceive that the demands of their work do not interfere with their family responsibilities (Selvarajan et al., 2013). But the review of the literature indicates that while work-family balance measures reduce W-F conflict and F-W conflict (Thomas and Ganster, 1995; Kossek et al, 2006; Hornung et al, 2008; Griggs et al, 2013; Selvarajan et al, 2013), the results are not always conclusive (Breaugh and Frye, 2008; Currie and Eveline, 2011) and the most frequent analyses usually study only one measure of work-family balance to explain it (Frye and Breaugh, 2004; Pérez et al., 2008), which may be insufficient in many occasions (Carlson et al., 2013). For this reason, our paper incorporates an interrelated bunch of work-family balance measures that allow to test whether its use is negatively related to the level of conflict. According to this we propose the following hypothesis:

H2a. The use of work-family balance measures is negatively related to W-F conflict.
H2b. The use of work-family balance measures is negatively related to F-W conflict.

Work-family balance measures may improve, according to the theory of social exchange, employee’s job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Thompson and Prottas, 2005; Kopelman et al., 2006). Our research suggests that enrichment and conflict represent causal mechanisms to explain these improvements in the behavior of employees at work. Regarding enrichment, some studies indicate that it is positively related to the physical health of the individual (Grzywacz and Bass, 2003; Allis and O’Driscoll, 2008) and the family balance (Grzywacz and Marks, 2000), which may favorably affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Boyar and Mosley (2007) suggest that having to develop multiple work and family tasks can be beneficial because it leads to develop skills and improve abilities to act in a particular environment because the employee feels satisfaction in facing this challenge. In addition, the individual with multiple responsibilities may also receive support from multiple areas, such as their supervisors or coworkers or their family and even friends outside the workplace.

Recent studies already support that perceptions of enrichment are mediators of the positive relationship between the availability of flexible working arrangements and job satisfaction on the one hand, and the intentions to leave the company on the other (Baral and Bhargava 2010; McNally et al, 2010a and 2010b).

As for the conflict, the negative effects are included in most of the literature that states that W-F conflict reduces both job and personal satisfaction and increases psychological stress, while F-W conflict results in lower efficiency and dedication of employees at work (Zhao and Namasivayam, 2012). Some research directly suggests reducing W-F conflict as a way to increase job satisfaction (Lapierre et al., 2008) because when employees feel that the organization supports the family,
that is, accepts the problems and/or family disruption, their W-F conflict decreases (Allen, 2001).

Certain studies even observe that a minor W-F conflict and a higher W-F enrichment are indirect indicators of balance in the work and family interface, so that these results suggest that more work-family balance can contribute to better results at work (Carlson et al., 2013), greater job satisfaction and greater organizational commitment (Aryee et al., 2005). In this line, other studies indicate that the lack of W-F balance can lead employees to have intentions to leave the company. This means that employees who have lower levels of W-F conflict are more satisfied at work and more committed to the company (Carlson et al., 2013). Based on these results the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3a. W-F enrichment is positively related to the employee’s job satisfaction.
H3b. F-W enrichment is positively related to the employee’s job satisfaction.
H4a. W-F conflict is negatively related to the employee’s job satisfaction.
H4b. F-W conflict is negatively related to the employee’s job satisfaction.

Figure 1 shows the model proposed in this paper with the hypotheses. It has also been marked the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, because in our paper we propose that organizational commitment is a direct consequence of job satisfaction, according to most of the literature reviewed (Mathieu and Hamel, 1989; Brown and Peterson, 1994; Frenkel et al., 2013), although there are also studies that only indicate a strong correlation between them and that both can be directly derived from the work-family balance (Koslowski et al., 1991; Brashear et al., 2003; Chen, 2004, Lok and Crawford, 2004).

Figure 1. Model of analysis
3. Methodology

To carry out the study, information was collected through a survey of workers of all Spanish companies that have been awarded with the “Flexible Enterprise Awards”, organized by the company CValor in calls from 2002 to 2013. The sample also includes companies that are certified as “family-responsible companies (EFR)”. The design of the survey was conducted in the second quarter of 2012. The information for the study was obtained from a structured questionnaire, developed from a previous literature review in order to search for variables required by the research model. The questionnaire was pretested by academics and professionals to check the validity of its content and the terminology used (since the original scales were written in English). The survey was sent to companies early in the second half of the year. The reception of the questionnaires took along that semester. The final number of valid questionnaires was 322, belonging to 30 different companies. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the sample.

Table 1. Sample characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>55,4% women/44,6% men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have a partner</td>
<td>78,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have children</td>
<td>61,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsability for adults</td>
<td>28,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>40 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They live in a urban area</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time in the company</td>
<td>10,4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time in the current job</td>
<td>6,8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee job sector</td>
<td>Services 80,1%; Industry 19,9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the final collected sample, data from the first questionnaires received were compared with the latest questionnaires of the submission period, under the assumption that the employees who answered at the end are representative of those who have not answered (Armstrong and Overton, 1977), not showing significant differences in terms of use of practices and demographic characteristics (student t test).

The questionnaire consists of several blocks of questions on issues related to the work-family balance of employees. Table 2 shows the information about its structure, and the references used for elaborating the scales are presented.

To test the proposed hypothesis we used the structural equations methodology. Exploratory factor analyses were performed with SPSS, version 19, and confirmatory factor analyses with EQS, version 6.1 for Windows.
Quantitative validation allowed us to identify the dimensionality of the scales and ultimately, to indicate the validity of using such scales to characterize enrichment, conflict, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. To detect which indicators are susceptible of being removed, reliability and dimensionality scales were analyzed. The internal consistency of the scale has been analyzed with the statistic Cronbach alpha and item-total correlation (Chandler and Lyon, 2001).

The variable *work-family balance measures* is determined as the arithmetic average of the use of eleven work-family balance measures of human resources offered by the company, which takes a value between zero and one. Employees were asked to indicate, for each of these practices, whether or not they made use of them. A higher value of this variable implies a greater use of these practices by employees and a greater synergy between them because they contribute to better solve different work-family balance needs.

This way of calculating the variable as an average of the use of individual measures has been previously used in other studies on human resources flexibility practices (Escrig-Tena et al., 2012).

The scale *enrichment* consists of 18 indicators assessed with a 7-point Likert scale (for example, “My involvement in my work helps me understand different points of view and it helps me be a better member of my family”), with Cronbach $\alpha = 0.961$. All item-total correlation indicators reach a value greater than 0.3, the minimum required, therefore it can be considered that the scale is reliable.

Once the dimensionality of this scale was analyzed, we obtained a two-dimensional model, W-F enrichment (9 items) and F-W enrichment (9 items), with a cumulative explained variance of 78.065%.

The variable *conflict* is composed of 10 indicators (e.g., “the amount of time my job requires difficults me to fulfill my family responsibilities”) measured with a 7 point Likert scale and Cronbach $\alpha = 0.910$. All item-total correlation indicators reach the minimum required, so it can be considered that the scale is reliable.

Analyzed the dimensionality of this scale, we obtained a two-dimensional model, W-F conflict (5 items) and F-W conflict (5 items), with a cumulative explained variance of 72.73%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLOCKS</th>
<th>Question number</th>
<th>No of items</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility-balance practices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Carlson et al. (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nettetemeyer et al. (1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour relations:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Satisfaction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Anderson et al. (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Organizational commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Allen and Meyer (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal information</td>
<td>6-15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Demographic variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional information</td>
<td>16-21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the construct job satisfaction, the resulting scale consists of 5 items (for example, “the work I do in my business makes sense to me”) rated with a 7 point Likert scale and Cronbach $\alpha = 0.869$. Also, for this construct, the item-total correlation indicators reach the required minimum. Once the exploratory study is finished, we obtained a model with a single dimension, job satisfaction, with an accumulated explained variance of 68.18%.

The construct organizational commitment consists of 8 items (for example, “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this company”) measured with a 7 point Likert scale and Cronbach $\alpha = 0.955$. All indicators reach a value greater than 0.3. The exploratory study indicates, there is a model with a single dimension, organizational commitment, with an accumulated explained variance of 74.13%.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 3, the values obtained for the reliability coefficients (CF1 and CF2) of the resulting variables or dimensions exceed the value of 0.5, reflecting reliability and convergent validity.

Table 3. Reliability coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>CF1</th>
<th>CF2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance measures ***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-family enrichment</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-work enrichment</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-family conflict</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-work conflict</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational commitment</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* CF1: Fornell and Larcker coefficient.
** CF2: Omega coefficient.
*** The variable “measures of work-family balance” does not present CF1 nor CF2 as it is a construct which is the arithmetic mean of the use of the different human resource flexibility practices offered by the company.

Once the confirmatory factor analysis of the variables in the model was conducted, it was found that both the factor loadings and the reliability coefficients have appropriate values. Regarding the factor loadings, all exceed 0.8, so the reliability coefficients of the observed variables ($R^2$) exceed 0.5. On the other hand, if the discriminant validity is analyzed, the factor loadings (correlations between observed variables and their respective constructs) outweigh the correlations observed between constructs, so it can be said that the proposed structure gives sufficient samples of internal validity of the multidimensional constructs. Table 4 shows the correlations between the variables of the model.
Table 4. Correlation among the variables of the model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balance measures</th>
<th>W-F enrichment</th>
<th>F-W enrichment</th>
<th>W-F conflict</th>
<th>F-W conflict</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance measures</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-F enrichment</td>
<td>0.189**</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-W enrichment</td>
<td>0.120′</td>
<td>0.553**</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-F conflict</td>
<td>-0.205**</td>
<td>-0.326**</td>
<td>-0.138′</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-W conflict</td>
<td>-0.179″</td>
<td>-0.144″</td>
<td>-0.118′</td>
<td>0.549″</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.157″</td>
<td>0.612″</td>
<td>0.322″</td>
<td>-0.412″</td>
<td>-0.207″</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>0.165″</td>
<td>0.611″</td>
<td>0.299″</td>
<td>0.256″</td>
<td>-0.188″</td>
<td>0.710″</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```
p<0.01; ′p<0.05.

4. Results and discussion

To measure the effect of work-family balance measures on enrichment (W-F and F-W) and conflict (W-F and F-W), and of these on job satisfaction (as well as job satisfaction on organizational commitment) a structural equations model is proposed. Table 5 includes the results of the model.

Table 5. Results of the model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relation</th>
<th>Standardized loads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The use of balance measures is positively related to W-F enrichment (H1a)</td>
<td>0.824**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of balance measures is positively related to the F-W enrichment (H1b)</td>
<td>0.603**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of balance measures is negatively related to W-F conflict (H2a)</td>
<td>-0.415**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of balance measures is negatively related to F-W conflict (H2b)</td>
<td>-0.258′</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-F enrichment is positively related to the employees job satisfaction (H3a)</td>
<td>0.621″</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-W enrichment is positively related to the employees job satisfaction (H3b)</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-F conflict is negatively related to the employees job satisfaction (H4a)</td>
<td>-0.196″</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-W conflict is negatively related to the employees job satisfaction (H4b)</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employees job satisfaction is positively related to their organizational commitment</td>
<td>0.719″</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```
```
p<0.01; ′p<0.05; R² (Use Pract-Enrich W-F)= 0.678; R² (Use Pract-Enrich F-W)=0.364; R² (Use Pract-Confl W-F)=0.172; R² (Use Pract-Confl F-W)=0.066; R² (Enrich and Confl-Satisfac)=0.503; R² (Satisfac-Commit)=0.517; X² (d.f.=771)= 2359.1012 (p=0.000); NFI=0.768; NNFI=0.819; CFI=0.830; IFI=0.831; RMSEA= 0.086.
Statistics and indexes of goodness of fit are in line with the acceptance levels recommended by Schumacker and Lomax (1996), so they properly define the relationships obtained.

As the data in Table 5 show, the use of work-family balance measures is positively related to both types of enrichment (W-F and F-W), whereas it is negatively related to the two types of conflict (W-F and F-W). These results support hypotheses H1a, H1b, H2a and H2b. With regard to the relationships of enrichment and conflict with job satisfaction, our data show different relationships. In both cases, the relationship is only significant in the W-F direction (being positive for enrichment and negative for conflict), which allows to endorse hypotheses H3a and H4a and reject H3b and H4b.

In addition to the results shown in Table 5 for the relations between these variables, namely between work-family balance measures, enrichment, conflict and satisfaction, the indirect effects between conciliation and satisfaction measures have also been calculated. The decomposition of the effects obtained from the estimation indicates that there is an indirect effect of the use of work-family balance measures on job satisfaction through W-F enrichment with a significant and positive coefficient of 0.511 and on W-F conflict also with a significant and positive coefficient of 0.081.

Table 5 also shows that job satisfaction is positively related to organizational commitment. We have also observed an indirect effect of W-F enrichment and W-F conflict on commitment through satisfaction (0.446 and -0.140 respectively).

The results of our study provide several new features to the literature of human resource management. First, the set of several measures of labor balance, unlike other studies that analyze individual practices presenting partial models (Breaugh et Frye, 2008; Pérez et al, 2008; Currie and Eveline, 2011; Selvarajan et al., 2013). Our study thus responds to the suggestions made by some scholars that say that the individualized use of these measures may not be enough (Carlson et al., 2013). Second, we have incorporated the double dimension of enrichment and conflict (work-family and family-work) in the study of the relations of work-family balance measures with enrichment and conflict and of these with job satisfaction. Previous research has studied these relations by including the conflict or enrichment effects, but not both simultaneously (Aryee et al., 2005; Karatepe and Bektessi, 2008; McNally et al, 2010a; Griggs et al, 2013). Moreover, our results are consistent with other studies that suggest that those employees using work-family balance measures will have less conflict than those who do not use them (Breaugh and Frye, 2008), besides feeling more satisfied at work (Zhao and Namasivayam, 2012). Likewise, the mere existence of appropriate policies conveys the message that the company cares about its employees (Siu et al., 2010).

From the point of view of business management and study of balance in companies, our results also have, in our opinion, several important implications. First, they suggest that enrichment may be a more explanatory variable than conflict to analyze the relationship between work-family balance measures and job satisfaction. Thus, both the W-F direction and the F-W direction corresponding to the enrichment...
coefficient is higher than the conflict in our structural equation results. This means that enrichment explains further the variance of job satisfaction than the contribution of conflict. While most literature (Zhao and Namasivayam, 2012) finds a negative relationship between conflict and job satisfaction and our results also support this, when explaining the contribution that work-family balance measures can make to employee’s job satisfaction, it would be better to use, or at least not leave aside, the enrichment variable.

In addition, unlike the conflict which is a negative and limiting focus on employee resources, the perspective of enrichment provides a more favorable view to relate the decisions made by managers in human resources and the results of employees in their organization. In particular, work-family balance measures can positively influence the performance of employees if the use of such practices makes people feel that the work improves their willingness and the sense of security and self-esteem. All this helps employees to perceive that they can take better care of their families and obtain greater job satisfaction. Polyvalent and interpersonal skills that employees acquire with certain practices, such as telework, can generate more confidence as well as support from supervisors, so that the employee feels comfortable at work and considers that it is contributing to his/her personal development and employability. However, it is necessary that the organization is aware of the importance of creating a positive work environment where employees are supported with, for example, greater work-family enrichment. For this reason, organizations must train supervisors on the importance of this support and the behaviors and attitudes that facilitate it in their employees.

Employees who use any of the family-friendly practices that the company makes available, can take over everything they learn at work and can be susceptible also to be applied to the family, and even vice versa, which not only results in an expected reduction of difficulties balancing work and family, but also in improved psychological states of wellness. Skills, knowledge and achievements at work, provide the employee experiences that will positively affect their family, and all this makes the work done by the latter have a greater sense and makes them feel more satisfied with the opportunities that his work offers. The performance of their tasks can help the employee understand different points of view, which enriches family relationships, influencing job satisfaction. In addition, the feeling of success, happiness and joy that can give personal fulfillment at work can also positively affect the family environment and welfare at work.

Employees can help to improve by themselves the work-family interface, involving their partners and closest family members in the design and implementation of lifestyles in order to plan and meet its future work priorities. Support in the family environment is crucial in achieving enrichment and a positive working environment in the company. Therefore, organizations have to assess the implementation of resources such as, for example, programs to assist employees both at home and within the family. Managers and employees must be aware that affection has implications for managing the positive roles of work and family. Employees may feel
satisfied to worry about their co-workers, as well as participate in the development of team activities within or even outside work, thanks to the flexible practices they use, allowing them to compensate for the stress that sometimes results from labor activities. Work-family enrichment, instrumental and affective paths alike, detected both in men and women in different jobs, are results that support the implementation of work-family balance measures.

Results also indicate that work-family balance measures can have a positive indirect effect on job satisfaction. It means that work-family balance measures, as suggested by other results from the literature (Zhao and Namasivayam, 2012), are positively related to job satisfaction. Our results go beyond pointing out this already proven relationship, and a priori fairly predictable in the management literature, since they indicate that the effect of work-family balance measures on enrichment, and this in turn on job satisfaction, is greater than the effect that could be associated only to work-family balance measures on job satisfaction. Therefore, these data would reinforce again the need to consider enrichment as a causal mechanism to explain the contribution made by the work-family balance measures on the job satisfaction of employees who use them.

The results also show that job satisfaction, positively influenced by enrichment and negatively by conflict, has a positive influence on organizational commitment. Work-family balance measures may then be a way of achieving organizational commitment as enrichment helps employees to demonstrate reciprocity in exchange for using such practices. For example, a person who is able to play simultaneously in a satisfactory way their family and work roles can better protect himself/herself against the potentially negative effects of each of these roles and maintain a healthier physical and mental attitude. Employees with greater identity and commitment to work can experience a greater work-family affective enrichment because of its positive attitude for enjoyment and work. Although employees are tired after work, they also have obtained satisfaction if they enjoy performing their duties. In sum, making those resources channeled through work-family enrichment, companies could leverage further positive effects of flexible practices on organizational commitment.

Finally, we must take into value that some of the assumptions of our model have not been significant, namely H3b and H4b posed a positive and negative correlation respectively between the F-W direction of enrichment and F-W of the conflict with job satisfaction. This does not allow us to suggest therefore that the influence that the family domain has on the work domain can always result in a lower or higher employee’s job satisfaction, unlike what we have found for the positive association of the W-F direction. That is to say, greater dedication to family can result in a better use of working time, gain knowledge, acquire extra skills, have a good disposition, definitely, be a better employee. However, no one can suggest that an employee who is more motivated by the above factors is always going to experience a greater job satisfaction, as other factors outside the family environment can more heavily impact on the welfare of the individual as, for example, promotion opportunities, work environment, the degree of companionship, or the support of their supervisors
and the management of the company. Likewise, the demands of family can alter the
development of work in the company and may interfere with the fulfillment of the
tasks, but would not necessarily reduce employee satisfaction, as there may be other
factors related to the development and context of work that outweigh family factors.

However, we believe that our study supports the desirability of work-family
balance measures to improve employee’s job satisfaction and commitment. In this
case, the positive effect of these practices is justified by the improved sense of per-
sonal enrichment that can experience the worker in the W-F interface. This is an
aspect that is new in the dynamics of work in the human resource managers, who
have traditionally placed their emphasis on reducing conflict. Instead, emphasize
the improvement of enrichment as a positive contributor to job satisfaction may be
included in the management of human resources for a greater number of employees,
not just to those in particular situations of conflict in their W-F and F-W interfaces.
Moreover, the management of human resources must be geared to a greater number
of job performance variables if they really want to experience the potential synergy
between work-family balance measures.

5. Conclusions

This paper has presented a comprehensive model that relates work-family bal-
cance measures with enrichment and conflict, and of these with job satisfaction and
organizational commitment. The results show that those workers using work-family
balance measures that the companies put at their disposal (such as telework, part-
time contract, leave of absence, reduced working hours, among others) are in better
condition than the rest when having to acquire skills, gain knowledge or develop
certain feelings that positively influence in their relationship with their family mem-
bers. On the other hand, employees who use work-family balance measures as a way
to balance their work and family life know much better how to use their time. They
also show greater availability to the company and feel happier at work by developing
feelings and attitudes that positively influence their work. Furthermore, the use of
these practices makes work demands interfere with the employee to a lesser extent in
family and domestic life, reducing the tensions that make it difficult to fulfill family
obligations.

In view of the results it is important, therefore, to point out that work-family
balance measures can be a relevant instrument when you want to balance family and
working life, making that result in a greater interest in the work and an increased
personal well-being. In this sense, having highly satisfied and motivated workers
will be one of the factors determining the future of the company. On the other hand,
the jobs are enriched allowing workers to acquire greater responsibilities and new
features, encouraging greater variety of jobs and new learning, but also making
work-family balance measures available to workers, helping them to organize in
terms of time and space.
Finally, as it is clear from our work, if employees are able to develop skills to solve conflicts at work that can also be applied in resolving family conflicts, this will positively affect their psychological state and welfare, and as a result it would also influence their work performance. Therefore, the enrichment of the worker will make that employee’s job satisfaction increases and consequently he/she will feel more committed to the organization. If the organizational commitment of workers increases, the organization can benefit from its many consequences, such as lower absenteeism, lower dropout rates, increased motivation and productivity, among others.

The findings of the study should be interpreted in light of its limitations. First, the variables are perceptual in nature, which does not ensure the absence of bias in responses. Second, we used measurements for a single unit of time, which hinder the establishment of causal relationships so that future studies could collect assessments longitudinally to assess the dynamic effect of work-family balance measures on employees’ enrichment and performance. Finally, it is important to note that the sample of companies has not been chosen randomly but has been biased toward “family-responsible” companies, which could distort the relationship between the variables studied. One possible line of future research should include larger samples of companies and from different sectors.

References


Notes on Contributors

Name: Manuela Pérez-Pérez
Position: Titular de Universidad (Acreditada a Catedrática)
School / Faculty: Escuela de Ingeniería y Arquitectura
University: Universidad de Zaragoza
Address: Edificio Betancourt, María de Luna, 5, 50018 Zaragoza, España
Telephone: +34 876 55 50 05
Email: manuela.perez@unizar.es

Name: M.ª José Vela-Jiménez
Position: Titular de Universidad
School / Faculty: Facultad de Economía y Empresa
University: Universidad de Zaragoza
Address: Edificio Lorenzo Normante, María de Luna, 5, 50018 Zaragoza, España
Telephone: +34 876 55 49 36
Email: mjvela@unizar.es

Name: Silvia Abella-Garcés
Position: Titular de Universidad
School / Faculty: Facultad de Empresa y Gestión Pública
University: Universidad de Zaragoza
Address: Plaza de la Constitución s/n, 22001 Huesca, España
Telephone: +34 974 23 93 73
Email: sabella@unizar.es

Name: Ángel Martínez-Sánchez
Position: Catedrático de Universidad
School / Faculty: Escuela de Ingeniería y Arquitectura
University: Universidad de Zaragoza
Address: Edificio Betancourt, María de Luna, 5, 50018 Zaragoza, España
Telephone: +34 876 55 50 24
Email: anmarzan@unizar.es