

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF FACILITATING CONDITIONS FOR WORK-FAMILY ENRICHMENT

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Abstract

We investigated the conditions under which individuals experience work-family enrichment. We selected six dual-career couples based on their positive spillover scores (categorized as high/mid/low) and conducted multiple in-depth interviews for a total of thirty interviews. We discovered and classified organizational and home factors which contribute to resources obtained in the work and family domains and also identified a new resource exclusive to the family domain. We also found that motivation, boundary preference and precedent enrichment experience facilitate the enrichment process as the transfer of resources from one role to another role can be either conscious and intentional or unconscious and unintentional.

Keywords: work-family enrichment, dual-career couples, agape love, work and home resources.

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Introduction

During the last three decades, considerable attention has been given to work-family research. Initially, it was the effects of working women that spurred this interest (e.g. Barnett and Rivers, 1996; Hochschild, 1997) and most of the early work focused on a conflicting perspective. From this perspective, work-family conflict exists because competing demands from both roles cannot be fulfilled simultaneously (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Greenhaus, *et al.*, 1990). For some time, this view dominated the research field and a large number of studies examined the effects of conflict such as lower life/job satisfaction and job performance and higher stress, psychological problems, absenteeism and turnover (e.g. Bruck, *et al.*, 2002; van Steenbergen and Ellemers, 2009) and the effects of work-family policies, family-friendly leadership and company culture on conflict reduction (e.g. Anderson, *et al.*, 2002; Lapierre and Allen, 2006).

Increasingly, research on the work-family interface shows that positive aspects can emerge from the interaction of the two roles (e.g. Balmforth and Gardner, 2006; Baral and Bhargava, 2010; Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000; Graves, *et al.*, 2007; Grzywacz and Bass, 2003; Hakanen, *et al.*, 2011; Lu, 2011; Rogers and May, 2003; Ruderman, *et al.*, 2002; Wayne, *et al.*, 2004). The origins of this perspective are to be found in the works of Sieber (1974) and Marks (1977), who propose that resources acquired in one role as a by-product of social relationships may be reinvested in other roles. They also suggest that participation in some roles creates energy that can be used to enhance experiences in other roles. This phenomenon has been described variously as *positive spillover*, that is, experiences in one domain are transferred to another domain (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000), *work-family facilitation*, that is, engagement in one domain yields gains that enhance the functioning of another domain (Grzywacz and McDonald, 2002) and *work-family enrichment*, which refers to experiences in one role that improve the quality of life in the other role (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006).

Whereas much focus has been placed on the effects of this positive phenomenon, little has been done to examine the underlying mechanism that enables the benefits obtained from one role to be transferred to another role (Greenhaus and Singh, 2003). This question is of paramount importance as individuals try to make the most out of their work and family life. It is also relevant for organizations, as they attempt to have competent and well-rounded employees.

Furthermore, it is also significant for public legislators since this might facilitate citizens' wellbeing and work experiences. Given the importance of this research gap, the aim of this paper is to examine the conditions under which work enriches family life and family enriches work life.

Our study contributes to the growing body of research on work-family enrichment. This study advances our theoretical understanding of why some individuals experience more enrichment than others by examining the conditions under which enrichment happens. Furthermore, we identify factors that produce the benefits that are transferred from one role to another and shed light into the origins of the positive experiences. In addition to this theoretical contribution, this study also responds to the need for more qualitative research, which currently contributes about 10 percent of work-family research (Eby, *et al.*, 2005).

Work-Family Enrichment

There is growing empirical evidence which supports the mutually beneficial effects of work and family roles. For instance, men with children are more satisfied with and committed to their careers than men without children (Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000). Women suggest that their personal lives provide them with psychological benefits as well as emotional support and are also opportunities for enriching their interpersonal and leadership skills that enhance effectiveness in the management role (Ruderman, *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, whereas parental role commitment is associated with career satisfaction and performance, marital role commitment is associated with increased enhancement, which reduces strain and strengthens outcomes such as career satisfaction and performance (Graves, *et al.*, 2007). In addition, higher marital satisfaction is significantly related to higher job satisfaction and higher marital discord to lower job satisfaction (Rogers and May, 2003).

Work-family enrichment theory posits that “experiences in Role A (work or family) can improve the quality of life in Role B (family or work)” (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006: 72). Quality of life is understood as high performance and positive affect. In this model, the transferable resources are: (1) skills and perspectives (e.g. multitasking skills, understanding cultural differences), (2) psychological and physical resources (e.g. self-esteem, health), (3) social capital (i.e. information and influence), (4) flexibility (i.e. discretion to determine when and where to carry out role duties), and (5) material resources (e.g. money, gifts).

Such transfer is proposed to take place directly through an instrumental path moderated by role salience (Role B is important to the individual), perceived relevance (perception that Role A will benefit Role B) and compatibility (resources of Role A fit the demands of Role B) and indirectly via the affective path (positive affect is a mediator). The proposed enrichment process is bidirectional in that resources flow from work-to-family and family-to-work (Carlson, *et al.*, 2006). Empirical evidence supports the existence of these two paths; the direct instrumental path (Hunter, *et al.*, 2010; Weer, *et al.*, 2010) and the indirect affective path (Siu *et al.*, 2011) through which resources are transferred in both directions.

Studies on the effects of work-family enrichment show that the phenomenon is negatively related to turnover intentions (Russo and Buonocore, 2011; Wayne, *et al.*, 2006) and positively related to the perception of psychological contract fairness (Taylor, *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, work-family enrichment mediates the relationship between work-life policies and practices (i.e. supervisor support, flexible work arrangements) and work outcomes (i.e. job satisfaction, affective commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors) (Baral and Bhargava, 2010; Macnall, *et al.*,

2010). Work-family enrichment, physical as well as psychological resources derived from the home domain, also protects employees from calling in sick both in terms of frequency of absenteeism as well as duration of the absence (ten Brummelhuis, *et al.*, 2012). Ten Brummelhuis *et al.* (2012) show that previous research on absenteeism had not found satisfactory explanations for its antecedents since it had mainly focused on workplace antecedents. However, it is likely that the antecedents of absence may be traced to the home domain as well. Following this reasoning, we simultaneously examine work-family enrichment at home and at work.

Method

We used qualitative methods to examine the conditions under which individuals experience work-family enrichment. In order to ensure that the participants we interview indeed experienced benefits from the two roles, we carefully selected our participants from a sample of people who were previously surveyed regarding their positive work-family experiences. We applied the diverse case selection method (Gerring, 2007) to choose our interview participants. In this approach, a minimum of two cases which represent the full range of values characterizing the variables X1, Y, or the relationship X1/Y, are selected for study. In other words, those who score extreme values (high and low) and the mean are selected in order to understand the reasons for the discrepancy between the values. Following this approach, we chose those who reported high, mid and low scores of positive work-family experiences. A more detailed account of our sample selection, interview process and data analysis is presented below.

Sample

A total of six working couples (focal respondents and their spouses) with children participated in this study. These couples were selected based on the focal respondents' previous survey scores on positive work-family experiences using Hanson *et al.*'s (2006) scale. The online work-family survey was administered to 157 executive MBA students of a large Business School in Spain. We obtained 90 complete questionnaires, giving a response rate of 57%. From these respondents, we selected only those who were working full-time, had an employed spouse (or significant other) and children. The final sample size was $N = 31$. The mean was 3.67 ($SD = 0.44$). From this sample, we selected two focal respondents for each score range of the survey which we categorized as high ($M = 4.14$ and $M = 4.68$), mid ($M = 3.68$, $M = 3.77$), and low ($M = 2.82$ and $M = 3.14$).

We contacted the six focal respondents and asked for interviews with their spouses, who were also surveyed to obtain the scores of their positive work-family experiences. All focal respondents agreed except one (in the low category, $M=2.59$). We therefore contacted the next person in the low category ($M=2.86$), who also declined to be interviewed. We repeated the same procedure with the next person ($M=3.14$), who finally agreed to be interviewed. Our sample consisted of six couples (6 focal respondents and 6 spouses) (see Table 1). All couples were married and had between one to four children under their care. None were living with and/or taking care of elderly parents or any other relatives.

Table 1

Summary of participants

	Couple 1		Couple 2		Couple 3	
Initials (sex)	Husband (focal respondent)	Wife	Wife (focal respondent)	Husband	Husband (focal respondent)	Wife
Age	43	42	47	47	39	40
Education	University/PhD	University	University	Not finished	University	University
Yrs work exp	20	14	24	25	15	14
Yrs in current org	7	3	20	2	8	14
Hrs of work	Full (50 hrs)	Full (40 hrs)	Full (50 hrs)	Full (40 hrs)	Full (50 hrs)	Full (37.5 hrs)
Profession	Lawyer	Lawyer	Director	Sales	Managing Director	Teacher
Managerial level	Top	-	Top	Freelancer	Top, Owner	-
Industry	Utilities	Legal	Pharmaceutical	Services	Consulting	Education
Yrs together	9		32		17	
No of children (age)	2 (4 and 5 yrs)		2 (11 and 18 yrs)		2 (6 and 9 yrs)	
Child/home care	Equal		Unequal (♂ more than ♀)		Unequal (♀ more than ♂)	
Home support	Yes		Yes		Yes	
WFE (mean:3.67)	2.82 (low)	2.23 (low)	4.14 (high)	3.68 (mid)	3.68 (mid)	3.68 (mid)

Summary of participants (Cont'd)

	Couple 4		Couple 5		Couple 6	
Initials (sex)	Husband (focal respondent)	Wife	Husband (focal respondent)	Wife	Husband (focal respondent)	Wife
Age	36	35	39	39	34	34
Education	University	University	University	Finishing	University	University
Yrs work exp	12	13	19	16	11	11
Yrs in current org	3	N/A	15	15	3	4
Hrs of work	Full (40 hrs)	Full (40 hrs)	Full (50 hrs)	Part (20-25 hrs)	Full (40 hrs)	Full (40 hrs)
Profession	Advertising	Director	Director	Sales	Finance	Accounting
Managerial level	Owner	-	Top, Owner	Manager, Owner	Manager	Owner
Industry	Publicity	Cinema	Commerce	Commerce	Automobile	Consulting
Yrs together	9		21		11	
No of children (age)	1 (less than 2 yrs)		4 (6, 9, 10 and 12 yrs)		3 (2 months, 4 and 6 yrs)	
Child/home care	Unequal (♀ more than ♂)		Unequal (♀ more than ♂)		Unequal (♀ more than ♂)	
Home support	Yes		Yes		Yes	
WFE (mean:3.67)	3.77 (mid)	3.77 (mid)	4.68 (high)	3.68 (mid)	3.14 (low)	3.68 (mid)

Interviews

Prior to the main interviews, we conducted four pilot interviews with two married couples with children. These pilot interviews took four hours in total, were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. This preliminary coding of the pilot interviews helped us develop and clarify the semi-structured questions of the main interviews. The interview questions were also developed based on the literature and peer feedback. For the main interviews, we conducted five in-depth interviews per couple for a total of thirty interviews. Within the couple, each partner was interviewed twice separately (single interviews) and once as a couple (couple interview). Prior to the interviews, we asked each couple to complete a comprehensive profile sheet regarding their work and family life. All interviews were face-to-face and were conducted in the respondents' office, home, or at the business school.

The first single interview consisted of questions regarding individuals' perception, salience and management of work and family roles. When both members of the couple had been interviewed individually, we then interviewed the couple. This interview essentially focused on home dynamics, including married life, children, and household management. Finally, the third round was again to interview the spouses separately and we inquired about individuals' work-family enrichment. At the end of these interviews, we asked respondents to draw how they perceived their life and explain it. From the beginning of the process, we ensured confidentiality, provided careful debriefing at the end of each interview, and invited contacts for further questions. Each couple took an average of five hours for a total of thirty hours of interviews that were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Analysis

We conducted the data analysis in two stages. In the first stage, we produced a 4-5 page narrative summary for each couple. This process allowed us to focus and comprehend each couple's uniqueness, as we aimed to preserve the stories (Riessman, 2008). The survey, the multiple interviews, and the life drawings were useful for constructing an overall image of the person, the couple and the family. In the second stage, we conducted a thematic analysis (Riessman, 2008). In this approach, we were guided by a theoretical framework – work-family enrichment theory. Common thematic elements across interviewees were identified while keeping the “story” intact (sequence, time and place). We cycled back and forth between data and theory and compared emerging themes within and across interviews. We used Atlas.ti version 5.2 for data management.

In the second stage of the analysis, the first author and a research assistant independently conducted a line-by-line codification on one couple. First-level codes were then reduced to more abstract second-level codes and finally grouped into categories and subcategories (Miles and Huberman, 1994), generating a codebook with common themes and their descriptions that was discussed and established between the two independent coders. The differences emerging between the two coders were discussed with the participation of the second author until agreement was reached. Based on the codebook, the rest of the five cases were analyzed. While new themes emerged and were integrated in the codebook, it was evident that some themes were more salient than others because they kept on emerging in the data. Finally, continuous comparisons of what was coded under common themes across other transcripts were made in order to identify potential relationships among the themes.

Results

The aim of our paper was to examine the conditions under which work-family enrichment happens. This section provides details about two main findings: (1) resources in work and family domains and the contributing factors that generate those resources, and (2) the dynamics in the transfer of resources via instrumental and affective paths (see Table 2).

Table 2

	Work domain	Family domain
<i>Resources</i>	Skills and perspectives, flexibility, psychological and physical resources, social capital, material resources	Skills and perspectives, flexibility, psychological and physical resources, social capital, agape love
<i>Factors contributing to resources</i>	Nature of the job: task itself along with job characteristics influenced by the managerial level, function and industry. Hygiene factors: salary, interpersonal relations, working conditions as well as formal policies (e.g. availability of flexible work arrangements). Organizational structure: company size and hierarchy.	Couple congruence : the extent spouses fit with each other in terms of life perception, core values, personality traits and professional profiles. Parenting experience: being a mother/father (parenthood), raising children with spouse (co-parenting) and the relationship with children. Share of caring responsibilities: the extent child- and homecare tasks are shared and managed by the couple (and external support, e.g. grandparents, nanny).
<i>Proactive behaviors to preserve/enhance resources</i>	Perform : seek improvements, deliver, maximize gains, search for new clients/projects Engage in extra work role : networking	Maintain home unity by focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self: reflect and adjust own behavior, prevent negative work experience from influencing behavior at home - Others: cherish spouse, transmit values to children, spend time together with family
<i>Conditions for transfer of resources (instrumental path)</i>	From work to family: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intrinsic motivation - Boundary management preference - Previous work to family enrichment experience 	From family to work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prosocial motivation - Boundary management preference - Previous family to work enrichment experience

Resources in work and family domains

Across the six cases, most resources were present in both domains, including skills and perspectives (100%), flexibility (100%), psychological and physical resources (83%), and social capital (75%). Material resources also appeared across all cases but in the work domain only. We identified a new resource that was present across the six cases unique to the family domain. We label this resource as *agape love* which includes unconditional self-giving, sacrifice, trust and spirituality.

Consider the following quotes which exemplify this resource: “The love and care you receive is key, to have that trust that you can rely on someone, in my case it’s my wife.” (husband, couple 5, interview 3). “Well, it is all about stability, love, joy, the possibility of becoming part of a family, what they give you.” (wife, couple 4, interview 3). “It is about trust, tolerance, love, respect, the fact that when there is a criticism it’s in a positive manner; that is, to know that they will share with you, that you can comment anything, anytime and that you share a goal.” (wife, couple 2, interview 3).

Most individuals in our sample (83%) engaged in proactive behaviors with the aim of enhancing and/or maintaining the resources obtained from each domain. For the work role, these behaviors include performing (i.e. seeking improvements, delivering, maximizing gains, searching for new clients/projects) and/or engaging in extra work role (i.e. networking). For the family role, these behaviors consist of maintaining home unity that focus either on the self (i.e. reflecting and adjusting one's own behavior, preventing negative work experiences from influencing behavior at home), or on others (i.e. cherishing spouse, transmitting values to children, spending time with the family).

Organizational and home factors influencing work and family resources

Organizational factors that we identified as contributing to work resources are well-established constructs in organizational behavior. They include the nature of the job, hygiene factors and organizational structure. *Nature of the job* refers to the task itself, along with job characteristics influenced by the managerial level, function and industry. *Hygiene factors* include salary, interpersonal relations, working conditions as well as formal policies (e.g. availability of flexible work arrangements). *Organizational structure* points to the company's size and hierarchy. Consider the following quotation which illustrates these factors: "Well, the fact that I work for a lawyer's office means that it is complex work, but also that I earn a very satisfactory salary. On the other hand, since it is complex and very technical, it makes me feel good professionally too. At the same time, the people I get to meet for work reasons are very interesting, because the clients are executives and my peers are too, excellent lawyers. So, it's a very homogenous professional surrounding but with a very high technical level and then in concrete cases, wonderful people. The fact that this profession is demanding time-wise is definitely worth it for the salary as well as for what the job itself entails." (wife, couple 1, interview 3).

Home factors that we identified as contributing to family resources include couple congruence, positive parenting experience and share of caring responsibilities.

Couple congruence refers to the extent that spouses fit with each other in terms of life perception, core values, personality traits and professional profiles. Congruence does not necessarily mean similarity, since it also includes complementary differences. Couples were either alike or different in their life perceptions, personality traits and professional profiles; however, they coincided in core values. For instance, one of the respondents affirms: "My wife's understanding is key, because we have complementary qualities, complementary tastes, so I do not have to justify every single thing I want to do, or every single decision I make regarding the home or the family. We considerably agree in the important things in life. We are really lucky in that sense." (husband, couple 1, interview 3). Couple congruence corresponds to the need for relatedness, which is one of the universal needs that are fundamental for human development and integrity (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Gagné and Deci, 2005; Ryan, *et al.*, 1996). More importantly, it is this need for relatedness which maintains and reinforces couple congruence.

Positive parenting experience consists of parenthood (being a mother/father), co-parenting (raising children with spouse) and the relationship with children. The first extract illustrates the experience of being a parent: "Well, it is something that comes from you, depends on you, although temporarily. Later (*the child*) will be a person who will pursue his own life. Yet, the love you have for your own child is essentially different from any other kind of love. I think the part I enjoy most (*of being a parent*) is the affective dimension, more than the daily routine." (husband, couple 3, interview 2). The second quotation, which is from a couple with

two children aged 18 and 12, explains how parenting experience contributes to family resources (couple 2, interview 2):

Wife: They are people that you feel very close to your heart. They continue the family that you and your spouse have created.

Husband: A life project.

Wife: As you see them growing, how they develop, how they become their own person, in each stage of life they contribute to you with different things. When they are still small they bring you novelty, their dependency on you. They give you the pleasure of educating and teaching them. You can share happy moments, and also some that are not that nice. When they grow a little older, there are the games, the comments, the reflections they make and they share with you their worries and concerns. When they grow more mature you can think more with them.

Finally, *share of caring responsibilities* refers to the extent that child- and homecare tasks are shared and managed by the couple (and external support, e.g. grandparents, nanny). Its influence on family resources is exemplified below:

“We decided one thing when we both had very similar jobs. We decided to – which is also one of the reasons why I did the MBA and not her because she could have done it too – we decided to create a family and it was clear to us that we could not possibly keep up with the same pace of work, around 12-13 hours day. When we had our first daughter, we still had this situation and it was very difficult. We needed a lot of help from the grandparents and we also realized that our daughter reacted differently and we were sad with this situation. So we decided, and one of us lowered expectations and work life. This was my wife. Of course, this has definitely helped my career. Also, knowing that someone was taking care of my daughter when I was not there was fundamental for me.” (husband, couple 6, interview 3).

We also mapped out organizational and home factors with work and family resources at a more specific level. Among the organizational factors, we identified that nature of job contributed to skills and perspectives and psychological and physical resources. Hygiene factors contributed to all of the five resources (skills and perspectives, psychological and physical resources, social capital, flexibility and material resources). Organizational structure contributed to psychological and physical resources and social capital. Among the home factors, we identified that couple congruence and positive parenting experience contributed to all resources (skills and perspectives, psychological and physical resources, social capital, flexibility and agape love) except for flexibility, which originated from share of caring responsibility.

Conditions for transfer of resources via the instrumental and affective paths

Consistent with Greenhaus and Powell’s (2006) work-family enrichment model, this study demonstrates that resources generated in work and family roles are transferred via the instrumental and affective paths. In the direct instrumental path, our data shows that the decision to apply resources from Role A to Role B is not always intentional, nor a conscious decision. This is not surprising as non-conscious thoughts, feelings and behaviors are drivers in daily life (Bargh, 2007; Hassin, *et al.*, 2005) and represent a large part of daily behavior (Andersen, *et al.*, 2007). In the indirect affective path, we also identified new connections between positive affect and performance.

Instrumental path

In the instrumental path, we found that motivation, boundary management preference and previous enrichment experience facilitated work-family enrichment. *Motivation* is a set of psychological processes that directs, energizes, and sustains action (Mitchell and Daniels, 2003; Ryan and Deci, 2000). Motivation facilitates the enrichment process but the type of motivation differs in the enrichment direction. Intrinsic motivation, which refers to a driving force based on individuals' interest or enjoyment of the task (Ryan and Deci, 2000), facilitates family-to-work enrichment. For instance, individuals consult their spouses in order to understand a particular topic in their job, receive work-related advice or gain alternative explanations of a work situation. The following quotation is from a school teacher who accepted an extra role with management responsibilities for her professional development, "Well, I accepted because I wanted to. They offered me to take it on and I accepted, yet I didn't have any obligation to have an additional responsibility at the school. For me, it was a matter of personal development." The respondent seeks advice from her husband regarding her new task: "Now I am responsible for the school's budget and I sometimes need the help of my husband since he knows this topic." (wife, couple 3, interviews 1 and 3).

On the other hand, prosocial motivation, which refers to a driving force based on a concern for others (Batson, 1987; Grant 2007; Pérez López, 1991), facilitates work-to-family enrichment. For instance, individuals apply what they learn from work to better educate/manage their children and maintain/raise the family members' quality of life. "With the new knowledge that I have, I can contribute to them (*the children*) with new things. When they come to me with a problem, I can help them. So the more I know, the more I can help them and the more I can teach them" (wife, couple 6, interview 1).

Boundary management preference refers to the extent that individuals prefer to integrate or segment work and family roles (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Most individuals are not pure integrators or segmentors but rather tend to be positioned on one side or the other of the continuum. Our data shows that there can be incongruence between cognition (what they think is/should be) and behavior (what they do) regarding the boundaries. Based on how individuals manage their work and family life, we identified more integrators (75%) than segmentors (25%). However, among the integrators, 33% experienced cognitive dissonance, meaning that they would rather separate their private and professional lives.

Boundary management preference facilitates the enrichment process in both conscious and unconscious ways. For instance, some integrators are aware of the benefits and intentionally channel them while other integrators apply the resources without thinking about it because it is "natural" to do so. We compared survey scores and boundary management preference profiles deduced from the narratives and interview data. Among the six focal respondents, only one is a segmentor (low score) and the rest are integrators (mid/high score). Among the six spouses, five (three integrators and two segmentors) scored mid score and one (integrator) belonged to the low score category.

We went back to the narratives and reviewed the data to examine the particular cases. For the two segmentors with mid scores, we found that despite their views of separate spheres and their facility to "disconnect" and "switch modes", they were also driven by strong intrinsic and prosocial motives to enrich and, furthermore, had previous enrichment experience. Likewise, we examined the integrator with low score and found that the person did experience substantial enrichment (via the instrumental path), indicating that the respondent was unaware of the

enriching behaviors. In general, our findings are in line with research that shows integrating strategies increase positive spillover (Hecht and Allen, 2009; Ilies, *et al.*, 2009) and segmenting strategies decrease it (Powell and Greenhaus, 2010).

Finally, *previous enrichment experience* facilitates the work-family enrichment process. Once individuals experience the enrichment in Role B through Role A, they return to Role A seeking more of those benefits. The following quote shows how a respondent goes back to his spouse from whom he obtains support and advice to solve work issues: “When I finish work, I always need someone with whom to unwind, someone who knows me and tries to understand where I come from. For me this is crucial. It helps me to keep balance (...) So, we talk a lot, she understands me very well, sometimes she offers me solutions and other times she offers me suggestions. I like having her opinion.” (husband, couple 6, interview 1). Another respondent illustrates how her daughter’s skills have helped her work presentations in an ongoing manner: “You know, they have helped me to do things, like presentations. My daughter is much better than me with IT, so I ask her to help me from time to time to improve my presentations.” (wife, couple 2, interview 1).

Affective path

Theoretically, the affective path has two components: (1) resources generated in Role A promote positive affect in Role A, and (2) positive affect in Role A increases performance in Role B and this relationship is moderated by role salience. In all six cases, we found the first part of the component but not the second part. In fact, our data reveals some new relations between the established constructs. In addition, whereas there is no intentionality involved in the affective path, individuals do have the discretion to enhance/maintain the resources which produce the positive affect as well as exercise self-control regarding the manifestation of the positive affect. Consider the following example: “If anything unfortunate in the family has happened to you, you have to make the effort and go to work, to make an effort to separate the issue and have the same attitude as if you were doing fine (...) Or if the opposite happens, the same. If you have a serious project, you cannot be too happy, you cannot transmit the impression “Hey! Barça has won!” (husband, couple 3, interview 3).

In our sample, none of the individuals experienced positive affect in work leading to family performance while very few experienced positive affect in family leading to work performance. In fact, most individuals experienced positive affect in work leading to positive affect in family which then enhanced family performance and vice-versa.

Positive affect in family led to positive affect in work which then enhanced work performance as illustrated by this quote, “Well, indirectly, if I feel good at home, that improves my mood and this indirectly improves my work. When I must confront the people here, what mood I am in is important. If I feel good at home, I feel good here.” (wife, couple 3, interview 3). This transfer of affect from one domain to another is consistent with previous research findings (e.g. Lambert, 1990).

Our study also reveals a relationship between work performance and positive affect in family although the opposite direction – family performance and positive affect in work – did not appear. Consider the quotation from the following respondent who recently started his own advertising business, “When you get an interesting project, it makes you happy, so you want to share it with your wife at home (...). This generates better dynamics, good spirits and conversation.” (husband, couple 4, interview 3). This extract also shows that a positive spillover

from work to family by one individual enhances the positive crossover – a bi-directional transmission of positive and negative emotions, mood, and dispositions between individuals who are connected intimately – between spouses (Bakker, Westman, van Emmerik, 2009; Ransford, *et al.*, 2008; Westman, *et al.*, 2009; Westman and Etzion, 1995).

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to examine the conditions under which work-family enrichment happens. We identified factors that impact on the resources required for the enrichment to occur and shed light on a more comprehensive transfer process.

First, we found a new resource exclusive to the family domain which might be a fundamental distinction from the work domain. As mentioned, the agape love resource is different from psychological and physical resources (e.g. having self-esteem because spouse values him/her). Moreover, love as presented in this study is beyond affect. Individuals might establish affective bonds with anyone resulting in friendship or professional relations with a high level of personal chemistry. For instance, the positive affect that managers might feel for their work colleagues pales out in comparison with the love of parents for children, in which considerable sacrifice is required to raise them. While love has an affective dimension, affect is not equivalent to love. This might also be the reason why participants claimed “My job is replaceable but my family is not,” “I can quit my job anytime but I cannot quit my family,” or “Until you have it, you have no idea what it is to have a spouse who loves you, children who love you for who you are and vice-versa.”

Future research should examine more closely the effects of these critical family relationships on enrichment which might also help explain why a majority of studies that assessed both directions of enrichment, found that family-to-work enrichment was substantially stronger than work-to-family enrichment (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). Focusing on the family and raising our knowledge of the family domain up to the level of the work domain might be important for a field that conducts research on work and family but has predominantly focused on work.

Second, our study reveals that organizational and home factors which impact the resources obtained from work and family roles differ. Organizational factors consist of nature of the job, hygiene factors and organizational structure. Home factors include couple congruence, positive parenting experience and share of caring responsibilities. One of the apparent differences between the two factors is that home factors are inherently relational. This does not mean ignoring the relational aspect at work. In fact, work relations have been researched for over thirty years because of their developmental benefits (e.g. Higgins and Kram, 2001; Kram, 1983; Ragins and Kram, 2007) and positive career outcomes such as career advancement and job search assistance (e.g. Wanberg, *et al.*, 2000; Wolff and Moser, 2009). Furthermore, research shows that the perception of supportive supervisors regarding work-family issues facilitates the use of formal work-family policies by employees (Blair-Loy and Wharton, 2002; Casper, *et al.*, 2004). However, interpersonal relations are only one of the organizational factors contributing to work resources, while at home, the relationship with spouse and children is practically the only factor that contributes to family resources. Hence, relations with family members might be of critical importance because there are no “substitutes”, unlike the case of work.

Third, we found that most individuals engaged in proactive behaviors either to enhance or maintain the resources. These include performing and networking in the work domain and maintaining home unity in the family domain. Being proactive implies that individuals are conscious of the benefits and have an intention to preserve them. Indeed, humans pursue actively what they believe to be good (Aristotle, *et al.*, 2009). However, individuals may also be unaware and/or have no intention to transfer those benefits from one role to another for two reasons. On one hand, segmentors may be unaware of the potential enrichment because they perceive the two spheres as separate and prefer to keep it that way. Conversely, integrators may also be unaware, regardless of their perception of an interconnected life, because the enrichment process is inherent to them or because a benefit is not perceived as a benefit. As March (1996: 285) posits “there is some general consensus that what we see or believe may at times deviate from what is true.”

On the other hand, individuals may have no intention to transfer the resources because the force that moves them to do so (motivation) is weak or non-existent. In our sample, in two of the couples in which husband and wife had very similar professional profiles, perceived relevance and compatibility were available for enrichment. In one couple, both wife (segmentor) and husband (integrator) received and gave work-related advice regularly. In another couple, the wife (integrator) asked the husband (segmentor) for work-related advice, but the husband did not, regardless of their compatibility. As long as attempts to enhance the resources within each domain –also requiring time and energy – are pursued, individuals may not feel the need to go further. In this case, resources may continue to pile up within a domain and not be transferred. Thus, while work-family initiatives can facilitate enrichment, good organizational intentions may not be enough if individuals are reluctant to apply the resources appropriately.

However, unawareness and lack of intention may still lead to enrichment if there is previous enrichment experience. Individuals learn through experience, knowledge and perceptions from everyday life and diverse disciplines (Argyris, 1976; Paul 1992). Hence, whatever the first motive may have been to trigger the transfer of resources from role A to role B and enhance role B’s performance, individuals may repeat the process because they learned it worked. Thus, previous enrichment experiences may lead to a virtuous circle of enrichment. However, this may only be for a specific resource and not for other resources, until their positive outcomes have been experienced.

Fourth, the findings of this study indicate that one of the reasons for the different survey scores (high/mid/low) may be the conscious vs. unconscious and intentional vs. unintentional aspects of enrichment. We compared survey scores, narratives and interview data to detect discernible patterns specifically for high and low enrichment but we could not find explanations for the differences in these two categories. This may be for two reasons. On one hand, given the unconscious dimension, individuals may actually have more enriched lives than they think they have. Indeed, there was a discrepancy between survey and interview data specifically for those with low scores because “disagree” items in the survey appeared positively in the interview data when individuals were telling their stories.

On the one hand, rather than the enrichment process itself (transferred resources, enrichment path and enrichment direction), context may contribute to high enrichment. Our narratives and interview data show that the two participants who scored high scores were in particular situations. One participant has worked for 15 years in a family-owned business. His wife works with him and all of their four young children know about the company. The other participant has worked for 20 years in the same organization and experiences a strong affect specifically

for the brand she works for. Metaphorically speaking, the brand is like another child for her and “has my daughter’s age”; her work is “so integrated in the family that, of course, the whole family also lives it.” In both cases, work and family lives were not just integrated, with permeable work-family boundaries; in fact, work and family were fusional.

Finally, our findings also have some practical implications. First, managers who consider enriching their work and family lives should be aware that they can enhance the resources and, more importantly, it is up to them to share the resources across domains. Family support policies may help individuals manage better work and family demands but they do not automatically enrich the other role. Consider, for instance, flexible working hours. The availability of this policy (organizational factor) allows greater flexibility (work resource) for individuals. Individuals gain in resources, yet it is their discretion to use them or not. If individuals decide to use these resources, they have a choice of what to do with them: spend time with children or on other things, such as hobbies or with friends. While spending time on hobbies or with friends might be a good thing, it might not necessarily make individuals better spouses or parents (e.g. satisfy children’s needs). On the other hand, spending time with children might not necessarily imply performance in family either, e.g. what children need is cognitive/behavioral engagement (e.g. actively playing with them), but what they get is physical presence (e.g. being in the same space with children).

Second, managers should be aware that good intentions to enrich may lead to work-family conflict. The salaries individuals earn are material resources used for living and other purposes (e.g. future investments, charity). One of the reasons why individuals are driven to have high-status, well-paid jobs may be for the family’s well-being (e.g. comfort, vacations abroad, good education). However, that same job may require long hours of work that may enhance time-based and strain-based work-family conflict, such that work and family demands can no longer be fulfilled simultaneously specifically because of time and energy constraints.

Finally, organizations interested in promoting work-family balance should include training on work-family enrichment and the importance of individuals’ proactivity in their family-friendly policies. In particular, organizations should train their managers so they are aware of how their subordinates’ home resources enhance their performance at work. One of the key reasons why formal policies are not used in companies tends to be managerial reluctance to let employees use them. The more managers understand and value the importance of their subordinates’ family life for work, the more they will proactively help employees to have enriched lives.

Limitations of Study

As any research, this study is not without limitations, and specifically those that come from the methods, the sample and, inevitably, the researchers’ biases. As for the methods, qualitative methods cannot be comprehensive and are not suitable for showing causality. Instead, they explore a phenomenon in greater depth and determine plausible relationships. To mitigate the method’s limitations, we designed an interview questionnaire and ran it through a number of colleagues working in the same field who were informed about our research question. They gave us helpful suggestions and we modified the questionnaire accordingly. We wanted our questions to be open enough to let themes emerge, but also succinct enough to not induce interviewees to wander in directions that would not contribute to our research aim. With this goal in mind, we ran four pilot interviews with two married couples with children to explore

whether our respondents could understand the meaning and provide answers within the scope of our research question. In this pilot stage, we also checked that questions were phrased in such a way that they did not trigger social desirability.

Another source of limitation for this study's results comes from our sample, which consisted of highly educated people in Spain with relatively well-paid professions. As we were interested in dual-career couples, we decided in advance that the participants would be married/in a serious relationship with a working spouse/partner with children at home. This was decided in order to have a sample of people with highly demanding situations both at work and at home. Thus, the findings of our study might not reflect enrichment processes in traditional households where there is a single breadwinner. Furthermore, the findings of this study might not reflect other samples, e.g. less educated, blue-collar jobs, etc. These limitations call for more research with other samples before moving to a quantitative stage.

Finally, another limitation emerges from the authors as researchers with an implicit worldview and personal convictions. Both researchers have pursued PhDs, are personally interested in work-family issues, and are inclined toward a positive view of work and family as complementary life spheres. This could bias us towards an over-positive analysis of the results, confounding spurious relationships with real ones. To prevent this effect, we involved other researchers in different stages of data collection and data analysis. Two research assistants helped with the 4/5-page narrative summaries of the interviews in order to understand the overall sense of the story. Another research assistant helped in the coding from the beginning, checking with the first author for reliability. The second author was present in most meetings as an external observer with the goal of bringing objectivity. None of these could fully overcome the limitations coming from the researchers' own bias, but they did possibly alleviate them.

Conclusion

A growing number of studies have focused on the positive aspects that emerge between work and family interaction. Much emphasis has been placed on the outcomes of enrichment and little has been done to understand how this happens. The present study examined the conditions under which work-family enrichment takes place. We presented organizational (nature of the job, hygiene factors, organizational structure) and home factors (couple congruence, positive parenting experience and share of caring responsibility) that contribute to work and family resources. Furthermore, we identified a unique resource in the family domain, agape love, that was not found in the work domain. We also showed that the transfer of resources in the instrumental path can be conscious/intentional but also unconscious/unintentional, which explains why motivation, boundary management preference, and previous enrichment experience facilitate work-family enrichment. Finally, we showed that the relations in the affective path were bidirectional and ground for positive crossover, specifically when individuals shared their positive experiences with their spouses. Overall, this study contributes to our understanding of what facilitates enrichment, why individuals experience different levels of enrichment and how to enrich one's work and family life.

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