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Inter-role conflict in Work and Family: is a healthy balance possible?

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ABSTRACT

Background: This paper contains four research contributions made by psychology students within the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory.

Methods: The aim was to investigate the relation between work-family conflict and some related variables, such as job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, basic psychological needs, and parenting educational practices in 126 pairs of parents, both workers. For each of the variables to be investigated, specific self-report scales were administered.

Results: Results suggest that there is a negative correlation between family-to-work conflict and job satisfaction in both women and men, that parenting educational practices are affected by quality of work-to-family conflict, that an intrinsic motivation to work could lead to a great job satisfaction, and that it exists a negative correlation between basic psychological needs satisfaction and work-family conflict.

Conclusions: Further implications of these results for understanding the impact of work-family dynamics on parental well-being are discussed in the conclusions section of this paper.

Keywords: *Work-Family Conflict; Psychological Needs; Job Satisfaction; Motivation to Work; Self-Determination Theory*

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Introduction

Work and family represent two of the most important life contexts, but stress associated with managing conflicting requests between these two areas influences well-being of individual worker, who is also a family member (Aziz, et al., 2018). Always more frequently demands, responsibilities, expectations, and duties linked to work and family contexts are incompatible with each other and that makes people's full participation in a role (family) rather than another (work) very difficult, with frustrating outcomes (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It is possible to describe Work-to-Family conflict (WFC) and Family-to-Work conflict (FWC) as two distinct forms of inter-role conflict in which "role pressures associated with membership in one organization are in conflict with pressures stemming from membership in other groups" (Kahn, et al., 1964, p. 20). Three main forms of work and family conflict can be mentioned: (a) time-based conflict, (b) tension-based conflict and (c) behavior-based conflict. Specifically, WFC is a form of inter-role conflict in which requests, time devoted to and tension related to work interfere with family responsibilities. On the contrary, FWC is a form of inter-role conflict in which requests, time devoted to and tension linked to family interfere with work responsibilities (Netemeyer, et al., 1996). Conflicts between work-role and family-role are linked to dysfunctional outcomes, such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and turnover (Frone, et al., 1992), as well as internalizing problems (e.g. depression) (Michel, et al., 2009), and life and marriage dissatisfaction (Gutek, et al., 1991; Netemeyer, et al., 1996).

A possible key to understanding the role conflict between worker and family member is offered by Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2017), a psychological theory of human motivation according to which various environmental factors can satisfy or frustrate three psychological needs (need for autonomy, competence and relatedness) considered fundamental for well-being. Environmental factors that can foster or hinder well-being include, for example, socio-cultural context and family/school education, that can encourage self-determination through needs satisfaction, so that people can perceive well-being, grow and self-fulfill. Conversely, a hindering environment, which is too controlling or too protective and defensive or repulsive, can frustrate psychological needs satisfaction and lead to malaise, psychological distress and psychopathology (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Family and work are therefore two socialization agencies able of promoting or contrasting individual well-being, satisfying or frustrating needs and pushing to act autonomously *versus* controlled way (Vansteenkiste, et al., 2007). The importance of basic psychological needs satisfaction for well-being and adaptation has been demonstrated in several studies conducted in organizational fields (Baard, et al., 2004; Deci, et al., 2001; Ilardi, et al., 1993; Kasser, et al., 1992).

Particularly, these studies found that basic needs satisfaction in workers predicted positive outcomes, such as greater commitment to work, an optimistic work attitude, greater self-esteem and general health. Within SDT, it is expected that if work environment responds to basic psychological needs, positive work outcomes and greater intrinsic motivation to work are achieved. However, if work environment actively frustrates these needs, the frequency of positive work outcomes will decrease and negative outcomes will emerge, as well as greater extrinsic motivation to work (Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Vansteenkiste, et al., 2007). In line with cited scientific literature, students in their first year of the Psychology Faculty realized four research contributions with the general aim of examining the role of some variables related to work-family conflict and verifying their impact on the well-being of a sample of parents who are both workers.

First contribution investigated the impact that work-family conflict may have on mothers and fathers perceived satisfaction in workplace. Job satisfaction can be defined as the gap between some expectations an individual has about a job and what he actually receives from his job (Locke, 1969). Furthermore, job satisfaction can also be assessed as the extent to which people like or dislike their job (Spector, 1997). In line with role theory, the expected relation between WFC and job satisfaction is such that as WFC increases, job satisfaction decreases (Kahn et al., 1964).

Second contribution concerns the association between work-family conflict and parents use of specific educational practices (psychological control *versus* autonomy support). Through psychological control, parents can exercise control over the psychological world of children and adolescents, they can impose their expectations and desires and make them change emotions, thoughts, and opinions by often relying on intrusive techniques, such as guilt induction (Chen, et al., 2016), love withdrawal (Assor, et al., 2004), and invalidation of feelings (Soenens, et al., 2017). Conversely, autonomy-support dimension pushes parents to encourage autonomous and volitive children's behaviors. Through it, parents do not impose rules and norms uncritically, but justify them with logical and sensible explanations, thus increasing the possibility that the child internalizes rules and fully approves them (Van Der Kaap-Deeder, et al., 2019). In SDT framework, it has been hypothesized that those who are better able to balance the requests coming from work and family contexts will implement more autonomy-supportive behaviors than controlling educational practices towards their children.

Third contribution focused on work motivation and its impact on mothers and fathers' perception of job satisfaction. SDT identifies different natures of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation that can also be applied to workplace. Forms of intrinsic motivation correlate with greater well-being and personal satisfaction, while forms of extrinsic motivation correlate more with lower satisfaction and greater

general malaise (Kanat-Maymon, et al., 2016). In line with these assumptions, it has been expected to find positive correlations between intrinsic work motivation and job satisfaction.

Last contribution investigated the role played by basic psychological needs, asking whether there are significant correlations between perception of needs and work-family conflict. In organizational life, need for autonomy refers to being at the origin of one's behavior at work, to autonomously choosing what is best. Need for relatedness refers to feeling accepted by social group, which can also be represented by team of colleagues: the possibility of sharing personal and work problems with them can satisfy this need. Finally, need for competence refers to sense of self-efficacy that a person feels he has at work, of being recognized by the group as a person capable of setting goals and achieving them adequately (Cengiz & Fikret, 2018). In line with SDT framework, it has been hypothesized that basic psychological needs satisfaction may negatively correlate with work-family conflict, both in mothers and fathers.

The general aim of these contributions was to investigate whether parental couple well-being coincides with working couple well-being and whether the variables just mentioned play a favorable or unfavorable role in maintaining individuals' mental health.

Method

Participants

126 couples of fathers and mothers take part to this study. The average age of fathers is 50.71 (DS = 8.4), while mothers' average age is 47.37 (DS= 8.05). All the participants are Italian and have at least one child. 70% of fathers and 78% of mothers have an employee job, the rest independent. 96% of the sample is married, the rest lives together for at least four years. Regarding parents' education, 17% of fathers had the middle school certification, 60% had a high school diploma, and 23% had a first level degree. Furthermore, 14% of mothers had the middle school certification, 53% had a high school diploma, and 33% had a first level degree.

Procedure

The subjects were recruited among friends and acquaintances of psychology students. The questionnaires were administered to fathers and mothers individually. Before filling out the questionnaires, participants signed the informed consent and were reassured of the anonymity of their responses. The protocol took about 30 minutes to be completed. Once the entire sample of data was collected, each group of psychology students worked on specific objectives, giving rise to the four contributions set out below. The data were then analyzed using IBM SPSS.

Measures

Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale (PBNSF; Chen, et al., 2015). This scale is made up of 24 items on a 5-point Likert response scale (1 = Not at all agree; 5 = Strongly agree). It represents the three basic needs, namely: autonomy ("I feel that my choices express who I really am"), competence ("I feel capable in what I do") and relatedness ("I feel that people I care about, really care about me "). In the present study Cronbach's alphas is good for all the subscales (Autonomy: .75 for fathers and .79 for mothers; Relatedness: .69 for fathers and .65 for mothers; Competence: .72 for fathers, .75 for mothers).

Work-to-Family and Family-to-Work conflict (adapted from Carlson et al., 2000). This scale is used in order to assess the interference of work engagement on family and vice versa. It is composed of 18 items on a 7-point Likert response scale (1 = Complete disagreement; 7 = Complete agreement). For work-to-family conflict, the examples of items are: "My work keeps me away from my family's activities more than I would like"; "When I get home from work, I am often too exhausted to participate in family activities / responsibilities"; for family-to-work conflict, some examples are: "The time I spend on family responsibilities often interfere with my work responsibilities"; "Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job". In the present study Cronbach's alphas is good for all the subscales (Work-to-family: .89 for fathers and .86 for mothers; Family-to-work: .85 for fathers and .89 for mothers).

Job satisfaction (adapted from Heller & Watson, 2005). This scale is used to assess the perception of personal job satisfaction. It consists of five items on a 7-point Likert response scale (1 = Complete disagreement; 7 = Complete agreement). Some examples of items are: "In this period, I feel quite satisfied with my work"; "During this time, every minute at work seems to never end". In the present study Cronbach's alphas is .95 both for fathers and for mothers.

Psychological Control Scale (PCS; Barber, 1996). It is an eight-item scale (e.g. "I try to change my child's way of thinking") on a 7-point Likert response scale ranging from 1 (It is not so) to 7 (It is mostly so) used to estimate parental psychological control. In this study the alpha value is .84 for fathers and .83 for mothers.

Perceptions of Parenting Scale (POPS; Robbins, 1994). The subscale of parental autonomy support is used in order to enquire parental supportive behaviors. It is a six-item scale (e.g. "When possible, I let my son / daughter make the decisions independently") using a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 5 (very true). In this study, the internal consistency is satisfactory both for fathers ($\alpha = .81$) and mothers ($\alpha = .73$).

Work Motivation (Moran et al., 2012). This scale is composed by 15 items on a five point likert scale ranging from 1 (Complete disagreement) to 5 (Complete agreement) and is used to assess

intrinsic and external job motivation. In the present study, the internal consistency is satisfactory for both intrinsic (fathers: $\alpha = .81$; mothers: $\alpha = .84$) and external motivation (fathers: $\alpha = .63$; mothers: $\alpha = .68$).

Contribution 1: Family-to-Work conflict and Job satisfaction

The hectic pace of life and the multiple goals in modern society make it difficult for people to balance work and family roles (Zhang, et al., 2019). Family-to-Work conflict is a form of inter-role conflict in which family requests and time devoted to, interfere with job duties and responsibilities (Netemeyer, et al., 1996). Job satisfaction, instead, is defined as the positive or pleasant feeling resulting from the appreciation of one's work (Locke, 1969). As lacking in the literature many studies that have analyzed the issue of inter-role conflict, the present study aims to investigate differences between fathers and mothers in family-to-work conflict and job satisfaction, and whether family-to-work conflict is related to job satisfaction.

Participants of this research are 126 couples of fathers (M= 50.71; DS= 8.4) and mothers (M= 47.37; DS= 8.05), who have compiled the *Job satisfaction*, adapted from Heller and Watson (2005) to assess couple's perception of job satisfaction, and the *Work-to-Family and Family-to-Work conflicts*, adapted from Carlson et al. (2000) to assess the interference of work engagement on family and vice versa. Means and Standard Deviations for each variable are shown in Table 1.

| Role | | Job satisfaction | Family to work |
|---------------|----|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Father | M | 5.15 | 2.12 |
| | SD | 1.37 | 1.04 |
| Mother | M | 5.05 | 2.35 |
| | SD | 1.43 | 1.29 |

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Our analysis showed that there is no difference between fathers and mothers in job satisfaction [$t(126) = -1.59$; $p=.11$] and family-to-work conflict [$t(126)= .55$; $p= .58$]. It also appears that there is a negative statistically significant correlation between family-to-work and job satisfaction [$\chi^2(126)= -.24$; $p< .001$].

The first aim of this research was to bring out whether there were differences between fathers and mothers in job satisfaction and family-to-work conflict. Surprisingly, our results led to the fact that there was no difference between fathers and mothers in job satisfaction, while previous research stated that women usually report greater satisfaction than men (Hauret & Williams, 2017). Probably these results could be explained because of the paucity of the present sample and the lack

of control for a wide range of personal and job characteristics and working conditions. Future studies need to deep these results.

Similarly, no difference emerged between fathers and mothers in family-to-work conflict: these results are in line with (Young, et al., 2014), and reflect the growing equality in gender behaviors across family context, where men are participating more in domestic related responsibilities compared to previous years.

An interesting negative correlation was found between job satisfaction and family to work conflict: perceiving a greater family-to-work conflict leads to a reduction in job satisfaction confirming the reference literature, regardless gender (Zhang, et al., 2019). Future research must overcome the limits of this study, deepening the relationship between family-to-work conflict and job satisfaction, thus checking both some personal and working variables, but also investigating the discrepancies between maternal and paternal perceptions.

Contribution 2: Parenting Versus Work: Incidence of Parental And Work Factors.

Taking into account different analysis levels, work could partially influence family dealings, especially parenting, that nowadays is much likely to assure children's well-being (Vansteenkiste, et al., 2007). The literature has already shown how frustrating situations for parents are correlated with a greater use of controlling educational practices, rather than supportive ones (Costa, et al., 2020). Some studies have shown that a greater work-to-family conflict is correlated with less parental warmth and higher parental irritability (Cooklin, et al., 2015), but so far no one has analyzed its relationship with psychological control and autonomy support. The aim of this study is to investigate the relations between work-to-family conflict and some parental practices, as psychological control and autonomy support, and also to verify if there are some differences between fathers and mothers.

126 couples of mothers ($M=47.37$, $DS=8.05$) and fathers ($M=50.71$, $DS=8.4$) have been involved in this research. To all the participants were administered these measures:

Work-to-Family and Family-to-Work conflicts, adapted from Carlson et al. (2000) to evaluate the work commitment interference on family; *Psychological Control Scale* (PCS; Barber, 1996) to estimate parental psychological control; and *Perceptions of Parenting Scale* (POPS; Robbins, 1994) to enquire parental supportive behaviors.

Table 3 shows means and standard deviations of work-to-family conflict, parental psychological control and autonomy support for fathers and mothers.

| Role | | Work to family | Parental psychological control | Parental autonomy support |
|---------------|----|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Father | M | 3.14 | 2.44 | 5.42 |
| | SD | 1.44 | 1.15 | 1.11 |
| Mother | M | 2.78 | 2.54 | 5.58 |
| | SD | 1.23 | 1.14 | .95 |

Table 3. Descriptive statistics

From the differential analysis, a significant difference has risen up in work-to-family conflict [$t(126) = 2.138$; $p = .033$], with males higher compared to females. There were no significant differences in the others variables taken in place. From the correlational analysis it has been shown that work-to-family conflict is positively related to parental psychological control [$\chi^2(252) = .203$; $p = .001$]. As shown in table 4, between work-to-family conflict and parental autonomy-support no significant correlations were found [$\chi^2(252) = -.057$; $p = .365$], not even between parental psychological control and parental autonomy support [$\chi^2(252) = -.049$; $p = .433$].

| | Parental psychological control | Parental autonomy support |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Work-to-family | .203** | -.057 |
| | .000 | .365 |
| Parental psychological control | | -.049 |
| | | .433 |

Table 4. Correlational Analyses. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

The second research's main aim was to stress the presence of correlations among work-to-family conflict and parenting, and to point out if these two variables are affected by gender differences.

Analysis showed that work-to-family conflict is higher in fathers, who probably perceive, more than mothers, how much work commitment prevents them from dedicating time to family or to devote themselves to family. These results need to be investigated further: in fact, in literature it seems that mothers and fathers perceive similar levels of conflict (Hill, et al., 2003). Our results should probably be read in light of the particular cultural context of South Italy, in which men typically have more demanding job roles than women (Mussida & Picchio, 2014).

Furthermore, a positive correlation between work-to-family conflict with parental psychological control, but not with parental autonomy support, was found. This finding is in line with reference literature that underline how pressing social environment characteristics, as work-to-family conflict, could affect parenting practices (Costa, et al., 2020). Future studies need to deepen these associations, in order to verify longitudinally work-to-family conflict as an antecedent factor of parental psychological controlling practices.

Contribution 3. Motivation to work and Job satisfaction.

In the context of the study of motivation, SDT identifies different natures of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation that can also be applied to workplace. Specifically, intrinsic motivation is comprised in autonomous motivation, that refers to experience volition and self-endorsement of their own actions. External motivation is a form of controlled motivation, in which one's behavior is a function of external contingencies of reward or punishment (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Forms of intrinsic motivation correlate with greater well-being and personal satisfaction, while forms of external motivation correlate more with lower satisfaction and greater general malaise (Kanat-Maymon, et al., 2016). If there are studies that have analyzed the relationship between the type of work motivation and job satisfaction (Breugh, et al., 2018), still few are those that have investigated these aspects in coworker parenting couples.

In this study, we want to investigate whether there are differences between fathers and mothers in motivation to work and job satisfaction and whether motivation to work is related to job satisfaction.

126 pairs of fathers (M= 50.71, DS= 8.4 and mothers (M= 47.37, DS= 8.05) participated in the research. To all the participants were administered these measures: *Job satisfaction* (JS) adapted from Heller & Watson (2005) to assess job satisfaction and *Work Motivation* (Moran et al., 2012) to assess motivation for work. Table 5 shows means and standard deviations of work intrinsic motivation, work external motivation and job satisfaction for fathers and mothers.

| Role | | Work intrinsic motivation | Work external motivation | Job satisfaction |
|---------------|----|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Father | M | 3.57 | 2.52 | 5.15 |
| | SD | 1.06 | 1.00 | 1.37 |
| Mother | M | 3.66 | 2.40 | 5.05 |
| | SD | 1.11 | 1.10 | 1.43 |

Table 5. Descriptive statistics

Differential analyses showed that there are no significant differences between fathers and mothers in intrinsic motivation [$t(126) = -.72$; $p = .47$], external motivation [$t(126) = .89$; $p = .37$] and job satisfaction [$t(126) = .55$; $p = .58$].

| | Work intrinsic motivation | Job satisfaction |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Work external motivation | -.104 | -.288 |
| | .099 | .000 |
| Work intrinsic motivation | | .424 |
| | | .000 |

Table 6. Correlational analyses. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

Furthermore our correlational analyses (table 6) showed that there is a significant negative correlation between external motivation and job satisfaction [$\chi^2(252) = -.29; p < .001$] and a positive correlation between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction [$\chi^2(252) = .42; p < .001$].

In accordance with our hypothesis, results show that an intrinsic motivation to work could lead to a great job satisfaction, while an external motivation is associated with lower levels of job satisfaction. These findings are in line with previous literature, that showed how the autonomous motivation is predictive of higher satisfaction and wellbeing (Kanat-Maymon, et al., 2016).

Our results also show that there are no differences in the type of work motivation between fathers and mothers: subsequent studies will have to further investigate these findings, controlling for job characteristics and personal aspects. From an application point of view, these results suggest the need to promote a more autonomous type of motivation in order to foster personal well-being and satisfaction.

Contribution 4. A difficult balance to achieve: work-family conflict and well-being

In recent years, interest in the issue of well-being in the workplace has grown considerably. Several scholars have paid particular attention to the issue of work- family influence and social support, as elements capable of affecting the perceived well-being (Colombo, et al., 2012). With regard to the latter area, scholars of "self-determination theory" (Ryan & Deci, 2017) have included the satisfaction of basic psychological needs to achieve well- being. Regarding the variables just mentioned in the present study, we wanted to investigate if there are differences among mothers and fathers in the perception of both the satisfaction of basic psychological needs and the work-family conflict, and also if these two variables are related or not.

A sample of 126 couples of fathers ($M = 50.71$, $DS = 8.4$) and mothers ($M = 47.37$, $DS = 8.05$) filled up a protocol consisting of 15 subscales.

More specifically, the fourth aim of this research focused on two subscales: *Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale* (PBNSF; Chen, et al., 2015) in order to assess the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, and *Work-Family Conflict* (WFC, adapted from Carlson et al. 2000) to evaluate the work-to- family conflict.

In table 7 are inserted means and standard deviation of fathers' and mothers' work-to-family conflict, and three basic psychological needs (autonomy, relatedness, competence).

| Role | | Work to family conflict | Autonomy | Relatedness | Competence |
|---------------|----|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Father | M | 3.14 | 4.01 | 4.46 | 4.33 |
| | SD | 1.44 | .71 | .58 | .57 |
| Mother | M | 2.78 | 3.92 | 4.44 | 4.15 |
| | SD | 1.23 | .72 | .56 | .65 |

Table 7. Descriptive statistics

From our analysis it emerged that there are significant differences in the perception of the work to family conflict [$t(126) = 2.14$; $p = .03$] and in the competence need [$t(126) = 2.40$; $p = .02$]. From the table, looking at the average, we note that in males sample the perception of work-family conflict and the competence need is higher compared to females.

Furthermore, it emerges that there is a significant correlation (table 8) between work-to-family conflict and the autonomy need [$\chi^2(126) = -.19$; $p = .002$]. Specifically, observing the value of χ^2 , it emerges that this correlation is negative. Moreover, autonomy need correlates positively with need for relatedness [$\chi^2(126) = .14$; $p = .03$] and with need for competence [$\chi^2(126) = .30$; $p = .0001$]; consequently, as the satisfaction of need for autonomy increases, the need for relatedness and competence also increase. Another positive correlation occurs between needs of competence and relatedness [$\chi^2(126) = .23$; $p < .001$].

| | Autonomy | Relatedness | Competence |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Work to family conflict | -.192 .002 | -.043 .492 | -.040 .529 |
| Autonomy | | .135 .031 | .299 .000 |
| Relatedness | | | .225 .000 |

Table 8. Correlational analyses. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

In our study we found a negative correlation between the satisfaction of basic psychological needs and the work to family conflict; in fact, if the satisfaction of needs decreases, the perception of the conflict increases and viceversa. These results are in line with the reference literature which argues that the satisfaction of basic psychological needs correlates with positive outcomes; on the contrary, stressful or conflicting experiences do not allow one to perceive one's basic psychological needs satisfied (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Furthermore, from our findings a specific relationship between work-to-family conflict and the autonomy need emerged: in fact, perceiving a greater conflict between work and family demands has an influence above all on the autonomy need, which could therefore be frustrated. Parents who perceive less satisfaction of the autonomy need may feel under

pressure and this could have effects not only on their general satisfaction with life, but also on the parenting strategies adopted (Costa, et al., 2019). Subsequent studies will have to further investigate these aspects and evaluate the relationship between work- to- family conflict and satisfaction of needs from a longitudinal perspective.

Conclusion

In this paper, psychology students in the first year ventured into their first experience of scientific research, investigating the psychological construct of work-family conflict in relation to a series of variables, and using Self-Determination Theory (SDT, Ryan & Deci, 2017) as a theoretical framework. Work-to-family conflict arises when requests for participation in one domain (e.g. work) are incompatible with requests for participation in the other domain (e.g. family) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Consequently, responsibilities in working life can negatively affect responsibilities in family life (WFC), and similarly roles in family life can negatively affect roles in working life (FWC) (Frone, et al., 1997; Byron, 2005). Since work and family are two of the micro-systems most frequented by human beings, SDT can be used as a key to understanding the dynamics within them. According to SDT, life contexts can contribute to supporting individuals' psycho-physical well-being, satisfying basic psychological needs (need for autonomy, competence and relatedness), or - on the contrary - they can increase the probability of malaise and psychopathologies, actively frustrating psychological needs (Vansteenkiste, et al., 2007). Several researches have shown that basic premises of SDT have been supported in different areas, including organizational one. In workplace, basic psychological needs satisfaction is linked to positive personal and organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction (Van den Broeck, et al., 2010), well-being (Gillet, et al., 2012; Lynch, et al., 2005; Van den Broeck, et al., 2008) and intrinsic motivation to work (Gagne, 2003). In line with these researches, students wondered if some variables related to work context (job satisfaction and motivation to work), to family context (parenting educational practices), and to humans' well-being (basic psychological needs) could significantly correlate with perception of work-family conflict in a sample of mothers and fathers who are both workers.

First research contribution investigated the relation between family-work conflict (FWC) and job satisfaction. Results did not reveal significant differences between mothers and fathers in family-work conflict and job satisfaction, while a negative correlation between two variables emerged. These results are in line with scientific literature (Kahn et al., 1964; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998) and confirm that as perception of family-domain conflict on work-domain increases, people's job satisfaction decreases, regardless of gender. Therefore, the more requests coming from family

environment that hinder one's working role performance (such as home management, children care, parental relationship, etc.), the lower the satisfaction of work that is being done (Kahn et al., 1964). Second contribution investigated the relation between family-work conflict and parenting educational practices used on children (psychological control vs autonomy-support). From data analyzes, a significant difference between fathers and mothers emerged only in family-work conflict. It would seem that fathers are more affected by the interference of their role in family context on their role in workplace, probably because, unlike women who are culturally used to juggling in multiple roles, fathers' role in family domain tires them and pours out commitments, thoughts and frustrations in working environment. Only one significant correlation emerged, that is the positive one between family-work conflict and psychological control. It would seem that both spouses tend to use controlling educational practices more frequently, such as guilt induction, love withdrawal and invalidation of feelings, when their perception of the conflict between family role and professional role is greater. These results are in line with psychological control literature (Costa, et al., 2019; Joussemet, et al., 2008; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2010), according to which a higher perception of stress from people's important life contexts can frustrate them and lead them to use educational practices that are controlling and frustrating children's autonomy.

Third contribution investigated the relation between work motivation - distinguishing extrinsic motivation, due to external factors, rewards, and secondary advantages, from intrinsic motivation, due to activity itself pleasure - and job satisfaction. Data analyzes did not reveal significant differences between fathers and mothers in both variables, while significant correlations appeared. Particularly, extrinsic motivation negatively correlates with job satisfaction. This means that the more the sample is pushed by external motivations in their job, e.g. money, prestige, recognition, without feeling real pleasure in work they carry out, the greater their dissatisfaction with the work performed (Ayub & Rafif, 2011). Conversely, it was found that intrinsic work motivation positively correlates with job satisfaction. This means that the more people are pushed to work for the pleasure of working and for the gratification that came from job activity itself, the greater his perception of job satisfaction, and consequently of well-being in all fields (Kanat-Maymon, et al., 2016).

Last contribution investigated the relation between work-family conflict and basic needs satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness). Significant gender differences emerged. Especially, men would perceive a greater conflict between their job role and their family role than women, and this is in line with results found in other students' studies. Furthermore, men would also perceive greater satisfaction with need for competence at work than women. They feel more recognized by others thanks to their job skills and their sense of work self-efficacy, and they feel able to set goals and achieve them effectively in workplace (Cengiz & Fikret, 2018). Regarding

correlational data, psychological needs correlate positively with each other, and a negative correlation has also emerged between work-family conflict and need for autonomy. This means that the more spouses feel that workplace demands are pressing and hinder their family role, the more frustrated they feel their need for autonomy, understood as the feeling of being at their behavior's origin, and to direct it according to one's will (Vansteenkiste, et al., 2007).

Students' research contributions have some limitations. One of the major limitations is that studies were made by students, although they were all supervised, and naturally students have a poor knowledge of the most suitable research methodologies, of the drafting of scientific hypotheses etc. A further limitation is given by the small sample size coming entirely from southern Italy. Furthermore, only self-report scales were used. Future research could take into consideration the present limitations and correct them, considering these contributions' results as a springboard to deepen relation between work and family well-being using SDT as a theoretical framework.

Indeed, despite limitations set out above, present results have several practical implications. With a view to promoting well-being and preventing maladaptation, those variables that have been shown to have a significant correlation with people perception of WFC or FWC, such as intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and psychological needs, could be enhanced in workplace. They could be enhanced through adequate information sessions of personnel and managers, and the subsequent implementation of specific training. It would be desirable for employees that employers guarantee flexible working hours, which allow people to carry out their role as parents adequately, and without worry, since studies realized by students have shown the importance of seeking a balance between roles played within those contexts (work and family) considered basically for general well-being.

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