SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES OF WORK-LIFE INTERACTION AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYEES

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REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- The editorial style and the references referred to in this mini-dissertation follow the format prescribed by the Publication Manual (5th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA). This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University (Potchefstroom) to use APA style in all scientific documents as from January 1999.

- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article. The editorial style specified by the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (which agrees largely with the APA style) was used, but the APA guidelines were followed in constructing tables.

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DECLARATION

I, Marissa de Klerk, hereby declare that "Socio-demographic differences of work-life interaction among South African employees" is my own work and that the views and opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and relevant literature references as shown in the references.

I further declare that the content of this research will not be handed in for any other qualification at any other tertiary institution.

MARISSA DE KLERK   **NOVEMBER 2007**

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LANGUAGE EDITING OF MINI-DISSERTATION

I, JWH Blaauw, SA Translators' Institute-accredited Afrikaans and English language editor, member number 1000230, hereby certify that I have done the language editing of Ms Marissa de Klerk's mini-dissertation entitled:

Socio-demographic differences of work-life interaction among South African employees

Yours faithfully

J.W.H. Blaauw

JWH BLAAUW

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SUMMARY

<u>Title</u>: Socio-demographic differences of work-life interaction among South African employees

<u>Key terms</u>: Work-life/home interaction, differences, socio-demographic characteristics, occupation, age, marital status, parental status, education, gender, language

South Africa, being a multicultural society, is faced with unique and unusual circumstances that can influence the interaction between their work and personal lives. However, countries can vary noticeably in cultural norms, values and gender-role beliefs, which can lead to the different experience of work-life interaction. Because of these differences, South African workers could experience the interaction between work and home in different ways, and this interaction may manifest differently in various socio-demographic groups. This makes it difficult to develop strategies and intervention programmes that will help workers integrate their work and personal lives more effectively.

The general objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and four dimensions of work-home interaction and to establish which socio-demographic characteristics best predict work-home interaction amongst South African employees. A sample ($n = 2040$) was taken from four industries in South Africa (i.e. police service, the earthmoving equipment industry, mining and nursing). A socio-demographic questionnaire and the 'Survey Work-Home Interaction – Nijmegen' (SWING) were used. Descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients, Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression analyses were used to analyse the data. The results indicated that robust predictors included occupation, gender and language for negative work-home interference (WHI), occupation, language and age for positive WHI, language and occupation for negative home-work interference (HWI) and language, occupation, age and education for positive HWI.

Recommendations were made for organisations and for future research.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Sosio-demografiese verskille van werk-lewe-interaksie onder Suid Afrikaanse werkers

Sleutelterme: Werk-lewe-/tuiste-interaksie, verskille, sosio-demografiese kenmerke, beroep, ouderdom, huweliksstatus, ouerskap, opleiding, geslag, taal

Suid-Afika, as 'n multikulturele samelewing, word gekonfronteer deur unieke en buitengewone omstandighede wat 'n invloed kan uitoefen op mense se werk en-lewensinteraksie. Lande verskil aansienlik ten op sigte van kulturele norme, waardes en geslagsroloortuigings, wat kan lei tot verskillende sieninge en ervaringe van werk-lewe-interaksie. As gevolg van die verskille kan Suid-Afrikaanse werkers die werk-lewe-interaksie verskillend ervaar en kan hierdie interaksie ook verskillend onder verskillende sosio-demografiese groepe manifesteer. Om hierdie rede is dit waarskynlik moeilik vir organisasies om strategieë en intervensieprogramme te ontwikkel wat werkers help om hul werk en tuiste meer effektief te integreer.

Die algemene doelstelling van hierdie studie was om ondersoek in te stel na die verhouding tussen sosio-demografiese kenmerke en die vier dimensies van werk-tuiste-interaksie, asook om vas te stel watter sosio-demografiese kenmerke die beste voorspellers is van werk-tuiste-interaksie. 'n Steekproef (n = 2040) is geneem van werkers in vier verskillende bedrywe in Suid-Afrika (bv. die polisiediens, die grondverskuiwingswerktuig-bedryf, die mynbedryf en die verpleegbedryf). Die 'Survey Work-Home Interaction – Nijmegen' (SWING)-vraelys asook 'n sosio-biografiese vraelys is afgeneem. Beskrywende statistiek, Cronbach-alphakoëffisiente, Pearson-produkmomentkorrelasie sowel as meervoudige regressieanalises is gebruik om die data te analiseer. Die resultate het aangetoon dat sterk voorspellers ingesluit het beroep, geslag en taal vir negatiewe werk-tuiste-inmenging (WHI), beroep, taal en ouderdom vir positiewe werk-tuiste-inmenging, beroep en taal vir negatiewe tuiste-werk-inmenging (HWI) en taal, beroep, ouderdom en opvoeding vir postiewe tuiste-werk-inmenging.

Aanbevelings is vir organisasies en vir verdere navorsing gemaak.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation focuses on South African employees and the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics (including occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language) and work-life[1] interaction.

Chapter 1 contains the problem statement, research objectives and research methodology employed. This chapter commences with a problem statement, giving an overview of previous related research conducted on work-home interaction and the relationship with socio-demographic characteristics, linking it with the research project and its research objectives. A discussion of the research method follows, with details regarding the empirical study, research design, participants, measuring instruments and statistical analysis. The division of chapters is also given.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Over the past two decades, the subject of work-home interaction (WHI) or home-work interaction (HWI) has received widespread publicity and has been subject to increasing investigation (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Jones, Burke, & Westman, 2006; Pitt-Catsouphes, Kossek, & Sweet, 2006). This is due mainly to vast changes in the composition of the workforce and the nature of work itself over the past decade that suggest the integration between work and home will become more difficult and that work-family issues will become increasingly vital. Today, South Africa's workforce compromises more mothers in the workplace, together with an increase of women in general due to economic and ideological reasons, dual-career couples, single parents and fathers who are actively involved in parenting (Schreuder & Theron, 2001). There has also simultaneously been an intensification of work. More women and men are working longer hours and report greater demands in their workplaces

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[1] The term "home" (incorporating other terms such as "family" and "non-work") is used as a global concept in this study, instead of "life"

(Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh, & Houtman, 2003; Peeters, Montogomery, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2005). Furthermore, high unemployment rates in South Africa have become particularly problematic for employees, exerting pressure on them to work harder and longer hours in response to uncertain feelings about their future security. Technological and telecommunications advancements (portable computers, mobile phones, etc.) have also made it possible to work longer hours and to perform job tasks in a variety of locations (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Lewis & Cooper, 2005).

Prominent transformations since South Africa's first democratic election in 1994 have occurred in the nature of work itself. Transformations were necessary in South Africa not only to move towards democracy, but also to become internationally competitive in a globalised competitive world (Du Toit, 2000). These transformations changing the nature of work, consist of increased domestic and international competition, restructuring, downsizing, outsourcing, cuts in government funding, changes in management style and structure, lay-offs, mergers, rapidly changing technology as well as demands for higher-quality products and services (Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua, & Stough, 2001). More specifically, these transformations and changes had an influence on various occupations in South African, including several industries in South Africa.

In the earthmoving equipment industry, employees are exposed to longer working hours, increased job demands, a dangerous working environment, reduced organisational commitment, injuries and accidents (Lingard, 2003; Lingard, & Sublet, 2002). With regard to the mining industry, the changing face of employment relations and legislation in South Africa requires companies to hire more women. As a result, many women are taking over the role that men once held within the mining environment, not only because the industry has opened up to the employment of more women, but also because of economic hardship (Calitz, 2004). The nursing profession are faced with heavy workloads, long working hours, low professional status, difficult relations in the workplace, difficulty in carrying out professional roles, budget constraints, medical inflation, overcrowded hospitals, high patient loads and exposure to HIV/AIDS-infected patients (Hall, 2004). Lastly, police officers are also exposed to stressors such as organisational

transformation, irregular working hours and a lack of resources (Jones & Kagee, 2005; Mostert & Joubert, 2005; Pienaar & Rothmann, 2005; Rothmann & Van Rensburg, 2002).

Due to the above-mentioned demographic and structural changes as well as transformations in the workforce, boundaries between work and home became more blurred, which in turn have a significant impact on organisational functioning and the workforce itself, placing more pressure on employees as they struggle with heightened worldwide competition and more demanding customers in an environment where speed and cost have become more important (Lewis & Cooper, 2005; O'Driscoll, Brough, & Kalliath, 2004). Furthermore, employees may find it difficult to combine their work and home obligations due to these changes and transformations (Van Hooff, Geurts, Taris, & Kompier, 2005). Because of this difficulty, some people can experience a certain degree of conflict from the one domain (e.g. work) to the other (e.g. family). It also appears clear that within South Africa, various societal influences, changes and organisational structures have a direct impact on the interaction between employees' work and home lives (Vosloo, 2002). Good work/non-work interaction is of paramount importance for the economic viability of institutions and for the welfare of families (Barnett, 1998). Therefore, it seems imperative from a researcher's point of view to study the work-home interaction of employees in South Africa.

In the past few decades, work and home have been considered separate domains and research on work-home interaction focused almost exclusively on the *negative* impact of work on the home situation (i.e. work-family conflict). However, it seems that researchers have come to realise that the work-home interface is a much broader concept, which also encompasses a positive side. For example, fulfilling multiple roles in the work and home domains may produce resources (e.g. energy mobilisation, skills acquisition, greater self-esteem) that could facilitate functioning in both spheres of life in a positive way (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). It therefore seems important to focus on both negative and positive work-home interaction, which in turn can have an impact on individuals as well as organisations. Geurts et al. (2005) encompass the total spectrum of work-home interaction and define it as a process of interaction between both work and home, more specifically as an interactive process in which a worker's functioning (behaviour) in one domain (e.g. work) is influenced by (negative or positive) load effects that have built up in the other

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domain (e.g. home). The above-mentioned definition suggests that mutual interference between the two domains can occur in both directions (work to home or home to work), which could influence each other in both a positive and a negative way. This interference ultimately takes place when spill-over of time tasks, attitudes, stress, emotions and behaviour occurs between work and home (Carnicer, Sánchez, & Pérez, 2004; O'Driscoll et al., 2004).

According to Geurts and Demerouti (2003), three types of work-family conflicts can therefore be identified, namely (1) *time-based conflict* (when work and family roles compete for time, e.g. time that is devoted to one role cannot be devoted to the other), (2) *strain-based conflict* (e.g. when strain in one role affects performance in another role) and (3) *behaviour-based conflict* (e.g. when certain patterns of role behaviour may well be in conflict with the expectations of behaviours in other roles).

Work-family conflict will not only affect work and family roles and their interrelation, but also have a significant impact on individuals and organisations, which can be related to various outcomes (Greenhaus, 1988; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). These individual and organisational outcomes include increased work stress, lower levels of organisational commitment, increased absenteeism, decreased job satisfaction, high turnover (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Duxbury, 2004; Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Kirkmeyer & Cohen, 1999) poor performance (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003), general wellbeing (Frone, 2002; Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998), sleeping disorders (Geurts, Rutte, & Peeters, 1999) and burnout (Montgomery, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Den Ouden, 2003). Consequently, organisations have realised that work-life balance is an important concept to understand because it can affect their competitiveness (Hall & Mirvis, 1995) and influence the development and growth of intellectual capital and return on investment (Barnett, 1996; Kotze, 2005; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). In a recent study of organisations in Canada, it was estimated that the costs of absenteeism as a result of WHI, specifically work overload, amounts to $3.1 billion, $830 million as a result of WHI generally and $450 million as a result of home-work conflict (Duxbury & Higgens, 2003).

The major consequences of work-home interaction can be categorised into five categories, namely physical, psychological, behavioural, attitudinal and organisational consequences (Geurts and Demerouti, 2003). Physical consequences include headaches, backaches, fatigue, dizziness and pain in the chest (Geurts et al., 1999). The psychological consequences refer particularly to work-related stress. Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1997) revealed elevated levels of depression and poor health, and Väänänen et al. (2004) reported an increase in the discharge of stress hormones in persons chronically exposed to overtime. Behavioural consequences are related to an increased consumption of stimulants such as coffee, cigarettes, alcohol and medication (Frone et al., 1997). Attitudinal consequences are mostly related to job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, family satisfaction, leisure satisfaction and commitment (Frone et al., 1997).

Many researchers have examined the consequences, prevalence, antecedents and outcomes of work-home interaction (Barnett, 1998; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1994; Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, & Crouter, 2000; Voyandoff, 2005). In South Africa, several studies have started to address measurement issues (e.g. Pieterse & Mostert, 2005; Rost & Mostert, 2007), as well as correlates of negative and positive interaction between work and home (e.g. Koekemoer & Mostert, 2006; Mostert, 2006; Mostert, Cronjé, & Pienaar, 2006; Mostert & Oosthuizen, 2006; Oldfield & Mostert, 2007). However, within South Africa little information is available regarding the prevalence of negative and positive WHI, as well as negative and positive HWI and how it manifests among different socio-demographic groups. According to Poelmans (2001), a lack of empirical studies of this phenomenon across cultures and especially in South Africa exists.

South Africa, being a multicultural society, is faced with unique and unusual circumstances. These unusual circumstances may exist due to different cultural backgrounds, values, norms and ethnicities among various groups (Lewis, 1997). Because of these differences, different cultural groups may experience and influence the interaction between work and home differently from each other and from other countries. According to Lewis (1997), countries can vary noticeably in cultural norms and values, gender-role beliefs and personal life interaction. Therefore work-home interaction can be viewed as an even more complex phenomenon in South African workplaces. It can therefore be argued that because of these differences, South African workers

could experience the interaction between work and home in different ways, and this interaction can manifest differently in various socio-demographic groups. This makes it difficult to develop strategies and intervention programmes that will help workers integrate their work lives and personal lives more effectively.

The objective of this study will therefore be to focus on the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction among South African employees. This will enable researchers and organisations to identify risk groups and to develop strategies and intervention programmes that will support workers to integrate their work and personal lives effectively. Socio-demographic groups in this study will include occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language.

The following research questions can be formulated, based on the above-mentioned description of the research problem:

- How is work-home interaction conceptualised in the literature?
- What is the relationship between work-home interaction and socio-demographic differences according to the literature?
- Which socio-demographic characteristics will predict the four dimensions (i.e. negative WHI, positive WHI, negative HWI and positive HWI) of work-home interaction in a sample of working South African employees?
- What future recommendations can be made for organisations and future research and practice?

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives are divided into a general objectives and specific objectives.

1.2.1 General objective

With reference to the above formulation of the problem, the general objective of this research is to investigate the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction and to establish which socio-demographic characteristics best predict work-home interaction among South African employees.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research are:

- To determine how socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction are conceptualised in the literature.
- To establish the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction according to the literature.
- To determine which socio-demographic characteristics will predict the four dimensions (i.e. negative WHI, positive WHI, negative HWI and positive HWI) of work-home interaction in a sample of working South African employees.
- To make recommendations for organisations and future research and practice.

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

This research, pertaining to the specific objectives, consisted of two phases, namely a literature review and an empirical study. The results obtained are presented in the form of a research article. A brief literature review has been compiled for the purpose of the article. The focal point of this paragraph consists of aspects that are relevant to the empirical study, and it consists of the research design, participants, the measuring battery and the statistical analysis.

1.3.1 Literature review

The literature review focuses on the relationship between socio-demographic groups and work-home interaction. The focus is on a brief history of work-home interaction, the major consequences for individuals and organisations, why it is important to investigate this phenomenon and the relationship with socio-demographic characteristics among socio-demographic groups in South Africa.

Relevant articles published between 1977 and 2007 were identified using computer searches and databases such as EBSCOHOST, Science Direct and Metacrawler. The following terms were used as search terms: work-life, work-life interaction, work-home, differences, socio-demographic. The following journals were studied: *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, Journal of Vocational Behavior, Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, Journal of Marriage and Family, Family Relations, Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, Personnel Psychology and South African Journal of Labour Relations, SA Journal of Psychology, SA Journal of Industrial Psychology and Management Dynamics.*

1.3.2 Empirical study

The empirical study consisted of the research design, the participants, the measuring battery and statistical analysis.

1.3.2.1 Research design

According to Kerlinger and Lee (2000), the main technical function of any research design is to control variance. Research designs are plans and structures used to answer research questions. Research designs act in conjunction with research hypotheses to yield a dependable and valid answer. In this study, a survey design was used to achieve the research objectives. The specific design was a cross-sectional design. During a cross-sectional design one group of people is

observed at one point in time, over a short period, such as a day or a few weeks. The design is also used to assess interrelationships among variables within a population and thus helps achieve the various specific objectives of this research (Struwig & Stead, 2001). According to Shaughnessy and Zechmeister (1997), this design is ideally suited to addressing the descriptive and predictive functions associated with correlational research, by means of which relationships between variables are examined. One advantage of cross-sectional research is that it is more economical in terms of time and cost than other designs. A disadvantage of a cross-sectional design is the inability directly to assess intra-individual change and the restriction of its interference (Baltes, Reese, & Nesselroade, 1988). However, this design is ideal since the objective of this study is to investigate whether socio-demographically different groups predict WHI/HWI.

1.3.2.2 Participants and procedure

For the purposes of this study, four occupational groups relevant to the South African workforce were used ($n = 2040$). These occupations include employees in the South African Police Service ($n = 685$); earthmoving equipment industry g ($n = 528$); mining industry ($n = 320$); and registered as well as auxiliary nurses ($n = 507$). After permission had been obtained from management in the various occupational groups, a letter requesting participation was provided to each individual prior to the administration of the measuring battery. The measuring battery was compiled and a letter explaining the purpose and importance of the research accompanied the questionnaires. Ethical aspects and a motivation regarding the research were discussed with the participants before the questionnaires were handed out. The participation was voluntary, and the confidentiality and anonymity of the answers were emphasised. The participants were given two to three weeks to complete the questionnaires, after which the latter were personally collected at a prearranged date.

1.3.2.3 Measuring battery

The following questionnaires were used in this empirical study:

Socio-demographic characteristics. A socio-demographic questionnaire was used to determine the socio-demographical characteristics of the participants working in South Africa. Characteristics such as occupation, age equal groups, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and the participant's language were measured with this questionnaire.

Work-home Interaction. The *Survey Work-home Interference Nijmegen* (SWING) was used to measure work-home interaction (Geurts et al., 2005). The SWING is a 22-item work-home interference measure. It measures four types of work-home interference, namely: (1) negative interference by work with the home (negative WHI), referring to a negative impact of the work situation on one's functioning at home (eight items, e.g. "your work schedule makes it difficult to fulfil domestic obligations"); (2) negative interference by the home with work (negative HWI), referring to a negative impact of the home situation on one's job performance (four items, e.g. "you have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic matters"); (3) positive interference by work with the home (positive WHI), referring to a positive influence of the work situation on one's functioning at home (five items, e.g. "you come cheerfully home after a successful day at work, positively affecting the atmosphere at home"); and (4) positive interference by the home with work (positive HWI), referring to a positive impact of the home situation on one's job performance (five items, e.g. "you are better able to interact with your colleague/supervisor as a result of the environment at home"). All items are scored on a four-point frequency rating scale, ranging from 0 ("never") to 3 ("always"). Geurts et al. (2005) report Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0,84 for negative WHI and 0,75 for positive WHI, as well as 0,75 for negative HWI and 0,81 for positive HWI. In a South African sample, Mostert (2006) provided evidence for the construct validity, construct equivalence and reliability of the scale. She reported the following Cronbach alpha coefficients for the SWING: Negative WHI = 0,90, Positive WHI = 0,81, Negative HWI = 0,84 and Positive HWI = 0,80.

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1.3.2.4 Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out by means of the SPSS program (SPSS Inc., 2005). Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to assess the reliability of the constructs that were measured in the study. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is appropriate when individuals respond to items on multiple levels. A Cronbach alpha coefficient contains important information regarding the proportion of variance of the items of a scale in terms of total variance, explained by the particular scale. If the coefficient is 0,70 the items measured are regarded as reliable.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationship between the variables. The product-moment coefficient of correlation was used to calculate the relationship between sets of ordered pairs in order to obtain more precise approximations of the direction and degree of relationship. The product-moment coefficient of correlation is based on the related variation of the members of sets of ordered pairs. If they vary together, it is said that there is a positive or negative relation, as the case may be. Thus, if a relationship exists between the variables, it can be termed a positive relationship. A negative relationship occurs when a decrease in the measurement of one variable leads to an increase in the other variable. If they do not co-vary, it is said that no relationship exists (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). In terms of statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95% confidence interval level ($p \leq 0,05$). Effect sizes were used to decide on the practical significance of the findings (Steyn, 1999). Cut-off points of 0,30 (medium effect) and 0,50 (large effect) were set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients (Cohen, 1988). When scales were not normally distributed, Spearman correlations were reported.

Lastly, multiple regression analyses were carried out. Multiple regression analysis is a method for studying the effects, and the magnitude of the effects, of more than one independent variable on one dependent variable (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). A multiple regression analysis is therefore carried out to determine the percentage variance in the dependent variable (e.g. negative and positive WHI, negative and positive HWI) that is predicted by the independent variables (e.g.

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socio-demographic characteristics). To determine the model fit to the actual outcomes, goodness-of-fit statistics were used. Goodness-of-fit statistics assess the fit of a multiple model against actual data (Field, 2005). R correlation coefficients were used to determine the overall fit of the regression model and R^2 was used for an estimation of the substantive size of the relationship, which in turn is the amount of variation in the outcome variable that is accounted for by the model. The F-ratio was used to determine how much the model had improved the prediction of the outcome compared to the level of inaccuracy of the model.

The regression analysis' predictors of the sample are based on assumptions, enabling it to generalise findings for a wider population. These assumptions for the predictors include the following: predictors must be quantitative or categorical; predictors should have some variation in value; predictors should not correlate too highly based on multicollinearity; there should be no external variables correlating with predictors included in the regression model; and at each level of the predictors' variable(s), the variance of the residual terms should be constant. Before the analysis, these assumptions were checked.

For categorical socio-demographic variables with more than two categories, *dummy* coding was used (Field, 2005). A baseline group (the majority group) was created and was coded with a value of 0 (e.g. in the case of occupation, police was chosen to be the baseline group). Secondly, a dummy group was created and coded with a value of 1 (in the case of occupation, it could either be earthmoving, nurses or mining). To determine whether there were differences between the baseline group and the *dummy* group, the beta value was used. Beta value shows the change in outcomes due to a unit change in the predictor and tells the relative difference between each group and the group chosen as the baseline group.

In order to determine significant predictors of the four work-home interaction dimensions, the sample was randomly divided into two groups, namely Group 1 ($n = 972$) (also used as the experimental group) and Group 2 ($n = 1068$) (used as the control group). For Group 1, a multiple regression analysis using the Forward method was used to determine if there were any statistically significant predictors. To determine whether these predictors were robust, the same model (including only the significant predictors in Group 1) was tested in Group 2, using the

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Enter method. At the statistical level, the test for the successful replication of the model involved using the χ^2 statistics to determine the difference in statistical fit between model 1 and model 2, by determining the difference in R^2. Non-significant differences between the models would indicate statistical support for the hypotheses that were tested.

1.4 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

In Chapter 2, the socio-demographic predictors of and the relationship with work-home interaction are discussed in the form of a research article. Chapter 3 deals with the conclusion, limitations and recommendations of this research.

1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

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

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES OF WORK-LIFE INTERACTION AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYEES

ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and four dimensions of work-home interaction, and to establish which socio-demographic characteristics best predict work-home interaction amongst South African employees. A sample (n = 2040) was taken from four South African industries (i.e. the police service, the earthmoving equipment industry, mining and nursing). A socio-demographic questionnaire and the 'Survey Work-Home Interaction – Nijmegen' (SWING) were used. Descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients, Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression analyses were used to analyse the data. The results indicated that robust predictors included occupation, gender and language for negative work-home interference (WHI), occupation, language and age for positive WHI, language and occupation for negative home-work interference (HWI) and language, occupation, age and education for positive HWI.

OPSOMMING

Die algemene doelstelling van hierdie studie was om ondersoek in te stel na die verhouding tussen die sosio-demografiese kenmerke en die vier dimensies van werk-tuiste-interaksie, asook om vas te stel watter sosio-demografiese kenmerke die beste voorspellers is van werk-tuiste-interaksie. 'n Steekproef (n = 2040) is geneem van werkers in vier verskillende bedrywe in Suid-Afrika (naamlik die polisiediens, die grondverskuiwingswerktuig-bedryf, mynbedryf en die verpleegbedryf). Die 'Survey Work-Home Interaction – Nijmegen' (SWING)-vraelys asook 'n sosio-biografiese vraelys is gebruik. Beskrywende statistiek, Cronbach-alfakoëffisiente, Pearson-produkmomentkorrelasie sowel as meervoudige regressieanalises is gebruik om die data te analiseer. Die resultate het getoon dat sterk voorspellers ingesluit het beroep, geslag en taal vir negatiewe werk-tuiste-inmenging (WHI), beroep, taal en ouderdom vir positiewe werk-tuiste-inmenging, beroep en taal vir negatiewe tuiste-werk-inmenging (HWI) en taal, beroep, ouderdom en opvoeding vir positiewe tuiste-werk-inmenging.

In modern society, two of the more central and salient domains in the life of an employed individual are work and home. The subject of work-home interference (WHI) or home-work interference (HWI) has received widespread publicity and have been subject to increasing investigation (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Jones, Burke, & Westman, 2006; Pitt-Catsouphes, Kossek, & Sweet, 2006). Many researchers have sought to explain the numerous ways in which work and home are integrated (Barnett, 1998; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), which emphasises the importance of employees integrating the responsibilities of both work and home. However, the integration between these two domains has become more difficult since major changes took place in the composition of the workforce and the nature of work itself.

Transformations that have changed the nature of work over the last two decades consist of increased domestic and international competition, restructuring, downsizing, outsourcing, cuts in government funding, changes in management style and structure, lay-offs, mergers, rapidly changing technology as well as demands for higher quality products and services (Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua, & Stough, 2001). Since the first democratic elections in April 1994, striking changes and prominent transformations have also occurred in South Africa. High unemployment rates in South Africa have become particularly problematic for employees, placing pressure on them to work harder and longer hours in response to uncertain feelings about their future security. More men and women are working longer hours and are reporting greater demands in their workplaces. Technological and telecommunications advancements (portable computers, mobile phones, etc.) have also made it possible to work longer hours and to perform job tasks in a variety of locations (Lewis & Cooper, 2005). These current transformations and changes(demographic and structural) inevitably have a direct impact on the workforce, placing more pressure on employees as they struggle with heightened worldwide competition and more demanding customers in an environment where speed and cost have become more important (Lewis & Cooper, 2005).

Employees might be unaware of the effect that these changes and transformations have on their well-being in their workplace as well as their home environment (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998; Ferber, O'Farrell, & Allen, 1991; Greenhaus, 1988; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). When poor interaction is experienced between work and home as a result of these changes, it can

effect institutional competitiveness and be associated with various negative organisational outcomes, which in turn creates not only a problem for employees but also a challenge for institutions (Duxbury, 2004; Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Kotze, 2005; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). These negative organisational outcomes associated with poor work-home interaction include reduced job and life satisfaction, low organisational commitment with intention to quit, job stress and burnout, low levels of job performance and the prevalence of accidents (Kandonlin, 1993; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

It therefore seems imperative to investigate the work-home interaction of various occupational groups, including the police, earthmoving industry, mining and the nursing profession. Police officers are exposed to stressful working environments and have to deal with various stressors such as organisational transformation, irregular working hours and a lack of resources (Biggam, Power, MacDonald, Carcary, & Moodie, 1997; Kop, Euwema, & Schaufeli, 1999). These stressors tend to spill over to a person's home life (Emslie, Hunt, & Macintyre, 2004; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992), which ultimately influences an individual's well-being negatively (Brough, 2003; Strazdins & Broom, 2003).

The earthmoving industry is confronted with stressors such as management of economic risk and political as well as social change, and employees are exposed to longer working hours, increased job demands, a dangerous working environment, reduced organisational commitment, injuries and accidents (Lingard, 2003; Lingard & Sublet, 2002).

Due to the important contribution the mining industry makes to the South African economy, various companies in the mining industry need to maintain a competitive advantage in complying with the demands of change (Oldfield, 2005). As a result, they impose various forms of stressors on their employees, including high levels of workload, time pressure and role conflicts, all of which have been shown to be positively related to employee health impairment (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003; Frone et al., 1992).

In the nursing environment, stressors such as workloads, long hours, low professional status, difficult relations in the workplace, difficulty in carrying out professional roles and a variety of workplace hazards are being experienced (Baumann et al., 2001).

It is clear that these stressors could spill over to a person's home life and could have a negative influence on individuals' well-being (Brough, 2003; Strazdins & Broom, 2003). On the other hand, positive interaction between the work-home domains can lead to positive outcomes for individuals, such as life satisfaction and work engagement (Montgomery, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Den Ouden, 2003; Mostert, 2006; Mostert, Cronjé, & Pienaar, 2006; Voydanoff, 1988). Many researchers have examined the consequences, prevalence, antecedents and outcomes of work-home interaction (Barnett, 1998; Frone, et al., 1992; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1994; Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, & Crouter, 2000; Voyandoff, 2005). In South Africa, several studies have started to address measurement issues (e.g. Pieterse & Mostert, 2005; Rost & Mostert, 2007), as well as correlates of negative and positive interaction between work and home (e.g. Koekemoer & Mostert, 2006; Mostert, 2006; Mostert, et al., 2006; Mostert & Oosthuizen, 2006; Oldfield & Mostert, 2007). However, within South Africa very little information is available regarding the prevalence of negative and positive WHI, as well as negative and positive HWI and how they manifest themselves amongst different socio-demographic groups.

The objective of this study was to focus on the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction among South African employees. This would enable researchers and organisations to identify risk groups and to develop strategies and intervention programmes that will support workers effectively to integrate their work and personal lives. Socio-demographic groups in this study included occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language.

Overview of work-home interaction

The most widely cited definition of work-family conflict is that of Greenhaus and Beutell (1985, p. 77) as "... a form of interrole conflict in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible". That is, participation in the work (family) role is made

more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role. However, this definition   is almost exclusively a one-sided focus on the negative impact of work on the home domain (i.e. work-family conflict) and does not consider the fact that the interaction between work and home can also be positive. Recently, researchers have come to realise that the work-home interface is a broad concept, which also encompasses a positive side. For example, fulfilling multiple roles in the work and home domains may produce resources (e.g. energy mobilisation, skill acquisition, greater self-esteem), which could facilitate functioning in both life spheres in a positive way (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

Geurts et al. (2005) look at the total spectrum of work-home interaction and define it as a process of interaction between both work and home, more specifically as an interactive process in which a worker's functioning (behaviour) in one domain (e.g. work) is influenced by load effects (negative or positive) that have built up in the other domain (e.g. home). The above-mentioned definition suggests that interference between the two domains can occur in both directions (work with home or home with work), which could influence each other in both a positive and negative way. This interference ultimately takes place when spill-over of time tasks, attitudes, stress, emotions and behaviour occurs between work and home (Carnicer, Sánchez, Pérez, & Jiménez, 2004; O'Driscoll, Brough, & Kalliath, 2004).

The definition of Geurts et al. (2005) is based on the Effort-Recovery (E-R) model, which describes how work and home may interact with each other and by which mechanisms well-being may be affected during this process (Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh, & Houtman, 2003; Meijman & Mulder, 1998). The E-R model describes how work and private life may interact with each other and by which mechanisms well-being may be affected during this process. According to this model, effort expenditure is associated with specific load reactions (namely physiological, behavioural and subjective responses) that develop within the individual. In practice, the short-term reactions include all the responses at a physiological, behavioural and subjective level that can be related to the load process. These reactions are, in principle, reversible. Recovery takes place when the exposure to load ceases, and the respective psychological systems, will stabilise again at a specific baseline level within a certain period of

time (Drenth, Thierry, & De Wolff, 1998). As a result of the recovery process, fatigue and other effects of stressful situations are reduced, but when demands do not cease, no recovery occurs.

The fundamental role of the recovery process clearly makes the E-R model a promising perspective from which to study *negative* work-home interaction. The presuppositions put forward by the E-R model can also enhance our understanding of positive work-home interaction, since effort expenditure may also be accompanied by positive load reactions. When individuals are able to keep their effort investments within acceptable limits by utilising opportunities for control and support (e.g. by alternating high-effort and low-effort, or unpleasant and pleasant tasks, by taking a "time-out" when necessary, and by asking support from significant others such as a supervisor, colleagues or a spouse), energy resources may be recharged rather than exhausted. Furthermore, in order to stabilise energy generation, it is necessary to consume energy (Marks, 1977), and people tend to find energy for the things they like doing. People will therefore produce rather than consume energy, which will result in tasks being completed with excellence.

In summary, work-home interaction comprises four dimensions (Geurts et al., 2005), namely 1) negative WHI, which refers to a situation in which negative load reactions build up at work, hampering a person's functioning at home; 2) negative HWI, referring to negative load reactions developed at home that fetter a person's functioning at work; 3) positive WHI, defined as positive load reactions built up at work that facilitate functioning at home; and (4) positive HWI, which occurs when positive load reactions developed at home facilitate functioning at work.

Socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction

This study focuses on seven socio-demographic groups, including occupation (police, earthmoving, mining and nurses), age, marital status (married vs. unmarried), parental status (with children vs. without children), level of education (individuals with a school education vs. individuals with a postgraduate education), gender (male vs. female) and language (English, Afrikaans, and African).

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With regard to *occupation,* several studies revealed that employees in the police environment reported more negative WHI than negative HWI (Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Montgomery et al., 2003). Police workers are exposed to elements such as demanding work characteristics (shift work, unplanned overtime, exposure to suffering and death), lower levels of decision latitude and support at work, organisational transformations, irregular working hours and a lack of resources, job pressures and emotional stressors, which ultimate influence the work-home interaction (Biggam et al., 1997; Marais, 2006; Sekwena, Mostert, & Wentzel, 2007).

In the earthmoving equipment industry, employees are exposed to longer working hours, increased job demands, a dangerous working environment, reduced organisational commitment, injuries as well as accidents (Lingard, 2003; Lingard & Sublet, 2002). Research in the earthmoving occupation found that interference originated more often from work than from home and that positive HWI is more prevalent than positive WHI (Geurts et al., 2005; Rost, 2006).

With regard to the mining industry, the changing face of employment relations and legislation in South Africa require companies to hire more women. Consequently, many women are filling roles that men once held within the mining environment, not only because the industry has opened up to the employment of more women, but also because of economic hardship (Calitz, 2004).

The nursing profession is faced with heavy workloads, long working hours, low professional status, difficult relations in the workplace, difficulty in carrying out professional roles, budget constraints, medical inflation, overcrowded hospitals, high patient loads and exposure to HIV-infected patients (Hall, 2004). In the mining and nurses occupation, studies revealed that interference occurred in both directions (Oldfield, 2005; Van Tonder, 2005). Based on these findings, it is expected that occupation will predict work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 1*).

With regard to the relationship between *age* and work-home interaction, most studies have found no relationship between different age groups (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997; Kinnunen &

Mauno, 1998; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005; Van Tonder, 2005). However, studies conducted by Grzywacz and Marks (2000) found that younger men reported higher negative spill-over between work and home (as well as between home and work) and less positive spill-over from family to work than older men. They also found that younger women reported more positive spill-over from work to family and more negative spill-over from family to work than older women. Duxbury and Higgins (2001) reported that participants between the ages of 36 and 55 experienced more interference from work with home. These results are supported by a South African study, which found that younger employees (between 26 and 35 years of age) experienced statistically significantly lower levels of positive WHI than older employees (between 46 and 65 years of age) (Rost, 2006). Rost (2006) also found that older participants experienced statically significantly lower levels of negative WHI than younger participants. Based on these findings, it is expected that age will predict work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 2*).

The impact of *marital status* on work-home interaction has not been clearly investigated, because most studies include a large percentage of married employees in their study sample. Grzywacz and Marks (2000) reported that single men and women experienced less negative spill-over from their work to home and less positive home-work spill-over, compared to their married counterparts. Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) failed to confirm an effect of marital status on conflict between work and home. Mostert and Oldfield (in press) found that unmarried employees reported higher levels of negative and positive WHI. Furthermore, it was found that individuals who lived with a spouse reported less negative influence from home than those who lived alone (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004). Rost (2006) reported no significant differences between married and unmarried employees. It is therefore hypothesised that marital status will not be a predictor of work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 3*).

Studies on *parental status* revealed that the age of children as well as the number of children living at home has an influence on work-home interference in both directions (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Higgens, Duxbury, & Lee, 1994; Kunninen & Mauno, 1998). Grzywacz and Marks (2000) reported that men who have children experienced more positive spill-over from work to home than men without children. Furthermore, Demerouti et al. (2004) found that

compared to women without children and men, women with children reported more positive than negative influences from the home domain. In South African studies, Rost (2006) found no significant differences with regard to relationship between parental status and work-home interaction, while Oldfield (2005) reported that working parents appear to have higher levels of negative WHI than those without children, but at the same time also experience higher levels of positive HWI. Based on these results, *Hypothesis 4* presupposes that parental status will predict work-life interaction.

Studies investigating differences based on *educational level* reported no significant differences between individuals with different levels of education (Frone et al., 1997; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005; Rost, 2006). However Grzywacz and Marks (2000) found that lower levels of education were strongly associated with a lower level of positive spill-over from work to home. Furthermore, Oldfield (2005) found that individuals possessing a secondary education scored higher on negative WHI and HWI, but also experience more positive HWI than participants possessing a tertiary education. Based on these results, it seems that educational level will predict work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 5*).

According to the literature, the role of *gender* has been largely ignored with regard to work-home interaction research (Emslie et al., 2004). Across a variety of samples, studies revealed almost consistently that there are hardly any differences between males and females in their experience of negative or positive interaction between home and work, in both directions (Burke, 1988; Demerouti, et al., 2004; Eagle, Miles, & Icenogle, 1997; Frone, 2002; Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Kirchmeyer, 1992). However, Grzywacz and Marks (2000) did report that women might experience a slightly larger spill-over from work to home. Geurts et al. (2005) found that females experienced more positive home-work interaction than males, and males reported more negative work-home interaction than females. This is supported by a study in South Africa, where Pieterse and Mostert (2005) found a practically significant difference between males and females on negative WHI, indicating that males reported a higher level of negative WHI than did females. Furthermore, it was also reported by Oldfield (2005) and Rost (2006) that males experienced a higher level of negative WHI than females. It was also indicated

that men experience more work-family conflict than family-work conflict (Linington & Donald, 2007). It is therefore expected that gender will predict work-home interaction(*Hypothesis 6*).

With regard to *language*, Hofstede's (1980) pioneer work regarding cross-cultural research differentiated between individualist and collectivistic cultures. According to Hofstede (1991:51), *individualism* characterises "societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family". On the other hand, *collectivism* characterises "societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty". Language is important as a means of expressing ethnic or cultural identity. The knowledge, beliefs and practices of a particular society are also reflected in its language (Naudé, 2005). Previous research regarding *language* revealed that differences do exist between different language groups.

In South African studies, Rost (2006) found that African language-speaking individuals experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive WHI and HWI than individuals speaking Afrikaans. It was also found that English-speaking individuals experienced significantly lower levels of negative WHI compared to Afrikaans and African groups (Rost, 2006). Oldfield (2005) showed that African language-speaking individuals experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive WHI, positive HWI and negative HWI compared to English and Afrikaans groups. However, Pieterse and Mostert (2005) reported no significant differences between language groups. Based on these South African findings, it is expected that language will predict work-home interaction (*Hypothesis 7*).

METHOD

Research design

A cross-sectional survey design was used to collect the data and to achieve the research objectives. With a cross-sectional design, one group of people is observed at one point in time, in a short period, such as a day or a few weeks (Du Plooy, 2001). The design is also used to assess

interrelationships among variables within a population and will thus help achieve the various specific objectives of this research (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

Participants and procedure

For the purposes of this study, four occupational groups relevant to the South African workforce were used (n = 2040). These occupations include employees in the South African Police Service (n = 685), the earthmoving industry g (n = 528), the mining industry (n = 320) and registered as well as auxiliary nurses (n = 507). After permission had been obtained from management in the various occupational groups, a letter requesting participation was given to each individual prior to the administration of the measuring battery. The measuring battery was compiled and a letter explaining the purpose and importance of the research accompanied the questionnaires. Ethical aspects and a motivation regarding the research were discussed with the participants before the questionnaires were handed out. The participation was voluntary, and the confidentiality and anonymity of the answers were emphasised. The participants were given two to three weeks to complete the questionnaires, after which they were personally collected at an arranged date. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the participants.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Participants (n = 2040)

		Group 1		Group 2		Total group	
Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Occupation	Earthmoving	267	27,5	261	24,4	528	25,9
	Mining	184	18,9	136	12,7	320	15,7
	Nurses	227	23,4	280	26,2	507	24,9
	Police	294	30,2	391	36,6	685	33,6
Language	Afrikaans	531	54,6	567	53,1	1098	53,8
	English	174	17,9	135	12,6	309	15,1
	African	267	27,5	330	30,9	597	29,3
Gender	Male	492	50,6	530	49,6	1022	50,1
	Female	480	49,4	522	48,9	1002	49,1
Age	19-26 years	66	6,8	89	8,3	155	7.6
	27-36 years	322	33,1	364	34,1	686	33,6
	37-46 years	332	34,2	349	32,7	681	33,4
	47-56 years	194	20,0	167	15,6	361	17,7
	57-66 years	58	6,0	37	3,5	95	4.7
Marital Status	Married	700	72,0	631	59,1	1331	65,2
	Unmarried	272	28,0	209	19,6	481	23,6
Parental Status	With children	667	68,6	638	59,7	1305	64,0
	Without children	305	31,4	201	18,8	506	24,8
Education	School	548	56,4	566	53,0	1114	54,6
	Postgraduate	424	43,6	405	37,9	829	40,6

Note. Where percentages do not sum to 100, this is due to missing values

According to Table 1, the participants in the total study population were equally distributed with regard to gender (50,1% males and 49,1% females). The majority of the participants were between the age of 27 and 36 years (33,6%), and from 37 to 46 years (33,4%). Most participants were married (65,2%), and 64% of the population had children. Regarding occupation, 685 (33,6%) of the participants were police workers, 528 (25,9%) earthmoving workers, 507 (24,9%) nurses and 320 (15,7%) were working in the mining industry. The number of participants that were in possession of a school education were 54,6%, while 40,6% of the participants possessed

a postgraduate qualification. In total, 53,8% of the participants were Afrikaans-speaking, 15,1% were English-speaking and 29,3% of the sample consisted of various African language-speaking participants.

Measuring instruments

The following measuring instruments were used in the empirical study:

Socio-demographic characteristics. A socio-demographic questionnaire was used to determine the socio-demographical characteristics of the participants working in South Africa. Characteristics such as occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and the participant's language were measured with this questionnaire.

Work-home interaction. The *Survey Work-home Interference Nijmegen* (SWING) was used to measure work-home interaction (Geurts et al., 2005). The SWING is a 22-item work-home interference measure. It measures four types of work-home interference, namely: (1) negative interference from work with home (negative WHI), referring to a negative impact of the work situation on one's functioning at home (eight items, e.g. "your work schedule makes it difficult to fulfil domestic obligations"); (2) negative interference from home with work (negative HWI), referring to a negative impact of the home situation on one's job performance (four items, e.g. "you have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic matters"); (3) positive interference from work with home (positive WHI), referring to a positive influence of the work situation on one's functioning at home (five items, e.g. "you come cheerfully home after a successful day at work, positively affecting the atmosphere at home"); and (4) positive interference from home with work (positive HWI), referring to a positive impact of the home situation on one's job performance (five items, e.g. "you are better able to interact with your colleague/supervisor as a result of the environment at home").

All items were scored on a four-point frequency rating scale, ranging from 0 ("never") to 3 ("always"). Geurts et al. (2005) report Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0,84 for negative WHI and 0,75 for positive WHI, as well as 0,75 for negative HWI and 0,81 for positive HWI. In a South

African sample, Mostert (2006) provided evidence for the construct validity, construct equivalence and reliability of the scale. She reported the following Cronbach alpha coefficients for the SWING: Negative WHI = 0,90, Positive WHI = 0,81, Negative HWI = 0,84 and Positive HWI = 0,80.

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out by means of the SPSS program (SPSS Inc., 2005). Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to assess the reliability of the constructs that were measured in the study. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationship between the variables. In terms of statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95% confidence interval level ($p \leq 0,05$). Effect sizes were used to decide on the practical significance of the findings (Steyn, 1999). Cut-off points of 0,30 (medium effect) and 0,50 (large effect) were set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients (Cohen, 1988). When scales were not normally distributed, Spearman correlations were reported.

Lastly, multiple regression analyses were carried out. To determine whether the model fit to the actual outcomes, goodness-of-fit statistics were used. Goodness-of-fit statistics assess the fit of a multiple model against actual data (Field, 2005). R correlation coefficients were used to determine the overall fit of the regression model and R^2 was used for a good estimation of the substantive size of the relationship, which in turn is the amount of variation in the outcome variable that is accounted for by the model. The F-ratio was used to determine how much the model has improved the prediction of the outcome compared to the level of inaccuracy of the model.

The regression analysis' predictors of the sample were based on assumptions, enabling it to generalise findings for a wider population. These assumptions for the predictors included the following: predictors must be quantitative or categorical; predictors should have some variation in value; predictors should not correlate too highly based on multicollinearity; there should be no

external variables correlating with predictors included in the regression model; and at each level of the predictors' variable(s), the variance of the residual terms should be constant. Before the analysis, these assumptions were checked.

For categorical socio-demographic variables with more than two categories, *dummy* coding was used (Field, 2005). A baseline group (the majority group) was created and was coded with a value of 0 (e.g. in the case of occupation, police is chosen to be the baseline group). Secondly, the dummy group was created and coded with a value of 1 (in the case of occupation, it can either be earthmoving, nurses or mining). To determine whether there are differences between the baseline group and the *dummy* group, the beta value was used. The beta value shows the change in outcomes due to a unit change in the predictor and tells the relative difference between each group and the group chosen as the baseline group.

In order to determine significant predictors of the four work-home interaction dimensions, the sample was randomly divided into two groups, namely: Group 1 ($n = 972$) (also used as the experimental group) and Group 2 ($n = 1068$) (used as the control group). For Group 1, a multiple regression analysis using the forward method was used to determine if there were any statistically significant predictors. To determine whether these predictors were robust, the same model (including only the significant predictors in Group 1) was tested in Group 2, using the Enter method. At the statistical level, the test for the successful replication of the model involves using the χ^2 statistics to determine the difference in statistical fit between model 1 and model 2, by determining the difference in R^2. Non-significant differences between the models indicate statistical support for the hypotheses that are tested.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the variables are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Cronbach Alpha Coefficients

Item	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Work-Home Interaction					
Negative WHI	1,37	0,75	0,48	-0,01	0,89
Positive WHI	1,68	0,77	0,36	-0,16	0,81
Home-Work Interaction					
Negative HWI	0,84	0,73	1,04*	1,05*	0,86
Positive HWI	2,01	0,81	0,13	-0,31	0,81

* High skewness and kurtosis

Inspection of Table 2 shows that acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained for all the scales. The Cronbach alpha coefficients of all the measuring instruments were considered to be acceptable compared to the guideline of $\alpha > 0,70$ (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). All the scores of the measuring instrument were normally distributed, except for the score of Negative HWI, which was a little skew.

Product moment correlations

The results of the product moment correlation coefficients between the constructs are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Correlation Coefficients between Socio-demographic Characteristics and Work-Home Interaction (n = 2040)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Earthmoving	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Mining	$-0,25^{+}$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Nurses	$-0,34^{+**}$	$-0,25^{+}$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Gender	$-0,26^{+}$	$-0,25^{+}$	$0,55^{+**}$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Age	$0,00$	$0,07^{+}$	$0,11^{+}$	$-0,04$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. English	$0,35^{+**}$	$-0,03$	$-0,08^{+}$	$-0,04$	$0,02$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. African Language	$-0,14^{+}$	$0,10^{+}$	$-0,21^{+}$	$-0,20^{+}$	$-0,05^{+}$	$-0,27^{+}$	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Marital Status	$0,00$	$-0,04$	$0,02$	$0,09^{+}$	$-0,18^{+}$	$0,02$	$0,08^{+}$	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Parental Status	$0,08^{+}$	$-0,08^{+}$	$0,04$	$0,03$	$-0,21^{+}$	$0,07^{+}$	$-0,10^{+}$	$0,28^{+}$	-	-	-	-	-
10. Education	$-0,03$	$-0,03$	$0,20^{+}$	$0,10^{+}$	$-0,02$	$0,04$	$-0,11^{+}$	$0,02$	$0,08^{+}$	-	-	-	-
11. M_NWHI	$-0,29^{+}$	$-0,14^{+}$	$-0,06^{+}$	$-0,10^{+}$	$-0,08^{+}$	$-0,18^{+}$	$0,17^{+}$	$-0,03$	$-0,07^{+}$	$0,01$	-	-	-
12. M_PWHI	$-0,10^{+}$	$-0,12^{+}$	$-0,20^{+}$	$-0,09^{+}$	$0,03$	$-0,06^{+}$	$0,35^{+**}$	$0,00$	$-0,04$	$-0,13^{+}$	$0,22^{+}$	-	-
13. M_NHWI	$-0,25^{+}$	$-0,10^{+}$	$-0,21^{+}$	$-0,08^{+}$	$-0,10^{+}$	$-0,15^{+}$	$0,27^{+}$	$0,01$	$-0,08^{+}$	$-0,08^{+}$	$0,59^{+**}$	$0,33^{+*}$	-
14. M_PHWI	$-0,10^{+}$	$-0,16^{+}$	$-0,16^{+}$	$-0,03$	$0,02$	$-0,11^{+}$	$0,33^{+**}$	$0,00$	$-0,11^{+}$	$-0,12^{+}$	$0,23^{+}$	$0,65^{+**}$	$0,30^{+*}$

$^{+}$ Correlation is statistically significant ($p \leq 0,05$)

* Correlation is practically significant $r \geq 0,30$ (medium effect)

** Correlation is practically significant $r \geq 0,50$ (large effect)

As can be seen in Table 3, Negative WHI is statistically significantly related ($p \leq 0,05$) to all the independent variables, except to Marital Status and Education. Positive WHI is statistically significantly related to Earthmoving, Mining, Nurses, Gender, English and African language (with a medium effect). Negative HWI is statistically significantly related to Earthmoving, Mining, Nurses, Gender, English, Age, African language, Parental Status and Education. Positive HWI is statistically significantly related to Earthmoving, Mining, Nurses, African language, Parental Status, Education and English (with a medium effect).

Multiple regression analysis

To determine which socio-demographic characteristic predicts WHI, four standard multiple regression analysis, using the forward method with the first group, and the enter method with second group, were performed. The first assessed the contribution that socio-demographic characteristics had upon Negative WHI; the second assessed the contribution that socio-demographic characteristics had upon Positive WHI; the third assessed the contribution that socio-demographic characteristics had upon Negative HWI; the fourth assessed the contribution socio-demographic characteristics had upon Positive HWI. The results are reported in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analysis with Negative WHI as Dependent Variable

Model		Beta (β)	t	p	F	R	R^2	ΔR^2
Group 1	(Constant)		30,16	0,00*				
	Earthmoving	-0,50	-14,80	0,00*	87,38	0,29	0,08	0,08
	Mining	-0,38	-11,72	0,00*	73,20	0,36	0,13	0,05
	Gender	-0,23	-6,73	0,00*	85,51	0,46	0,21	0,08
	Nurses	-0,18	-4,86	0,00*	74,03	0,48	0,23	0,03
	Age	-0,07	-2,33	0,02*	60,53	0,49	0,24	0,00
	African Language	0,06	2,05	0,04*	51,30	0,49	0,24	0,00
Group 2	(Constant)		28,85	0,00*	52,48	0,49	0,24	0,24
	Earthmoving	-0,48	-14,78	0,00*				
	Mining	-0,36	-11,60	0,00*				
	Gender	-0,20	-5,45	0,00*				
	Nurses	-0,19	-5,06	0,00*				
	Age	-0,01	-0,37	0,71				
	African Language	0,07	2,19	0,03*				

*$p \leq 0,05$

Table 4 summarises the regression analysis with socio-demographic characteristics as predictors of Negative WHI. For Group 1, the forward method was used. The model indicated that statistically significant predictors were Earthmoving (β = -0,50 ; t = -14,80 ; R^2 = 0,08; $p \leq$ 0,05), Mining (β = -0,38 ; t = -11,72 ; R^2 = 0,13; $p \leq$ 0,05), Gender (β = -0,23 ; t = -6,73 ; R^2 = 0,21; $p \leq$ 0,05), Nurses (β = -0,18 ; t = -4,86 ; R^2 = 0,23; $p \leq$ 0,05), Age (β = -0,07 ; t = -2,33 ; R^2 = 0,24; $p \leq$ 0,05) and African language (β = 0,06 ; t = 2,05 ; R^2 = 0,24; $p \leq$ 0,05), explaining approximately 24% of the variance.

Entry of socio-demographic characteristics for Group 2 produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(6,997)}$ = 52,48; p = 0,00), accounting for approximately 24% of the variance. Taken together, it seems that significant predictors of Negative WHI are Earthmoving (β = -0,48 ; t = -14,78 ; $p \leq$ 0,05), Mining (β = -0,36; t = -11,60; $p \leq$ 0,05), Gender (β = -0,20; t = -5,45; $p \leq$ 0,05), Nurses (β

= -0,19; t = -5,06; $p \leq 0,05$) and African language (β = 0,07; t = 2,19; $p \leq 0,05$). The difference in R^2 was 0 and non-significant, indicating that the model obtained in Group 1 is robust in Group 2.

Table 5

Multiple Regression Analysis with Positive WHI as Dependent Variable

Model		Beta (β)	t	p	F	R	R^2	ΔR^2
Group 1	(Constant)		25,92	0,00*				
	African Language	0,33	10,77	0,00*	129,29	0,34	0,12	0,19
	Mining	-0,32	-9,87	0.00*	84,79	0,39	0,15	0,03
	Nurses	-0,27	-8,02	0,00*	65,92	0,41	0,17	0,02
	Earthmoving	-0,27	-7,46	0,00*	62,52	0,45	0,21	0,04
	Age	0,09	3,23	0,00*	52,64	0,46	0,21	0,01
	English	0,09	2,89	0,00*	45,59	0,47	0,22	0,01
Group 2	(Constant)		27,78	0,00*	53,02	0,49	0,24	0,24
	African Language	0,30	9,99	0,00*				
	Mining	-0,28	-9,15	0,00*				
	Nurses	-0,31	-9,44	0,00*				
	Earthmoving	-0,26	-7,87	0,00*				
	Age	0,11	3,71	0,00*				
	English	0,07	2,24	0,03*				

*$p \leq 0,05$

Table 5 summarises the regression analysis with socio-demographic characteristics as predictors of Positive WHI. For Group 1, the forward method was used. The model indicated that statistically significant predictors were African language (β = 0,33 ; t = 10,77 ; R^2 = 0,12; $p \leq$ 0,05), Mining (β = -0,32 ; t = -9,87; R^2 = 0,15; $p \leq 0,05$), Nurses (β = -0,27 ; t = -8,02 ; R^2 = 0,17; $p \leq 0,05$), Earthmoving (β = -0,27 ; t = -7,46 ; R^2 = 0,21; $p \leq 0,05$), Age (β = 0,09 ; t = 3,23 ; R^2 = 0,21; $p \leq 0,05$) and English (β = 0,09 ; t = 2,89; R^2 = 0,22; $p \leq 0,05$), explaining approximately 22% of the variance.

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Entry of socio-demographic characteristics for Group 2 produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(6,999)}$ = 53,02; p = 0,00), accounting for approximately 24% of the variance. Taken together, it seems that significant predictors of Positive WHI are African language (β = 0,30 ; t = 9,99 ; $p \leq$ 0,05), Mining (β = -0,28; t = -9,15; $p \leq$ 0,05), Nurses (β = -0,31; t = -9,44 ; $p \leq$ 0,05), Earthmoving (β = -0,26; t = -7,87; $p \leq$ 0,05), Age (β = 0,11; t = 3,71; $p \leq$ 0,05) and English (β = 0,07; t = 2,24; $p \leq$ 0,05). The difference in R^2 was 0 and non-significant, indicating that the model obtained in Group 1 is robust in Group 2.

Table 6

Multiple Regression Analysis with Negative HWI as Dependent Variable

Model		Beta (β)	t	p	F	R	R^2	ΔR^2
Group 1	(Constant)		20,85	0,00*				
	African Language	0,15	5,00	0,00*	60,05	0,24	0,06	0,06
	Earthmoving	-0,45	-13,12	0,00*	52,49	0,31	0,10	0,04
	Nurses	-0,36	-9,84	0,00*	59,86	0,40	0,16	0,06
	Mining	-0,35	-10,67	0,00*	77,31	0,49	0,24	0,09
	Gender	-0,08	-2,47	0,01*	63,18	0,50	0,25	0,00
	Age	-0,08	-2,59	0,01*	53,62	0,50	0.25	0,00
	Parental Status	-0,06	-2,20	0,03*	46,83	0,50	0,25	0,00
Group 2	(Constant)		16,38	0,00*	44,44	0,54	0,29	0,29
	African Language	0,16	4,89	0,00*				
	Earthmoving	-0,44	-12,02	0,00*				
	Nurses	-0,40	-9,45	0,00*				
	Mining	-0,39	-11,10	0,00*				
	Gender	-0,03	-0,62	0.54				
	Age	-0,01	-0,44	0,66				
	Parental Status	-0,03	-1,06	0,29				

*$p \leq 0,05$

Table 6 summarises the regression analysis with socio-demographic characteristics as predictors of Negative HWI. For Group 1, the forward method was used. The model indicated that statistically significant predictors were African language (β = 0,15 ; t = 5,00 ; R^2 = 0,06; $p \leq$

0,05), Earthmoving (β = -0,45; t = -13,12; R^2 = 0,10; $p \leq 0,05$), Nurses (β = -0,36 ; t = -9,84 ; R^2 = 0,16; $p \leq 0,05$), Mining (β = -0,35; t = -10,67 ; R^2 = 0,24; $p \leq 0,05$), Gender (β = -0,08 ; t = -2,47 ; R^2 = 0,25; $p \leq 0,05$), Age (β = -0,08 ; t = -2,59; R^2 = 0,25; $p \leq 0,05$) and Parental Status (β = -0,06 ; t = -2,20; R^2 = 0,25; $p \leq 0,05$), explaining approximately 25% of the variance.

Entry of socio-demographic characteristics for Group 2 produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(7,776)}$ = 44,44; p = 0,00), accounting for approximately 29% of the variance. Taken together, it seems that significant predictors of Negative HWI are African language (β = 0,16 ; t = 4,89 ; $p \leq$ 0,05), Earthmoving (β = -0,44; t = -12,02; $p \leq 0,05$), Nurses (β = -0,40; t = -9,45; $p \leq 0,05$) and Mining (β = -0,39; t = -11,10; $p \leq 0,05$). The difference in R^2 was 0 and non-significant, indicating that the model obtained in Group 1 is robust in Group 2.

Table 7

Multiple Regression Analysis with Positive HWI as Dependent Variable

Model		Beta (β)	t	p	F	R	R^2	ΔR^2
Group 1	(Constant)		28,42	0,00*				
	African Language	0,30	9,91	0,00*	124,67	0,34	0,11	0,11
	Mining	-0,30	-9,08	0,00*	81,64	0,38	0,14	0,03
	Nurses	-0,23	-6,64	0,00*	61,91	0,40	0,16	0,02
	Earthmoving	-0,21	-6,04	0,00*	57,36	0,44	0,19	0,03
	Parental Status	-0,08	-2,56	0,01*	48,44	0,45	0,20	0,01
	Age	0,07	2,27	0,02*	41,47	0,45	0,21	0,01
	Education	-0,06	-2,08	0,04*	36,29	0,46	0,21	0,00
Group 2	(Constant)		23,36	0,00*	25,69	0,45	0,20	0.20
	African Language	0,21	5,78	0,00*				
	Mining	-0,37	-9,66	0,00*				
	Nurses	-0,29	-7,02	0,00*				
	Earthmoving	-0,26	-6,37	0,00*				
	Parental Status	-0,02	-0,55	0,58				
	Age	0,13	3,59	0,00*				
	Education	-0,07	-2,03	0,04*				

*$p \leq 0,05$

Table 7 summarises the regression analysis with socio-demographic characteristics as predictors of Positive HWI. For Group 1, the forward method was used. The model indicated that statistically significant predictors were African language ($\beta = 0,30$; $t = 9,91$; $R^2 = 0,11$; $p \leq 0,05$), Mining ($\beta = -0,30$; $t = -9,08$; $R^2 = 0,14$; $p \leq 0,05$), Nurses ($\beta = -0,23$; $t = -6,64$; $R^2 = 0,16$; $p \leq 0,05$), Earthmoving ($\beta = -0,21$; $t = -6,04$; $R^2 = 0,19$; $p \leq 0,05$), Parental Status ($\beta = -0,08$; $t = -2,56$; $R^2 = 0,20$; $p \leq 0,05$), Age ($\beta = -0,07$; $t = -2,27$; $R^2 = 0,21$; $p \leq 0,05$) and Education ($\beta = -0,06$; $t = -2,08$; $R^2 = 0,21$; $p \leq 0,05$), explaining approximately 21% of the variance.

Entry of socio-demographic characteristics for Group 2 produced a statistically significant model ($F_{(7,710)} = 25,69$; $p = 0,00$), accounting for approximately 20% of the variance. Taken together, it seems that significant predictors of Positive HWI are African language ($\beta = 0,21$; $t = 5,78$; $p \leq 0,05$), Mining ($\beta = -0,37$; $t = -9,66$; $p \leq 0,05$), Nurses ($\beta = -0,29$; $t = -7,02$; $p \leq 0,05$), Earthmoving ($\beta = -0,26$; $t = -6,37$; $p \leq 0,05$), Age ($\beta = 0,13$; $t = 3,59$; $p \leq 0,05$) and Education ($\beta = -0,07$; $t = -2,03$; $p \leq 0,05$). The difference in R^2 was 0 and non-significant, indicating that the model obtained in Group 1 is robust in Group 2.

Based on the multiple regressions, a summary of predictors for the four work-home interaction dimensions is displayed in Table 8. Predictors found in both Group 1 and 2 are indicated by means of a bold note. Those predictors that were only found in Group 1 and not in Group 2 were indicated with a normal note.

Table 8

Multiple Regression Summary Table

	NWHI	PWHI	NHWI	PHWI
Occupation	√	√	√	√
Age	√	√	√	√
Marital Status				
Parental Status			√	√
Education				√
Gender	√		√	
Language	√	√	√	√

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As can be seen from Table 8, occupation predicted all four work-home interaction dimensions, *which confirms Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 was partially confirmed* by age that predicted all four work-home interaction dimensions. However, marital status was not a predictor for any of the work-home interaction dimensions, confirming *Hypothesis 3*. Parental status was a predictor for the negative and positive HWI dimensions, which provided partial support for *Hypothesis 4*. Furthermore, education was a predictor for the positive HWI dimension, providing partial support for *Hypotheses 5*. *Hypothesis 6* was partially confirmed by gender that predicted the negative WHI/HWI dimensions. Finally, language predicted all four work-home interaction dimensions, confirming *Hypothesis 7*.

DISCUSSION

Work and home are considered to be the two most important spheres of employed individuals' lives. The various demographic and structural changes in the workforce and family structure have affected both work and family roles. These changes emphasise the importance of investigating demographic differences in order to identify which employees are inclined to experience not only negative WHI and HWI, but also who are likely to experience positive WHI and HWI.

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction and to establish which socio-demographic characteristics best predict work-home interaction amongst South African employees. The socio-demographic groups that were investigated in this study included occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language.

With regard to negative WHI, the findings showed that occupation, gender, age and language were statistically significant predictors in the experimental group, which explained 24% of the variance. These characteristics also explained 24% of the variance in the validation group, which indicated no difference between the models.

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With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police experienced statistically significantly higher levels of negative WHI compared to earthmoving, nurses and mining. It can be assumed that employees in the police occupation work under more stressful circumstances. Police workers are exposed to elements such as demanding work characteristics (shift work, unplanned overtime, exposure to suffering and death), lower levels of decision latitude and support at work, organisational transformations, irregular working hours, a lack of resources, job pressures and emotional stressors, which could spill over to their home environment (Biggam et al., 1997; Marais, 2006; Sekwena et al., 2007). These findings seem to be in line with other empirical studies (Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Marais, 2006; Montgomery et al., 2003).

With regard to *gender*, the findings showed that males experienced higher levels of negative WHI compared to females. These results are similar to previous findings (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005; Rost & Mostert, 2007). This may imply that the work situation of females is more favourable than the work situation of males. On the other hand, males might perceive their work activities as more demanding than females. Males may also find it difficult to separate their work and personal lives. This could be because the traditional role of men has changed. An increased number of females and dual earners enter the workforce, placing more focus on work activities than home activities, which could imply that males also have to contribute to the household. This invariably causes negative load reactions to spill over from work to home, hindering their functioning at home.

Regarding *age*, the results showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significantly higher levels of negative WHI compared to older employees (47-66 years of age), findings that are similar to previous ones (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). The results may imply that the younger employees had not yet obtained the necessary skills to manage the integration between personal life and work as compared to older employees. The different work and home activities of the employees may also have influenced the interaction, since the younger employees might be in the early stage of their careers and might have been working very hard to prove themselves. It is important to note that

age was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative WHI and should therefore be used with caution.

For *language*, it was found that Afrikaans-speaking individuals experienced statistically significantly lower levels of negative WHI compared to African language-speaking individuals. These findings are in accordance with studies done by Oldfield (2005) and Rost (2006) and may suggest that African language-speaking employees experience their work environment as more stressful, resulting in fewer opportunities to recover at home. The cultural differences and backgrounds may also influence the way in which the work environment is perceived. In agreement with the findings of Hofstede's (1991) definition of individualistic cultures, a possible explanation could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic culture where there are distinct boundaries for work and home. These distinct boundaries could prevent work and home spheres from influencing (positively or negatively) each other. In addition, the African culture is a more collectivistic culture where people are more conscious of groups, more dependent on one another emotionally, and more often merge the boundaries between work and home. Consequently there is more room for the work and home spheres to interact and influence each other either positively or negatively. These findings are in contrast with the findings of Frone et al. (1997), Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) and Pieterse and Mostert (2005), who found no prediction with regard to language and work-home interaction.

With regard to positive WHI, the results showed that language, occupation and age were statistically significant predictors in the experimental group, which explained 22% of the variance. These characteristics also explained 24% of the variance in the validation group, which indicated no statistically significant difference between the models.

With regard to *language*, the results showed that English-speaking individuals as well as African language-speaking individuals experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive WHI compared to Afrikaans-speaking individuals. These findings are in accordance with studies done by Marais (2006), Oldfield (2005) and Rost (2006). Possible reasons for this finding may be the way in which each of us perceives the world around us. Each culture has distinguishing attributes and these affect the way in which we interpret situations and circumstances. For

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example, a situation that may be considered worthless or even detrimental by one person/culture, may be perceived as challenging and/or promising circumstances by another. With regard to the positive WHI, African language-speaking and English-speaking individuals may perceive the skills they receive in the workplace as advantageous, and as a result experience higher levels of positive WHI. The findings may also suggest that African language-speaking employees and English employees experience their work environment as consisting of resources, resulting in more opportunities to recover at home.

With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police officers experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive WHI compared to employees in earthmoving, nursing and mining. These findings seem to be in line with other empirical studies (Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Montgomery et al., 2003) and may suggest that the police experience their work environment as consisting of more resources, such as energy mobilisation, skills acquisition and greater self-esteem, which leads to role enhancement creating a positive spill-over from work to home.

The results regarding *age* showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significantly lower levels of positive WHI compared to older (47-66 years of age) employees. These results are congruent with the findings of various studies (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Rost & Mostert, 2007). A possible reason for younger employees' experiencing lower levels of positive WHI could be the fact that they are largely inexperienced and resultantly feel unsettled in themselves and their work (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Another possible explanation could also be that older individuals may have acquired the necessary skills required in managing the demands or conflicts of both domains. It could also prove useful to investigate the activities that older people engage in, as they may prove helpful in alleviating the pressures of their environments.

With regard to negative HWI, the results showed that language, occupation, gender, age and parental status were statistically significant predictors in the experimental group, which explained 25% of the variance. These characteristics explained 29% of the variance in the validation group, which indicated no statistically significant difference between the models.

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The results regarding *language* showed that African language-speaking individuals experienced statistically significant higher levels of negative HWI compared to Afrikaans-speaking individuals. The cultural differences and backgrounds may influence the way in which the work environment is perceived. A possible explanation could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic culture where there are distinct boundaries for home and work interaction. Furthermore, the home situation of African language-speaking individuals might be less favourable than the home situation of Afrikaans-speaking individuals, resulting in a negative spill-over from home to work. It could also be that certain cultural aspects in the African groups could cause negative interference between the two domains. For example, in the African culture it is considered an offence not attending family and/or community funerals. Non-attendance results in negative branding of those individuals, as they are considered disrespectful. These findings are in contrast with the findings of Frone et al. (1997), Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) and Pieterse and Mostert (2005), who found no prediction with regard to language and work-home interaction.

With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police experienced statistically significantly higher levels of negative HWI compared to employees in earthmoving, nursing and mining. This finding is in contrast to previous findings (Demerouti et al., 2004, Geurts et al., 2005). It may be assumed that a lack of the presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) in a person's life may make it impossible for the individual to deal with the demanding aspects in his/her home environment, which ultimately spill over to the work environment. Another assumption might be that the employees have home demands depriving them from recovery, which has a negative impact on them and ultimately spill over to the work domain. The geographical area in which these employees stay (they might be confronted with high crime and violence rates) may also have an impact.

Statistically significant results between work-home interaction and *gender* showed that males experience higher levels of negative HWI compared to females. Previous studies confirm this finding (Geurts et al., 2005; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005). It may be assumed that a lack of the

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presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) may cause males to perceive their home activities as more demanding than females. Males might find it impossible to deal with the demanding aspects in his/her home environment, which will ultimately then spill over to the work environment. It is important to note that gender was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

The results regarding *age* showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significant higher levels of negative HWI compared to older (47-66 years of age) employees. These results are similar to previous findings (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005) and may imply that the younger employees had not yet obtained the necessary skills to manage the integration between personal life and work as compared to older employees. It may be assumed that a lack of support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) may cause younger employees to experience more negative HWI. It is important to note that age was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

In terms of the *parental status* of employees, the results indicated that employees with children experience higher levels of negative HWI than those without children. These results are similar to previous findings (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Higgens et al., 1994; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). It may be assumed that a lack of the presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse) in a person's life may make it impossible for the individual to deal with demanding aspects in his/her home environment, which ultimately spill over to the work environment. It is important to note that parental status was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

With regard to positive HWI, the results showed that language, occupation, parental status, age and education were statistically significant predictors in the experimental group, which explained 21% of the variance. These characteristics also explained 20% of the variance in the validation model, indicating no statistically significant difference between the models.

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The results regarding *language* showed that African language-speaking individuals experience statistically significant higher levels of positive HWI compared to Afrikaans-speaking individuals. As explained above, it could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic culture where there are distinct boundaries for work and home interaction; whereas the African culture is a more collective culture where people are more socially orientated and more often merge the boundaries between work and home. Therefore it can be assumed that African language-speaking individuals might have more positive social support and resources from home, resulting in more opportunities to recover at home, which ultimately spill over to their work. These findings are also in accordance with various other studies (Oldfield, 2005; Rost, 2006).

With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive HWI compared to employees in earthmoving, nursing and mining. These findings support a previous study (Demerouti et al., 2004), indicating that the home domain may offer more possibilities to adjust behaviour to one's current need for recovery than the work domain (Geurts et al., 2005). The presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) in a person's life may make it possible for the individual to deal with the demanding aspects in his/her home environment. This will be related with positive load effects or spill-over from home to work, facilitating one's functioning at work (Demerouti et al., 2004; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

In terms of the *parental status* of employees, the results indicated that employees with children experience higher levels of positive HWI than those without children. Similar findings were made by Demerouti et al. (2004) and Geurts et al. (2005) with reference to the role enhancement hypothesis, which assumes that managing multiple roles (in this case employee, spouse and parent) may create energy and provide extra resources that "contribute" to positive interaction from the home to the work sphere. It may also be assumed that it appears to be advantageous to have children, possibly because of the level of maturity that comes with settling down in life. It is important to note that parental status was not a significant predictor in the validation model for positive HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

The results regarding *age* showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significant lower levels of positive HWI compared to older (47-66 years of age) employees. These results are similar to previous findings (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005). It may be assumed that a lack of support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) may cause younger employees to experience less positive HWI. Another possibility may be that the younger employees must adapt to a new way of living apart from their support system (e.g. parents), whereas older employees might already have a support system in place with resources creating a positive spill-over from home to work. Older employees might have already achieved their goals in their work place, resulting in their spending more leisure time at home gaining more recovery, which ultimately creates a positive spill-over from home to work.

The last demographic factor that was investigated was *education*. Individuals with a postgraduate education experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive HWI compared to employees with a school education. These findings are in contradiction to previous findings, which reported no significant difference between individuals with different levels of education (Frone et al., 1997; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005). It may be assumed that individuals with a postgraduate qualification might have a better-paying position, which makes him/her financially stable. This financial stability might contribute to home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) making it easier for employees to concentrate on other obligations.

In conclusion, the results revealed that different socio-demographic characteristics (including occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language) predict work-home interaction, which also differs with regard to the quality and direction of interaction between work and home.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the research showed promising results, it was not without its limitations. The first limitation of this study was the use of only a few socio-demographic groups (e.g. occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language). This limits the

study's ability to generalise the results to other socio-demographic groups and subgroups, a variety of job settings and groups of workers.

Another limitation is the fact that only self-reported questionnaires were used to obtain research results in this study. This may lead to a predicament usually referred to as "common-method variance" or "nuisance". In its defence it can be said that there is limited scope for existing methodologies to deal with the dilemma of self-report questionnaires. Lastly, only possible explanations for predictions were formulated. Further exploratory studies should be conducted in the South African workforce.

Despite the limitations of this study, the present findings may have important implications for future research and practice. In order to promote work-life balance and to prevent negative interference between work and home, organisations should provide work-family facilities that enable employees to better align both life spheres. They should focus on formal policies (for instance, by offering compressed work schedules, flexible starting and finishing times, childcare facilities and parental leave) as well as the informal work environment (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). Lastly, organisations tend to see only the work and individual as the unit of analysis. It is therefore imperative that organisations examine the cross-over effect of spouses and families of work-home interaction as a unit of analysis. This may increase our understanding of the complexities of multiple roles in different domains.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter consists of conclusions concerning the literature review and the empirical study according to the specific objectives. The limitations of this study are discussed, followed by recommendations for the research problem in the organisation. To conclude, suggestions and recommendations are made for future research.

3.1   CONCLUSIONS

The objectives of this research were to determine the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction and to establish which socio-demographic characteristics best predict work-home interaction in a sample of working employees from various occupations in South Africa.

The first objective of this study was to investigate work-home interaction according to the literature. To achieve this objective, an extensive literature search of the concept of work-home interaction was undertaken. Various articles and other sources were consulted. Work-home interaction has been described as "an interactive process in which a worker's performance in one area (e.g. home) is influenced by (negative or positive) load reactions that have built up in the other area (e.g. work)" (Geurts et al., 2005, p. 322).

The second objective set for this research was to establish the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction according to the literature. An extensive literature search of the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and work-home interaction was undertaken. Various articles and other media were consulted.

The third objective of this research was to determine which socio-demographic characteristics will predict the four work-home interaction dimensions (i.e. negative work-home interference

(WHI), positive WHI, negative home-work interference (HWI) and positive HWI) in a sample of working South African employees. The socio-demographic groups that were investigated in this study included occupation (police vs. employees in earthmoving, mining and nursing), age, marital status (married vs. unmarried), parental status (with children vs. without children), level of education (school vs. postgraduate), gender (males vs. females) and language (Afrikaans, English and African language). Statistically significant predictors were found regarding work-home interaction in terms these groups.

Negative WHI

The results where negative WHI was regressed upon socio-demographic characteristics, showed occupation, gender, age and language as statistically significant predictors. With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police experienced statistically significantly higher levels of negative WHI compared to earthmoving, nurses and mining. It can be assumed that employees in the police occupation work under more stressful circumstances. Police workers are exposed to elements such as demanding work characteristics (shift work, unplanned overtime, exposure to suffering and death), lower levels of decision latitude and support at work, organisational transformations, irregular working hours, a lack of resources, job pressures and emotional stressors, which could spill over to their home environment (Biggam, Power, MacDonald, Carcary, & Moodie, 1997; Marais, 2006; Sekwena, Mostert, & Wentzel, 2007). These findings seem to be in line with other empirical studies (Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Marais, 2006; Montgomery, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Den Ouden, 2003).

With regard to *gender*, the findings showed that males experienced higher levels of negative WHI compared to females. These results are similar to previous findings (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005; Rost & Mostert, 2007). This may imply that the work situation of females is more favourable than the work situation of males. On the other hand, males might perceive their work activities as more demanding than females. Males may also find it difficult to separate their work and personal lives. This could be because the traditional role of men has changed. An increased number of females and dual earners enter the workforce, placing more focus on work activities than home

activities, which could imply that males also have to contribute to the household. This invariably causes negative load reactions to spill over from work to home, hindering their functioning at home.

Regarding *age*, the results showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significantly higher levels of negative WHI compared to older employees (47-66 years of age), findings that are similar to previous ones (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). The results may imply that the younger employees had not yet obtained the necessary skills to manage the integration between personal life and work as compared to older employees. The different work and home activities of the employees may also have influenced the interaction, since the younger employees might be in the early stage of their careers and might have been working very hard to prove themselves. It is important to note that age was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative WHI and should therefore be used with caution.

For *language*, it was found that Afrikaans-speaking individuals experienced statistically significantly lower levels of negative WHI compared to African language-speaking individuals. These findings are in accordance with studies done by Oldfield (2005) and Rost (2006) and may suggest that African language-speaking employees experience their work environment as more stressful, resulting in fewer opportunities to recover at home. The cultural differences and backgrounds may also influence the way in which the work environment is perceived. In agreement with the findings of Hofstede's (1991) definition of individualistic cultures, a possible explanation could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic culture where there are distinct boundaries for work and home. These distinct boundaries could prevent work and home spheres from influencing (positively or negatively) each other. In addition, the African culture is a more collectivistic culture where people are more conscious of groups, more dependent on one another emotionally, and more often merge the boundaries between work and home. Consequently there is more room for the work and home spheres to interact and influence each other either positively or negatively. These findings are in contrast with the findings of Frone, Russell, and Cooper, (1997), Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) and Pieterse and Mostert (2005), who found no prediction with regard to language and work-home interaction.

Positive WHI

With regard to positive WHI, the results showed that language, occupation and age were statistically significant predictors. With regard to *language*, the results showed that English-speaking individuals as well as African language-speaking individuals experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive WHI compared to Afrikaans-speaking individuals. These findings are in accordance with studies done by Marais (2006), Oldfield (2005) and Rost (2006). Possible reasons for this finding may be the way in which each of us perceives the world around us. Each culture has distinguishing attributes and these affect the way in which we interpret situations and circumstances. For example, a situation that may be considered worthless or even detrimental by one person/culture, may be perceived as challenging and/or promising circumstances by another. With regard to the positive WHI, African language-speaking and English-speaking individuals may perceive the skills they receive in the workplace as advantageous, and as a result experience higher levels of positive WHI. The findings may also suggest that African language-speaking employees and English employees experience their work environment as consisting of resources, resulting in more opportunities to recover at home.

With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police officers experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive WHI compared to employees in earthmoving, nursing and mining. These findings seem to be in line with other empirical studies (Geurts et al., 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Montgomery et al., 2003) and may suggest that the police experience their work environment as consisting of more resources, such as energy mobilisation, skills acquisition and greater self-esteem, which leads to role enhancement creating a positive spill-over from work to home.

The results regarding *age* showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significantly lower levels of positive WHI compared to older (47-66 years of age) employees. These results are congruent with the findings of various studies (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Rost & Mostert, 2007). A possible reason for younger employees' experiencing lower levels of positive WHI could be the fact that they are largely

inexperienced and resultantly feel unsettled in themselves and their work (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Another possible explanation could also be that older individuals may have acquired the necessary skills required in managing the demands or conflicts of both domains. It could also prove useful to investigate the activities that older people engage in, as they may prove helpful in alleviating the pressures of their environments.

Negative HWI

With regard to negative HWI, the results showed that language, occupation, gender, age and parental status were statistically significant predictors. The results regarding *language* showed that African language-speaking individuals experienced statistically significant higher levels of negative HWI compared to Afrikaans-speaking individuals. The cultural differences and backgrounds may influence the way in which the work environment is perceived. A possible explanation could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic culture where there are distinct boundaries for home and work interaction. Furthermore, the home situation of African language-speaking individuals might be less favourable than the home situation of Afrikaans-speaking individuals, resulting in a negative spill-over from home to work. It could also be that certain cultural aspects in the African groups could cause negative interference between the two domains. For example, in the African culture it is considered an offence not attending family and/or community funerals. Non-attendance results in negative branding of those individuals, as they are considered disrespectful. These findings are in contrast with the findings of Frone et al. (1997), Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) and Pieterse and Mostert (2005), who found no prediction with regard to language and work-home interaction.

With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police experienced statistically significantly higher levels of negative HWI compared to employees in earthmoving, nursing and mining. This finding is in contrast to previous findings (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004, Geurts et al., 2005). It may be assumed that a lack of the presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) in a person's life may make it impossible for the individual to deal with the demanding aspects in his/her home environment, which ultimately spill over to the work environment. Another assumption

might be that the employees have home demands depriving them from recovery, which has a negative impact on them and ultimately spill over to the work domain. The geographical area in which these employees stay (they might be confronted with high crime and violence rates) may also have an impact.

Statistically significant results between work-home interaction and *gender* showed that males experience higher levels of negative HWI compared to females. Previous studies confirm this finding (Geurts et al., 2005; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005). It may be assumed that a lack of the presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) may cause males to perceive their home activities as more demanding than females. Males might find it impossible to deal with the demanding aspects in his/her home environment, which will ultimately then spill over to the work environment. It is important to note that gender was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

The results regarding *age* showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significant higher levels of negative HWI compared to older (47-66 years of age) employees. These results are similar to previous findings (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005) and may imply that the younger employees had not yet obtained the necessary skills to manage the integration between personal life and work as compared to older employees. It may be assumed that a lack of support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) may cause younger employees to experience more negative HWI. It is important to note that age was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

In terms of the *parental status* of employees, the results indicated that employees with children experience higher levels of negative HWI than those without children. These results are similar to previous findings (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Higgens, Duxbury, & Lee, 1994; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). It may be assumed that a lack of the presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse) in a person's life may make it impossible for the individual to deal with demanding aspects in his/her home

environment, which ultimately spill over to the work environment. It is important to note that parental status was not a significant predictor in the validation model for negative HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

Positive HWI

With regard to positive HWI, the results showed that language, occupation, parental status, age and education were statistically significant predictors. The results regarding *language* showed that African language-speaking individuals experience statistically significant higher levels of positive HWI compared to Afrikaans-speaking individuals. As explained above, it could be that the Afrikaans culture is a very reserved individualistic culture where there are distinct boundaries for work and home interaction; whereas the African culture is a more collective culture where people are more socially orientated and more often merge the boundaries between work and home. Therefore it can be assumed that African language-speaking individuals might have more positive social support and resources from home, resulting in more opportunities to recover at home, which ultimately spill over to their work. These findings are also in accordance with various other studies (Oldfield, 2005; Rost, 2006).

With regard to *occupation*, it was found that police experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive HWI compared to employees in earthmoving, nursing and mining. These findings support a previous study (Demerouti et al., 2004), indicating that the home domain may offer more possibilities to adjust behaviour to one's current need for recovery than the work domain (Geurts et al., 2005). The presence of home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) and support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) in a person's life may make it possible for the individual to deal with the demanding aspects in his/her home environment. This will be related with positive load effects or spill-over from home to work, facilitating one's functioning at work (Demerouti et al., 2004; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

In terms of the *parental status* of employees, the results indicated that employees with children experience higher levels of positive HWI than those without children. Similar findings were

made by Demerouti et al. (2004) and Geurts et al. (2005) with reference to the role enhancement hypothesis, which assumes that managing multiple roles (in this case employee, spouse and parent) may create energy and provide extra resources that "contribute" to positive interaction from the home to the work sphere. It may also be assumed that it appears to be advantageous to have children, possibly because of the level of maturity that comes with settling down in life. It is important to note that parental status was not a significant predictor in the validation model for positive HWI and should therefore be used with caution.

The results regarding *age* showed that younger employees (19-36 years of age) experienced statistically significant lower levels of positive HWI compared to older (47-66 years of age) employees. These results are similar to previous findings (e.g. Duxbury & Higgens, 2001; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005). It may be assumed that a lack of support (e.g. spouse, family and friends) may cause younger employees to experience less positive HWI. Another possibility may be that the younger employees must adapt to a new way of living apart from their support system (e.g. parents), whereas older employees might already have a support system in place with resources creating a positive spill-over from home to work. Older employees might have already achieved their goals in their work place, resulting in their spending more leisure time at home gaining more recovery, which ultimately creates a positive spill-over from home to work.

The last demographic factor that was investigated was *education*. Individuals with a postgraduate education experienced statistically significantly higher levels of positive HWI compared to employees with a school education. These findings are in contradiction to previous findings, which reported no significant difference between individuals with different levels of education (Frone et al., 1997; Pieterse & Mostert, 2005). It may be assumed that individuals with a postgraduate qualification might have a better-paying position, which makes him/her financially stable. This financial stability might contribute to home resources (e.g. a domestic help, domestic appliances or a babysitter) making it easier for employees to concentrate on other obligations.

The results revealed that different socio-demographic characteristics (including occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language), predict work-home

interaction, which also differ with regards to the quality and direction of interaction between work and home.

3.2 LIMITATIONS

It is necessary to note some limitations of the current study. The first limitation of this study was the use of only a few socio-demographic groups (e.g. occupation, age, marital status, parental status, level of education, gender and language). This limits the study's ability to generalise the results to other socio-demographic groups and subgroups, a variety of job settings and groups of workers. Other characteristics such as geographical area (some areas may be perceived as more violent, which might place more demands on a persons' work environment), socio-economic status (some workers with a higher income might experience more workload resulting in more stress and a negative impact on the worker), various races and ethnic groups (seeing that each culture is unique and perceive the world around them in a unique way) and education (since the samples included employees who were educated with a school or postgraduate education, the generalisation of findings to employees with lower or no education levels at all can also be questioned) should also be included in studies.

An added limitation is the use of self-reported questionnaires to acquire work-home interaction scores, which increases the possibility of contamination of the reported relationships through common-method variance. Although the strength of this type of variance cannot be tested, several studies have indicated that common-method variance is not as troublesome as one might expect (Spector, 1992; Semmer, Zaptl, & Grief, 1996). Also, since many multiple regression analyses were used to analyse the data, the possibility of chance capitalisation cannot completely be ruled out in this study. In addition, the impact of this methodological artefact can be expected to be relatively constant across all relationships (Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh, & Houtman, 2003).

Due to the variety of languages spoken in South Africa, and the fact that English might not be the respondent's first language, it is recommended that the questionnaire that was used (SWING) be translated into the other eight official languages. It is recommended that studies with a greater

variety of socio-demographic characteristics and larger samples will enhance the reliability and usefulness of the questionnaire (SWING) in other occupational groups in South Africa. In this way the generalisation of findings will be more effective and it will promote the in-depth investigation of work-home interaction and various socio-demographic characteristics across cultures in South Africa.

Finally, the current study focused only on a limited number of socio-demographic variables and did not take into account some of the variables that have been found to be related to work-home interaction (psychological involvement, personality variables, etc.). It therefore appears important for future research to examine a model with different sets of variables. Also, only possible explanations for predictions were formulated which cannot be generalised for all occupations, thus further studies should be carried out in the South African workforce.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Notwithstanding these limitations, the current study has important implications for organisations and future research.

3.3.1 Recommendations for organisations

The practical importance of WHI (and HWI) is highlighted by a U.S. national study (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998) that found that 85% of employees have some day-to-day family responsibility and that virtually identical proportions of men and women report WHI problems. Furthermore, evidence from the United States has indicated that employees with WHI/HWI problems are three times more likely to consider quitting (Johnson, 1999). In addition, employees who believe that work is causing problems in their personal lives are much more likely to make mistakes at work (30%), compared with those who have a few job-related personal problems (19%; Johnson, 1995). Thus, the corporate world must expand its conception of why it needs to be concerned about WHI/HWI-related issues. Both Friedman (1999) and Johnson (1999) have observed that corporations will require extraordinarily committed and

creative employees to permit them to survive and prosper in turbulent and highly competitive markets. To promote such energy and commitment, employers in South Africa must demonstrate a concern with both the working and the private life of a person.

Striving for a balance between work and home roles poses a great challenge to organisations. Research on work and home interaction revealed that work-life initiatives have a positive effect on the organisation, as well as on the welfare of individuals and their families (Barnett, 1998; Greenhaus, 1988; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999; Bond et al., 1998; Ferber, O'Ferrell, & Allen, 1991). Several studies revealed that work-home interaction affects organisations' competitiveness, economic viability and bottom line (Burke, 1988; Barnett, 1998; Duxbury, 2004; Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Hall & Mirvis, 1995; Kotze, 2005; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1999). The application of valid, equivalent and reliable instruments will be a valuable tool to assist managers and employees in obtaining a clear and accurate understanding of the concept of work-home interaction. In addition, it will determine the success of their implementation in organisations. Correct application and clear understanding will result in higher levels of organisational commitment, low intention to leave the organisation, higher levels of performance and the development of skills (Duxbury, 2004; Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Kotze, 2005). Overall, organisations are continuously changing and adapting to legislation such as employment equity legislation. These transformation developments emphasise the significance of construct equivalence because organisations can use it to obtain important results when comparing work-home interference across different cultures within the organisation.

It was found in the study that the four work-home interaction dimensions exist more in the police service compared to the other occupations (e.g. employees in the earthmoving, nursing and mining industry). Police workers are exposed to elements such as demanding work characteristics (shift work, unplanned overtime, exposure to suffering and death), lower levels of decision-making latitude and support at work, organisational transformations, irregular working hours and a lack of resources, job pressures and emotional stressors, which ultimate influence the work-home interaction (Biggam et al., 1997; Marais, 2006; Sekwena et al., 2007).

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Therefore it is recommended that organisations utilise programmes for police workers to assist them in dealing with these aspects. These programmes could include suicide prevention, initial debriefing (addressing the experience of traumatic incidents), equipping members with financial skills, addressing HIV/Aids, Stress Management, etc. These programmes should be presented to members themselves as well as to such members' spouses and other important people in their lives (Alkus & Padesky, 1983; Regehr, 2005). This could potentially enhance the balance between a person's work and home life, seeing that the person's home life would then be included in the process (cf. Roberts & Levenson, 2001). However, it is also necessary to use similar programmes in the other occupational groups and to determine specific aspects in the working environment of each occupation that could hamper/foster interaction between work and home.

In order to promote work-life balance and prevent negative interference between work and home, organisations should provide work-family facilities that enable employees to better align both life spheres. However, they need to focus not only on formal policies (for instance, by offering compressed work schedules, flexible starting and finishing times, childcare facilities and parental leave), but also on the *informal* work environment (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). According to Cohen (1997), employees who struggle with balancing their work and family responsibilities might benefit more from an informal family-friendly organisational climate than from formal family-friendly policies. Consequently, in addition to having a "family-friendly policy" (the formal arrangements that are provided by the organisation), organisations should also create an organisational *culture* in which employees who experience work-home interference will feel entitled to use the facilities that are available. Therefore, the attitude of supervisors and colleagues towards the use of these formal arrangements should also be "family-friendly". Furthermore, organisations should invest in implementing interventions that enhance positive WHI. It has been recognised that work-home interaction can also be positive in that participation in multiple roles provides a greater number of opportunities and resources to the individual, which can be used to promote growth and better functioning in other life domains (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

Lastly, research in South Africa should focus on processes aimed at helping individuals develop a balanced lifestyle and an awareness of unhealthy practices. Organisations can assist by investigating staff management practices and the culture of the work environment. By studying work-home interaction along with other measuring instruments, such as job demands, home demands and coping strategies, a contribution can be made towards possible answers to the management of work-home interaction. Furthermore, organisations should not merely provide work-related training and support to employees, but it is perhaps time for organisations also to try and provide training and support for non-work-related demands (e.g., parental training, role reorientation for couples, possibilities for working at home, or child care facilities).

3.3.2 Recommendations for future research

To overcome the above limitations in future research, certain recommendations can be made for future studies. The most important recommendation for future research is the use of longitudinal designs. These designs are used to validate the hypothesised causalities of the relationships further and to examine whether the reported relationships hold true over time. Although longitudinal designs are important, Montgomery et al. (2003) suggest that they be reserved for circumstances when their considerable research power can be used to maximum advantage instead of being wasted on exploratory investigations in new research domains. Demerouti et al. (2004) suggest that, although the relationship between work and non-work can be seen as a relatively new research domain, there is a need for longitudinal studies within this research domain.

It is recommended that additional studies be carried out in all the provinces of South Africa. An important reason for this is that each province has its own inherent characteristics (language, culture, crime rate, types of crime, etc.). Those results can then be compared with the results obtained in the current study. It is also recommended that various occupations, job characteristics, socio-demographic characteristics, personality traits and family situations be investigated. Since working conditions are unique within the different occupations – but are still related to work-non-work interface – the investigation of heterogeneous populations is important. Future research should also be directed to cross-national comparative studies. These

investigations will not only broaden and strengthen the current findings, but will also provide valuable information for the development of interventions that would help in the quest to achieve balance between work and home.

It is suggested that instead of using self-report measures, a more objective and detailed analysis of a person's activities during non-working hours be obtained, as well as of the consequences this might have in terms of energy consumption, recovery and accumulation of load effects (Geurts et al., 2003). One example of this is Sonnentag's (2001) diary study, where leisure time activities were measured with a diary method. Thus, the problems associated with the use of retrospective data for assessing activities over long periods of time were avoided. Data was assessed over a period of five days, taking into account variations in activities and well-being across the days (Sonnentag, 2001). Sonnentag (2001) also controlled for demographic variables, work situation variables and situational well-being at the end of the work day, making it possible to focus specifically on the effects of the work situation or the effects of the leisure time situation. Therefore, using this method to obtain data from participants regarding work-home interaction, a more detailed analysis of the effects between the two spheres could be formulated.

Lastly, organisations tend to see only the work and the individual as the unit of analysis; therefore it is imperative that organisations examine the cross-over effect of spouses and families in work-home interaction as a unit of analysis. This may increase our understanding of the complexities of multiple roles in different domains.

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