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NATURE OF THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN WORK AND FAMILY SATISFACTION IN WOMEN

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SUMMARY

Background:

The aim of the present study was to specify the nature of the relationships between work and marital satisfaction in the women. In addition it aimed at revealing as to whether demographic variables, such as age, position, length of service, marriage duration, and the number of children have an impact upon the work and marital satisfaction in working women.

Material/ Methods:

The present study included 120 married, working women, and analyses the relationship between job satisfaction and marital satisfaction, taking into consideration emotional and cognitive factors. The participants were mostly office workers, of whom 20 (8%) occupied management positions. The Descriptions Inventory, Job Affect Scale, Questionnaire of Well-matched Marriage, and a scale of work-job interactions were administered.

Results:

Significant positive correlations across almost all variables of job and marital satisfaction were observed. This means that the increase of marital satisfaction corresponds with the increase in job satisfaction, although the work/family conflict resulted in experiencing negative emotions at work. Moreover, the level of job satisfaction was higher than the level of family satisfaction. It was also found that the age and time spent at work proved to have a negative impact upon job satisfaction.

Conclusions:

Work-family facilitation proved to be crucial since its exclusion made the interface between all factors of family satisfaction and work insignificant. At the same time, the managerial women suffered from work/family conflict to a greater degree than did office workers. The study revealed also that the needs of older workers should be taken into account to maintain their work/life balance.

Key words: job satisfaction, family satisfaction, age, length of service, job position

INTRODUCTION

The increasingly fast pace of technological innovations has resulted in many new business structures and configurations which, when combined with social and cultural changes, places qualitatively and quantitatively new demands on both employees and employers (Coughlan, 2000; Fisher, 2000). This has made it necessary to introduce organizational changes that would assist employees in achieving a healthy work-life balance (Grady & McCarthy, 2008; McCarthy, Darcy & Grady, 2010). Further complications are caused by current demographic changes, especially an aging population, an increasing number of dual career and single parent families, and an increase in the number of women occupying a broad array of positions in the workforce (Brough & Kelling, 2002; Hobson, Delunas & Kesie, 2001). To meet these challenges, many organizations offer part-time jobs, job sharing, flexible working arrangements, a shorter working week, working from home, and e-working (Grady & McCarthy, 2008; Smith & Gardner, 2007).

For many women, in particular, a significant factor in maintaining their work-life balance is family life, which is something that requires family-responsible practices. Women employees often find attempting to keep some balance between vocational roles and family life to be a real challenge (Darcy & McCarthy, 2007; Petrou & Bakker, 2016; Schöneck, 2015). The work-family conflict is even more challenging if a woman occupies a managerial position (see Lantara, 2015). Many of them make heroic attempts to overcome the difficulties created by the urgent demands of professional activity combined with the need to make their family life run as smoothly as possible. These difficulties are due to the fact that, despite recent changes in rules and attitudes, the traditional attitudes towards male/female roles have proved to be resistant to change, and women are still expected to take care of the home, children, and quite often their aging parents as well. All these obligations may cause difficulties in meeting their needs and ambitions (Kumari & Selvi, 2016; Unger & Crawford, 2004). Moreover, in Poland – as in most European countries - persistent cultural and religious stereotypes enforce the role of motherhood. This creates conflicts and a lack of balance between work and family roles (Grzywacz & Bass, 2003). Thus, the main problem for contemporary women – at least in Europe – is achieving a work-family life balance, rather than choosing between them (Major & Germano, 2006).

As mentioned above, many of the difficulties in keeping this balance are due to traditional views of the role of a man and a woman in society. In contrast to men, women in Polish society are often expected to be more submissive in order to play their putative future roles as wives and mothers. Moreover, they are raised to believe in the importance of beauty. These stereotypes are deeply rooted in Polish culture, as in many other countries, and the majority of married women feel obliged not only to take care of their children, but also to prepare meals, and make sure that the members of their family do not go hungry. Thus, women are not so much forced to accept all these responsibilities, from which men are exempt, as they are raised to internalize them as categorical imperatives. This means that in order to change the traditional family roles, we would have to

change the attitudes of the women themselves, and not just those of (still predominantly male) employers and managers. Hence, it will require a long and patient fight with a very old tradition governing which social roles and activities are believed to be appropriate for males, and which for females. The traditional role of a man has been as the provider and the head of the family, while the woman is expected to take care of family life and housekeeping (Berk, 1985). These roles are not always fully verbalized, but are passed along and acquired during the process of socialization that produces gender role stereotypes (Eagly & Steffen, 1984).

DIFFERENCES IN GENDER SOCIALIZATION

Barriers to women building professional careers have their roots in gender socialization, since girls are expected to be less active and less aggressive than boys, and they are also believed to be more community-minded. This leads to status differences, strengthened additionally by stereotypic beliefs that women are more easily influenced than men, and that men exercise power more easily than women (Eagly & Wood, 1982; Eagly & Steffen, 1984). These stereotypes are imprinted in early childhood in various social situations and at play (Pufal-Struzik, 2017). This was presented by West and Zimmerman (1987), who introduced the term *doing gender*. They wrote: "Doing gender means creating differences between girls and boys and women and men, differences that are not natural, essential, or biological. Once the differences have been constructed, they are used to reinforce the 'essentialness' of gender." (West & Zimmerman, 1987:137).

Instructive exemplifications of imprinting beliefs and attitudes have been provided by Garner and Grazian (2016), who have reported on observations made in a zoo. They noted that parents transmit messages emphasizing gender differences in accordance with feminine and masculine stereotypes; they also tend to discipline boys and girls differently, and allow the boys freedom to run and explore the surroundings, while at the same time they are apt to constrain the physical activity of their daughters. This is closely interrelated with the belief that boys, who will play agent roles in the future, need to be encouraged to be dominant and aggressive, balanced by the assumption that girls should be empathetic, submissive, and giving. These beliefs stem from traditional and stereotypical perceptions of the roles of men and women, which results in seeing men as strong breadwinners, while women are assigned the role of keepers of the home. These stereotypes are acquired during the process of socialization, and provide the rationale for the differing roles of men and women within society. They are so deeply rooted that such an unequal division of home tasks can also be observed in couples where the wife's earnings are higher than those of the husband, and yet both of them perceive this as fair (Berk, 1985).

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Paradoxically, the collapse of Communism in Poland resulted in the proliferation of workplace inequalities. The Communist regime made no distinction be-

tween men and women, and there was a rule that everyone had to work. Women also had the opportunity to take a full time job, since there were childcare facilities attached to each major workplace. Moreover, all citizens had equal access to education. As a result, 30% of technical university students in Poland were women, while at the same time (in the 1960s) the percentage of women in technical studies in Western Europe never exceeded 20%. Yet it is important to remember that a number of citizens' rights were only on paper, and the 'socialistic' society was never truly egalitarian (see Pidd, 2011).

On the other hand, however, a discrepancy between the rights gained on paper and social practice can be observed in all European societies, and they could also be observed in interwar Poland (The Second Polish Republic). As early as 28 November 1918, less than three weeks after Poland had regained its status as an independent nation, the Polish Head of State, Józef Piłsudski, signed an electoral law allowing women to vote, which they did for the first time in parliamentary elections in January 1919. It should be pointed out that Polish women gained the right to vote sooner than their counterparts in the USA, Britain, and France. The electoral law also allowed Polish women to hold public office, but they constituted fewer than 2% of the Parliament after the 1919 elections. Today, in Poland's Parliament, 33% of its members are female, although only 14% percent of senators are women.

In 1918, Polish women also gained the right to work, but this was limited to jobs believed to be appropriate for females, mainly in the food and clothing industries, in services, as mid-level clerical and health care personnel, and in selected professions (teachers, physicians, economists, etc.). These limitations are best exemplified in the statement that women are not allowed to work in occupations that 'can be harmful for health or dangerous to public morality and good manners.' (Żarnowska & Szwarc, 2000).

CONTEMPORARY WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Nowadays, the situation is much better, although still far from ideal. Ludera-Ruszel (2016) reports that women's participation in the labour market in Poland equals 53.1%, which is lower than the EU average of 58.5%; nevertheless, the gender pay gap in Poland equalled 9.8% in 2009 and was significantly lower than the EU-27 average of 16.9%. Moreover, Polish women achieve higher educational levels than men. However, only 12% of board positions in large companies are occupied by women (in the EU – 14%), which may be due to persistent gender socialization. Paradoxically, the fact that Polish legislation protects pregnant women and working mothers from work-related interference with their (present or future) maternal roles, results in employers avoiding the hiring of women. This is based on a biased attitude, namely, that women are unreliable workers prepared to go on maternity leave at the most inappropriate moment (Poland – Working Mothers, Working Women, 2017).

It should be stressed, however, that the main problem facing Polish female employees is how to reconcile their professional ambitions and family lives in a functional and satisfactory manner. A review of the subject literature suggests that the interface between work and family is bilateral, and may be both facilitating and conflicting in nature (Patten & Parker, 2012). Conflict appears when a person is forced to make choices between opposing actions, or when heavy duties in one domain make it impossible to effectively perform duties in another (Plopa, 2007). At the same time, positive impacts upon family-job and job-family interactions are emphasized by a number of authors; for example, Greenhaus et al. (2003) state that performing many roles may bring positive effects if work and family life experiences add up, and performing one of the roles provides a buffer against the stress connected with the other. They point out that experiences gained from one role may have a positive effect on the effective performance of the other role.

The main goal of the current study was to discover whether demographic variables, such as age, position, length service, marriage duration, and the number of children have an impact upon the work and marital satisfaction in working women. In addition, the study aimed at revealing the nature of the relationships between work and marital satisfaction of the women examined. Accordingly, three hypotheses were formulated:

- Hypothesis 1: Demographic variables have an impact on family and work satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 2: The relationship between work and marital satisfaction is modified by conflict between work and family life.
- Hypothesis 3: The relationship between work and marital satisfaction is modified by facilitation between those two domains.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Participants

The study included 120 women aged between 23-59 ($M = 38.06$; $SD = 10.75$), employed in various positions in Lublin, eastern Poland, mainly in state, local government or educational institutions. Most of them – 80.8%, had university degrees, 5.8% had only a secondary education, while 3.3% had only a vocational school education. The majority of the participants – 79.2%, worked as staff members, while 20.8% held managerial positions. Their mean length of service ranged from 5-10 years. It may be of interest to note that 83.3% of the examined women specified their work as ‘mostly with people’, and only 26.7% stated that they work ‘mostly with data and objects.’

The average length of marriage of the women was 15 years, and ranged from one to over 30 years. Most of them – 35.8%, had two children, 29.5% had one child, and 25% were childless; only 7.5% of the participants had three children, 1.7% had four, and 0.8% had five children. This is consistent with demographic trends in Poland where small (nuclear) families are the most common.

The study was performed individually at the working place of each woman, and informed consent to take part in the study was obtained from each of them. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and there was no time limit. It has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at the university under whose auspices the study was performed.

Procedure

Four standardized measures commonly used in research projects of this type were administered in the present study:

- 1) A Polish short version of the Work Descriptions Inventory by Neuberger and Allerbeck (1978), adapted by Zalewska (2001). The Inventory measures seven cognitive components of work: Colleagues, Superiors, Work content, Working conditions, Organization and Management, Development, and Salary. The evaluation was carried out using seven-point scales with face symbols. An additional value of the Inventory is that it also enables for an evaluation of job and life satisfaction.
- 2) A Polish adaptation of the Job Affect Scale (JAS) (Brief et al., 1988) measuring emotional aspects of work satisfaction. The scale contains 20 statements: 10 of them assess positive affects, and the other 10 negative affects (Zalewska, 2002). Participants are asked to rate the strength of their affective states at work on a seven-point scale ranging from one (slightly or not at all) to seven (definitely). Arithmetic means were measured for both positive and negative affects.
- 3) The Well-matched Marriage Questionnaire (Plopa, 2007), which comprises 32 items separated into four scales: Intimacy, Disappointment, Self-realization, and Similarity.
- 4) The self-designed Questionnaire of Job/Family Interactions (Kamola, 2012). This consists of four parts, including items that make it possible to evaluate work-family facilitation, family-work facilitation, work-family conflict, and family-work conflict. The Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (RHO) Calculator showed that the correlation of each item with the general mean was significant; moreover, Cronbach's Alpha revealed a high reliability for each scale.

As mentioned above, all these tests are often applied in both employment and marital studies as they have proved to be useful and reliable measures. Statistical analyses of the results obtained was performed with the SPSS 22.0 PL programme for Windows.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the mean values of the examined variables in relation to demographic factors. The means were calculated for the cognitive and emotional evaluation of work, for marital satisfaction, and for the evaluation of interrelations between work and family life as reported by the participants. In order to measure the significance of the observed differences, an analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Table 1. Arithmetic means of the results for demographic variables and the examined facets of work and family satisfaction

		GSM	CAJS	PA	NA	FJF	FFJ	CJF	CFJ
Age	23-30	5.42	4.93*	4.69	3.13	2.68	3.62	2.28	1.52
	31-44	5.08	4.79*	4.56	3.22	3.03	3.65	2.48	1.62
	45-59	5.26	4.34*	4.64	2.97	2.67	3.44	2.69	1.50
Position	Managerial	5.52	4.77	4.80	3.48*	2.71	3.55	2.47*	1.50
	Staff member	4.79	4.75	4.50	2.79*	2.74	3.60	1.92*	1.39
Length of service	3-5	4.71	4.64	4.19	3.26	2.52	3.18	1.97*	1.39
	6-10	5.85	4.84	4.60	3.00	2.58	3.60	2.13*	1.52
	11-20	5.03	4.89	4.63	3.02	3.01	3.71	2.56*	1.57
	21-30	4.75	4.41	4.56	3.18	2.85	3.44	2.75*	1.50
	>30	5.44	4.38	4.83	3.14	2.69	3.51	2.89*	1.68
Marriage length	1-2	5.48	4.76	4.57	3.21	2.67	3.53	2.05	1.47
	3-5	5.93	5.30	5.00	2.88	2.91	3.76	2.35	1.56
	6-10	5.55	4.83	4.51	3.15	2.89	3.66	2.72	1.65
	11-20	5.00	4.64	4.59	3.17	2.87	3.60	2.50	1.53
	>30	5.50	4.74	4.71	3.21	2.80	3.52	2.76	1.72
No children number	0	5.90*	4.97	4.76	2.98	2.82	3.70	2.40	1.37
	1	5.34*	4.75	4.58	3.08	2.76	3.58	2.39	1.54
	2	4.65*	4.49	4.52	3.28	2.80	3.57	2.54	1.67

* Level of statistical significance - 0.05.

GMS – general marital satisfaction; CAJS – cognitive aspect of work satisfaction; PA – positive affect; NA – negative affect; FJF – facilitation job-family; FFJ – facilitation family-job; CJF – conflict job-family; CFJ – conflict family-job.

was performed with the exception of one variable – position. In this case, the Mann-Whitney U test was used since this variable included only two groups.

Age proved to be statistically significant for the cognitive aspect of job satisfaction ($F=3.773$; $p<0.05$). Job satisfaction was highest in the youngest group and gradually decreased with age. At the same time, the length of service turned out to be significant for work-marital conflict, since the conflict increased with time spent in employment ($F=2.913$; $p<0.05$). The impact of work satisfaction on family life was at the level of statistical tendency ($F=2.465$; $p=0.089$) for the 31-44 age group, especially in the negative ($U=218,500$; $p<0.05$) and conflicting ($U=284,500$; $p<0.05$) aspects. It was stated that women occupying managerial positions felt stronger negative emotions and work-family conflict than women holding lower positions. The duration of marriage was insignificant, but marital satisfaction tended to decrease along with the increase in the number of children. On the other hand, although the number of children had an impact on marital satisfaction ($F=3.899$; $p<0.05$), it did not interfere with job satisfaction.

In order to verify hypotheses 2 and 3, partial correlation was performed, since this makes it possible to evaluate the strength of the relationship between two variables, and to control variables that might modify this interrelation (Table 2). It may be noted that the facilitating impact of family on work increases work-family satisfaction. Excluding that variable results in the disappearance of relationships among all the main components. The family-work conflict becomes less significant, since its exclusion results in the disappearance of the relationships between the work-related negative affect and family life satisfaction. Similar ef-

fects are observed in the case of work-related cognitive functioning, as well as marriage disappointment and intimacy. On the other hand, work-family conflict increases the relation between the cognitive aspects of job satisfaction and general marital satisfaction (correlation value .290; $p < .01$; after this factor is excluded, this value reaches .213; $p < .05$), self-realization in the marriage (.254; $p < .05$; after this factor is excluded, .227; $p < .05$) and similarity felt by partners (.285; $p < .01$; after exclusion, .211; $p < .05$). At the same time, excluding family-work conflict increases interrelations between positive emotions connected with work and general marital satisfaction (.189, after exclusion, .230; $p < .05$), self-realization within the marriage (.258, after exclusion .270; $p < .01$) and intimacy (.172, non-significant; after exclusion: .210; $p < .05$) as well as disappointment (negative correlation: -.185, after exclusion, -.232; $p < .05$). In summary, family-job conflict *weakens* interrelations between positive work emotions and marriage satisfaction, and *tightens* the connection between cognitive work aspects and general marital satisfaction, self-realization within the marriage, and similarity felt by partners.

In contradiction to family-work relationships, work-family conflict increases the relationship between the cognitive aspect of work satisfaction and general marital satisfaction (correlation value .290; after the exclusion of this factor, the value reaches .274; $p < .01$) and intimacy (.251; after exclusion -.235; $p < .05$). Work-family conflict also strengthens the interface between work-related negative affect and disappointment (.227, after exclusion, .202; $p < .05$) as well as general marital satisfaction (negative indicator -.209; after exclusion, -.183; $p < .05$). Work-family conflict also weakens the interface between work-related cognitive satisfaction and self-realization (.254, after exclusion, .274; $p < .01$) as well as work-related positive affect and general marital satisfaction (.189, after exclusion .194; $p < .05$) and disappointment (negative correlation -.185, after exclusion, -.190; $p < .05$). Moreover, work-family conflict differentiated the relationship between positive work-related affect and self-realization in the marriage (.258; $p < .01$). Excluding that factor resulted in the disappearance of the significance of the relationship between work negative affect and intimacy (-.189; $p < .05$; after exclusion not significant) and similarity felt between partners (-.195; $p < .05$; after exclusion not significant).

The effects of the facilitating impact of work on family life are even more diversified, since excluding that variable increases the relationship between the cognitive aspect of the job and general marital satisfaction (correlation value .324; $p < .01$) and intimacy (.267; $p < .01$), as well as similarity (.317; $p < .01$) in particular. At the same time, the correlation between self-realization and the cognitive aspect of job satisfaction (.233; $p < .05$) and positive job affect (.238; $p < .01$) decreases. A slight lowering of the negative relationship between negative affect and intimacy (-.187; $p < .05$) was also observed. However, the value of the correlation between negative affect and marital satisfaction (-.209; $p < .05$) as well as the feeling of similarity between the partners (-.195; $p < .05$) did not change. This means that the feeling of work-family enhancement has no impact on the relationship between family satisfaction and similarity. On the other hand, it de-

Table 2. Correlation values of the variables without control of extraneous and with control of extraneous variables

Pairs of Variables	Correlation values without controlling extraneous variables	Correlation values after excluding the impact of extraneous variables			
		FJF	FFJ	CJF	CFJ
CAJS-GMS	.290**	.324**	.161 ns.	.274**	.213*
CAJS -Int	.251**	.267**	.134 ns.	.225*	.171 ns.
CAJS-Dis	-.254**	-.327**	-.144 ns.	-.235*	-.163 ns.
CAJS-Self	.254**	.233*	.133 ns.	.274**	.227*
CAJS-Sim	.285**	.317**	.157 ns.	.261**	.211*
PA-GSM	.189*	.201*	.070 ns.	.194*	.230*
PA-Int	.172 ns.	.173 ns.	.066 ns.	.178 ns.	.210*
PA-Dis	-.185*	-0.230*	-.087 ns.	-.190*	-.232*
PA-Self	.258**	.238**	.161 ns.	.258**	.270**
PA-Sim	.060 ns.	.061 ns.	-.077 ns.	.065 ns.	.088 ns.
NA-OSM	-.209*	-.209*	-.137 ns.	-.183*	-.114 ns.
NA-Int	-.189*	-.187*	-.123 ns.	-.149 ns.	-.094 ns.
NA-Dis	.227*	.235*	.168 ns.	.202*	.125 ns.
NA-Self	-.107 ns.	-.099 ns.	-.032 ns.	-.131 ns.	-.071 ns.
NA-Sim	-.195*	-.195*	-.121 ns.	-.155 ns.	-.103 ns.

* Significance level - .05; **, Significance level - .01; ns. – not significant

CAJS – cognitive aspect of job satisfaction; PA – positive affect; NA – negative aspect; GMS – general marital satisfaction; Int – intimacy; Dis – disappointment; Self – self-realization; Sim – similarity;

FJF – facilitation job-family; FFJ – facilitation family-job; CJF – conflict job-family; CFJ – conflict family-job.

creases the strength of the relationships across most components of family satisfaction (with the exception of self-realization) and the cognitive aspects of work satisfaction, as well as between positive work affect and general marital satisfaction and disappointment (negative correlation). In addition, it decreases the negative affect and disappointment (positive correlation). As shown in Table 2, the relationship between work and marital satisfaction is modulated by the conflicting or facilitating character of the interface between these two domains.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study concerning working women can be summarized as follows:

1. The level of work satisfaction proved to be above the mean value, while family satisfaction was at the mean level.
2. Both the facilitating and the constraining impact of work upon the family was at an average level, while the facilitating impact of the family on work was above average, and constraining below average.
3. Age differentiated the cognitive work component, since the younger the women, the higher it became.
4. Women in managerial positions showed higher work dissatisfaction in relation to the work-family conflict.
5. Length of service had a strong impact on work-family conflict.
6. Marital satisfaction decreased with the number of children.

7. Correlations across cognitive components of work and marital satisfaction were significant.
8. High job satisfaction was closely related to marital satisfaction.
9. Low job satisfaction was related to family life-work conflict and marital disappointment.
10. The family displayed a facilitating impact on work, while work-family conflict decreased marital satisfaction.

This study confirmed the interrelations between job satisfaction and family satisfaction reported by other researchers (Haar et al., 2003; Heller & Watson, 2005; Ilies et. al., 2009). Nonetheless, there is a lack of consensus about the significance of these two dimensions. Many studies suggest that it is the family and not work that is the main source of satisfaction for women (Cinamon, 2006; Emslie & Hunt, 2008; Rostowska, 2008). However, the current study shows that job satisfaction was higher than family satisfaction in the women under study, which is in agreement with some other reports (Cinamon, 2006; Lachowska, 2010). At the same time, older women indicated lower job satisfaction, which may be the result of facing higher demands at work. It may also be due to heavier family obligations (Chandola et al., 2004; Emslie & Hunt, 2008). This conclusion seems to be confirmed by the fact that parental status has been found to have a negative impact on family satisfaction (McKeen & Burke, 1994). Another important factor is that older women usually have additional obligations, such as taking care of elderly parents and supporting adult children, who often are not able to live by themselves (Darcy et al., 2012).

It may also be worth pointing out the difference between women holding managerial positions and those who hold staff positions. The managerial women suffered from work-family conflict to a greater degree, which may follow from being overburdened at work, resulting in low work satisfaction. This would be consistent with the observations of Schueller-Weidekamm and Kautzky-Willer (2012), who point out that the traditional roles of women as mothers and guardians of the home, force upon them a concentration on family duties. At the same time, Erdamar and Demirel (2014) indicate that a higher job position also entails an increased work load, additional duties, and higher stress caused by the pressure of the job and the higher level of responsibilities.

The constraining impact of work on family satisfaction was higher than the relationship between high work satisfaction and family satisfaction. On the other hand, the facilitating impact of family satisfaction upon work satisfaction proved to be highly significant, while the constraining impact was below average. It is highly probable that these findings are due to the fact that for most Polish women the family remains most important, despite recent social and cultural changes. This is closely connected with the long tradition concerning the roles a woman is expected to play, and the beliefs and attitudes she acquires while 'doing gender' already in her childhood.

Moreover, this study identified the existence of a family-work facilitator as a mediator of interrelations across individual indices of both family and work satisfac-

tion. The exclusion of this factor resulted in the disappearance of the significance of correlations across both high and low work satisfaction, and in all aspects of marital satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the report by Wayne et al. (2004) who added that family-work facilitation plays the most important role in employee wellbeing.

A research project conducted at the Technical University in Munich (Technische Universität München – TUM, 2014) throws additional light on the reasons for the shortage of women in managerial roles – the wording of job advertisements which, as a rule, underlines features commonly associated with male stereotypes, such as assertive, independent, determined, analytical and hierarchical. Such words act as a turnoff, and make women feel that the job is not suitable for them, in consequence, they are therefore reluctant to respond to such advertisements. It follows that in order to make a given position more attractive for women the advertisements should use more ‘inclusive’ words, like adaptable, resilient, creative, thoughtful, multitasking and trustworthy. Peck (2016) suggests that masculine words in job postings, as a rule are used unintentionally, reflecting an unconscious bias in the job listing, as well as job expectations. Such unconscious biases lead to serious problems and, in effect, many companies are lamenting the shortage of competent leaders, while many highly educated, qualified, and energetic women do not apply for managerial positions. They do not apply because they think they do not fit the job described in the job listing. For example, a statement describing a work environment as one where employees ‘work hard and play hard’ may be understood as a need to spend time in informal meetings in addition to the scheduled working hours. In consequence, the managerial woman may be afraid she will have no time for her family.

To sum up, the presented study analysed the relationship between job satisfaction and marital satisfaction, with emphasis on the conflicting or facilitating nature of the interface between those two domains of life. The findings obtained show that the level of job satisfaction was higher than marital satisfaction in the group of studied women. However, it was higher in younger than in older women. It was also found that satisfaction from both work and family life is modified by conflict and facilitation, and the negative impact of job dissatisfaction upon family life appears to be greater, which is in agreement with other studies (Cinamon, 2006). The negative impact of work on family life increased the strength of the relationship between work and family life, while a positive effect at work decreased the relation between job and family life satisfaction. Moreover, the high level of family satisfaction had a facilitating impact on work satisfaction. This may follow from the fact that the examined group consisted of women for whom family life is still the most significant. The work-family conflict also depended on the duration of employment, since a longer time in the job increased this conflict. This might be due to an overload of obligations, since middle-aged women often experience more health problems and have to take care of their aging parents, grown-up (but still dependent) children, and grandchildren. It would therefore seem advisable for employers to pay more attention to the needs of their older

workers in order to maintain their work–life balance, a position also advocated by Darcy et al. (2012).

Work-family facilitation proved to be important, since its exclusion made the interface between all factors of family satisfaction and work insignificant, which suggests that it conditions family-work satisfaction. The observed difference between women holding managerial positions and working as staff members is most probably due to the greater work-related stress and job-family life conflict felt by managerial women. It is generally known that taking care of the family is still the primary domain of women, which creates distress, since managerial duties make it difficult to reconcile work with family life (Schueller-Weidekamm & Kautzky-Willer, 2012).

Women are now taking a larger part in the job market. They not only share economic duties with men, but they have ambitions to develop their professional career. However, they are still conditioned to focus on home duties and on taking care of children much more so than men, which results from traditional forms of socialization.

Work overload causes unpleasant feelings because it stimulates the punishment system in the brain, thus weakening the reward system by reducing the strength of positive feelings (cf. Fig. 1). The strength and duration of these emotions are associated with the meaning of work for a given woman. Therefore, fatigue at work can modify the minimal (working) and longitudinal (autobiographical) self, strengthening the significance of a given event (negative or positive) (see Pačalska 2019).

As noted by Pačalska, Kaczmarek and Kropotov (2014; 499), activation of reward/punishment systems is not indifferent to the organism, because it may

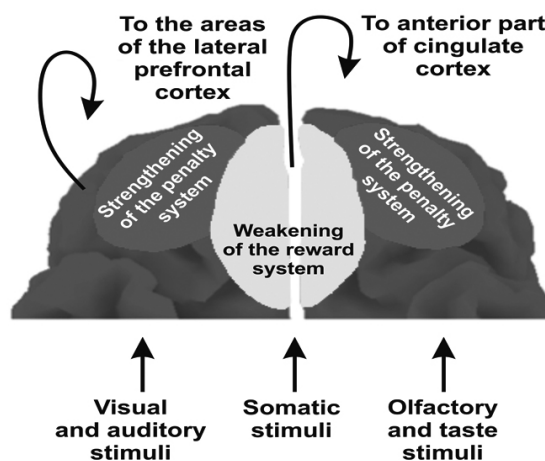


Fig. 1. The reward /penalty system: the medial part involves the processing of the reward, and the lateral part involves the processing of the penalty.

Source: Pačalska, Kaczmarek i Kropotov 2014, modified

create in the brain new neural circuits. Both during the day (conscious brain) and during sleep (resting system), neuronal connections are made, which are stimulated when we rest with open eyes or during sleep, and inhibited when we perform specific tasks. This therefore allows you to combine and evaluate data from outside and inside the body because it covers the posterior ACC, the lateral surface of the prefrontal cortex in which we have reward/penalty system. Updates related to the types of neuronal patterns connected with an unpleasant experience, as well as the neurotransmitters created by these connections, have numerous connections with areas related to cognitive activities and emotional processes (Pačalska, Kaczmarek and Kropotov 2014). This means that job satisfaction or dissatisfaction can have a positive or negative effect on a particular person.

How to help?

In the whole context, it is imperative to provide women with support from their life partners, from state institutions, and from the workplace itself (Lambert, 2000). The study showed also that childcare facilities on-site and/or subsidizing childcare expenses is not sufficient for women employees' well-being since it was older women who suffered from work dissatisfaction. Moreover work-family conflict increased with the length of service. Therefore, organizations should take greater care of promoting their older employees' mental health to the benefit of both parties.

CONCLUSIONS

Work-family facilitation proved to be crucial since its exclusion made the interface between all factors of family satisfaction and work insignificant. At the same time, it was the managerial women who suffered from work-family conflict to a greater degree than was the case for office workers. The study revealed also that needs of older workers should be taken into account to maintain their work-life balance.

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