

Drivers of Work-Life-Balance

- An Empirical Analysis Based on Data from a CAC-40 Company -

Diplomarbeit im Fach Personalwirtschaftslehre

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Vorgelegt in der Diplomprüfung im Studiengang Betriebswirtschaftslehre

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Köln (2012)

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1 Introduction

1.1 Abstract

In recent years the challenge of maintaining a balance between work life and personal life has grown significantly. Employees face greater workload, increasing time pressure and growing obstacles in satisfying both job and personal demands. At work the demand for efficiency leads to more tasks, which have to be fulfilled in a shorter period of time. Corporate globalization has resulted in an increasing number of business trips for the employees, leading to longer periods of absenteeism from their families or personal lives (Stock-Homburg/Bauer, 2007: 27).

On the personal side there is a growing number of double-career families and single-parent households. The traditional structure of a household where the father is working while the mother is in charge of household management is anachronistic. Today a mere 10% of the American population is living in this traditional type of family construct. The trend is comparable in Europe (Boles et al., 1997: 17). The overall effect is increasing coordination difficulties in terms of childcare, eldercare and in a reduction of general free-time spent together at home.

Satisfying the often conflicting demands of work and family life is one of the biggest challenges for modern employees. Research reveals that there is a growing percentage of employees who are overstrained from reconciling the work domain with the family domain, resulting in an increasing number of sick days which are due to psychological diseases (Frone et al., 1992: 72). This absenteeism because of psychological illness is often long lasting and incurs considerable costs for the employer. Decreasing these costs represents one motivation for employers to consider the balance between work and family life of their employees.

Additionally, the current demographic make-up of society has created a scarcity of young high-potential job candidates. In order to attract these talents, one incentive is the promotion of a career opportunity that accounts for both needs - those of the firm and those of the employee.

Though the term work-life-balance has become very popular in general linguistic usage, it is uncommon in scientific research examining this interface. Some scholars criticize the implication that work is a “segmented dimension” that is opposite to life (Resch/Bamberg, 2005: 171). In fact, researchers use the terms work/non-work balance/conflict or they refer to work-family-balance/work-family-conflict. Employees who have a family life are obliged to satisfy both work and family demands, and thus are recognized as often having the biggest challenges in finding their personal balance. Hence this population group is generally the focus of relevant research.

This thesis will likewise examine work-family-balance/conflict. The title of this study is: “Drivers of Work-life-balance” as it likewise addresses those readers who do not possess a detailed knowledge of this field and thus are more acquainted with the popular term.

Over the last three decades, comprehensive research has been conducted to better understand and to determine possible outcomes and effects of an imbalance between the domains of work and family (Anderson et al., 2002; Higgins et al., 2000). However, far less research has been conducted to determine the influencing factors that make up a successful work-family-balance.

Research Issue

As the importance of work-family-balance and its outcomes has increased significantly, likewise the factors that favor or exacerbate this popular balance move in the center of interest. How do employees realize a work-family-balance which meets their expectations? What are key drivers leading to a balance of the two domains work and family? These are the key questions this diploma thesis will answer.

Course of Analysis

The thesis is divided into four parts:

1. It begins with an introduction where the relevance of the topic work-family-balance is explained. The research issue names the key questions this thesis will respond to. The following section provides some definitions of the term work-family-balance and illustrates the link to work-family-conflict. It ends with possible outcomes of work-family-balance.

2. The second chapter explains the resource-based theory, which offers a scientific approach to work-family-balance, explains cause-effect-relationships between the two domains work and personal/family life and identifies drivers of this construct. It finishes with a theoretical assessment of measures which are employed in order to improve employees' work-family-balance.
3. Chapter three illustrates how experts at Airbus, one of the biggest employers in Europe, deal with this issue. Therefore a qualitative analysis has been conducted, where executive human resource managers who possess knowledge of work-family-balance were interviewed. Within this chapter, influencing factors that are identified by theory are compared to the practical set of opinions.
4. The final chapter then summarizes the results, points out key drivers and suggests strategic recommendations for a better work-family-balance. It finishes by recommending areas that would benefit from future research.

1.2 Definition of Work-Family-Balance/ Work-Family-Conflict

Definitions for work-family-balance are varied. Clark characterizes work-family-balance as “satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict” (Clark, 2000: 751). This definition describes that an individual who has a high work-family-balance feels a low work(role)-family(role)-conflict, and an individual who has considerable work-family-conflicts feels a low level of work-family-balance. This diploma thesis likewise shares this view.

Kirchmeyer explains work-family-balance as “achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains, and to do so requires personal resources such as energy, time, and commitment to be well distributed across domains” (Kirchmeyer, 2000: 81). Thereby she links her definition to the resource-based view, which will be presented in chapter two.

In an attempt to include positive and negative balance, Greenhaus et al. define work-family-balance as “the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in – and

equally satisfied with – his or her work and family role” (Greenhaus et al., 2003: 513). These authors consider work-family-balance as equilibrium of the following three components: time balance, involvement balance and satisfaction balance.

Finally, Higgins et al. portray work-family-balance as “a perceptual phenomenon characterized by a sense of having achieved a satisfactory resolution of work and family domains” (Higgins et al., 2000: 19). Hence they include in their definition the personal and subjective character of work-family-balance.

All four definitions have one attribute in common: they emphasize one elementary outcome of a well-adjusted work-family-balance, and that is satisfaction.

Contrary to this, Voydanoff provides a definition which focuses on the antecedents of work-family-balance. She defines work-family-balance as “a global assessment that work and family resources are sufficient to meet work and family demands such that participation is effective in both domains” (Voydanoff, 2005: 825). This definition serves as a basic concept for this thesis as it highlights factors that entail work-family-balance and thus are in the center of interest.

The degree of work-family-balance is a scale which is difficult to measure, that is to say, people have difficulties in evaluating their work-family-balance. Moreover, there is no overall criterion which states where a reasonable work-family-balance begins and where it ends. Every employee has his or her own threshold and thus work-family-balance is a highly individualized concept where needs and beliefs differ significantly between people (Kaiser et al., 2010: 234).

In order to operationalise the relationship between work and family it is necessary to examine potential work-family-conflicts. There are two directions of work-family-conflicts: interference from work to family and interference from family to work. Thus researchers analyze the conflict between the two domains work and family and associate the combination of a low work-family-conflict and a low family-work-conflict as equivalent with a well-adjusted work-family-balance (Higgins et al., 2000: 19; van Rijswijk et al., 2004: 287). More details concerning different types of conflicts and their appearance are explained in section 2.2.

The construct of work-family-conflict originates from research on role conflict. Kahn et al. define role conflict as “simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other” (Kahn et al., 1964: 19). Based on the results of Kahn et al., Greenhaus and Beutell propose a definition of work-family-conflict which has become widely recognized and frequently quoted (Adams et al., 1996: 411; Ayree et al., 2005: 132; Martins et al., 2002: 399). They define work-family-conflict as “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus/Beutell, 1985: 77). That means that participation and execution in one domain is hindered by participation and execution in the other domain.

1.3 Outcomes of Work-Family-Balance

1.3.1 Employee Outcomes

Overall, a perceived satisfaction with work-family-balance leads to a higher degree of satisfaction with family life and increased well-being and life-satisfaction in general (Ayree et al., 1999: 505). Employees are happy with their weighting of the two domains.

Considering the work-related outcomes, employees who experience a low work-family-conflict and realize thereby a favorable work-family-balance, report higher levels of job satisfaction (Thomas/Ganster, 1995: 10). A high level of contentment with his or her own work-family-balance implies a higher level of employee’s loyalty for the firm (Kaiser et al., 2010: 245) and lower intentions to change to another company (Anderson et al., 2002: 803). Furthermore, those employees who are expected by their supervisors to be satisfied with their work-family-balance advance faster in their career (Lyness/Judiesch, 2008: 798).

In contrast, an unfavorable work-family-balance causes stress, which can lead to exhaustion and feelings of helplessness. Thomas and Ganster show that an unbalanced situation of the work and the family domain results in concrete deterioration of the health status (Thomas/Ganster, 1995: 11). Frone et al. identify a strong relationship between an unsatisfied evaluation of work-family-balance and depression (Frone et al., 1992: 72). Martins et al. show that the more intense the perceived work-family-

conflict, the lower is the contentment with the career satisfaction (Martins et al., 2002: 403).

With regard to family life, there is a negative relationship between perceived work-family-conflict and the performance as a parent (Higgins et al., 2000: 52).

1.3.2 Company Outcomes

Several outcomes of work-family-balance are direct outcomes for the employee and indirect outcomes for the company. Employees, who are loyal, satisfied and committed, contribute to the overall objective and positive outcome for the company, and that is improved business performance and better results. Healthy employees are less vulnerable to diseases, both physically and psychologically, which in turn decreases the absenteeism rate. This is a factor that is increasingly becoming important, given the fact that especially psychological diseases cause long periods of disability that are extremely expensive for the company. Research confirms that companies that have well-balanced employees show a significantly higher business performance than those firms where employees are confronted regularly with work-family-conflicts (Perry-Smith/Blum, 2000. 1112).

In contrast, an average employee who perceives his work-family-balance as non-satisfying has a greater probability of moving to another company and is characterized by higher rates of absenteeism, causing increased employee turnover rates for the company and higher costs.

2 Theoretical Approach to Work-Family-Balance

2.1 The Resource Drain Theory

The largest body of research in the area of work-family-balance can be integrated in the combined framework of the Resource Drain Theory and the Role Theory. This thesis will likewise focus on this combined approach. Each individual has different roles, which he or she has to perform, for instance the role of an executive manager and the role of a parent. The scarcity or depletion perspective, which is inherent in the Resource Drain Theory, divides between the work/professional-related dimension and the individual/personal-related dimension. In each dimension there are resources and demands (Shirom, 1982: 22). Voydanoff defines resources as “structural or psy-

chological assets that may be used to facilitate performance, reduce demands, or generate additional resources” (Voydanoff, 2005: 823). Thus, resources are factors that facilitate the achievement of a successful work-family-balance (Stock-Homburg/Roederer, 2009: 26). They are scarce and have to be allocated effectively (Goode, 1960: 495).

Edwards and Rothbard define demands as “qualitative and quantitative requirements faced by the person and include objective demands and socially constructed norms and role expectations” (Edwards/Rothbard, 1999: 88). Demands need resources in order to be satisfied. If demands from one dimension can’t be satisfied by resources, they start to interfere with demands from the other dimension which is associated with a conflict and the impairment of work-family-balance. Thus the interaction of resources and demands determine the presence of work-family-balance or work-family-conflict and are the drivers. It has to be noted that resources and demands in the work-related dimension are more related to work-family-conflict, whereas resources and demands in the individual-related dimension are more related to family-work-conflict. The construct and its different occurrences is displayed in Figure 1.

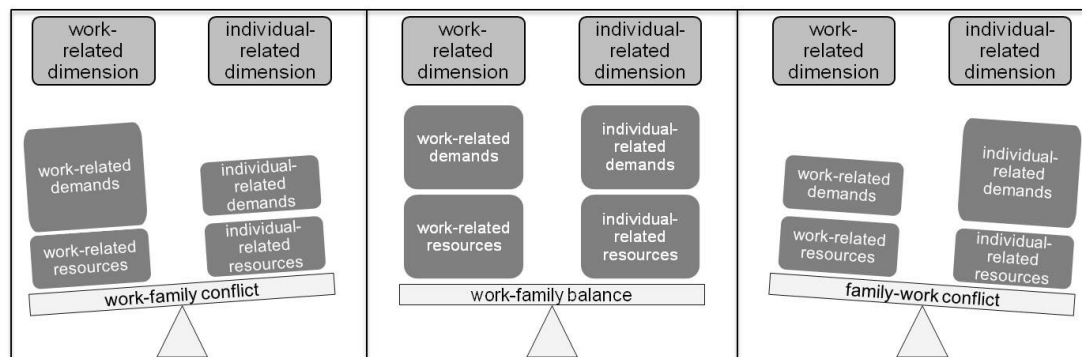


Figure 1. Occurrences of conflicts and balance
(Source: compiled by the author)

2.1.1 Work-related Dimension

In the work-related dimension those drivers are examined which originate from the work/professional environment.

2.1.1.1 Work-related Resources

An essential work-related resource is the organizational support of a company (Warner/Hausdorf, 2009: 138). Employees, who work in an organization with a sup-

portive, family-friendly corporate culture where familiar issues are also taken into account, more easily achieve a balance between the work and the life domain. Furthermore, a central driver of work-family-balance is the degree to which a supervisor encourages the employees to pay attention for both domains, which is accumulated under the term “supervisor support“. Thomas and Ganster show in one of their studies that supervisor support is significantly negatively correlated with work-family-conflict, implying an improved work-family-balance when the supervisor acts in an understanding manner (Thomas/Ganster, 1995: 10).

In addition to the support from the supervisor, the social backing which is provided by colleagues represents a fundamental work-related resource. Imagine the situation of a shift worker whose child falls ill. A supportive colleague, who is willing to change shifts in order that the shift worker can stay at home and take care of the child, helps him balance the resources/demands of both domains.

Additionally, the coordination of work has characteristics which help or complicate the realization of a satisfying work-family-balance. For instance, the individual control that an employee perceives in coordinating tasks, that is to say, when which task is fulfilled, is a work-related resource and is negatively correlated to work-family-conflict and thereby positively correlated to work-family-balance (Butler et al., 2005: 162). Another work-related resource under the category of job characteristics is the type of work, for instance the degree of job complexity. A high level of job complexity is linked with high level of skills in two ways: First, highly complex jobs will only be managed by highly skilled employees (Valcour, 2007: 1515). Second, performing in a complex environment facilitates the development of additional skills which are required, such as planning, organizing or negotiating.

In summary, family-friendly company culture, supervisor support, backing of colleagues and certain work type characteristics are main resources stemming from the work environment.

2.1.1.2 Work-related Demands

Work-related demands are requirements which employees face in their work environment. These demands draw upon resources in order to be satisfied. A central

work-related demand is the number of hours worked. Obviously, the more hours one spends at work, the less time there is to fulfill demands from the family domain, which results in interference with work-family-balance (Warner/Hausdorf, 2009: 133). Employees in higher level/management positions have exceedingly large workloads to handle, and the decisions which have to be made have far-reaching consequences and are associated with stress and strain. For these reasons, executive managers experience higher levels of work-family-conflict than employees in lower-level positions (DiRenzo et al., 2011: 309).

The time and difficulty of getting to the workplace, meaning the commute time, is another significant work demand as it absorbs time which otherwise could have been spent in personal life (Baltes/Heydens-Gahir, 2003: 1006).

While, as explained above, a workplace that promotes individual control is regarded as a resource, alternatively, a work environment which is characterized by a lack of autonomy is evaluated as a demand and a driver which increases work-family-conflict (Frone et al., 1992: 69). Job activities that are physically or psychologically challenging are equally regarded as work-related demands that lead, without sufficient supply of resources, to work-family-conflict (Pleck et al., 1980: 30).

Regarding the different roles an employee has to perform, Boles et al. describe role conflict as: “when he/she receives incompatible sets of expectations that need to be satisfied simultaneously” (Boles et al., 1997: 18). Thus, when employees have different roles and act in different groups and when these roles require different behaviors, this can result in role conflict (Rizzo et al., 1970: 6). Their findings and following research confirm that there is a strong positive relationship between role conflict and work-family-conflict (Boles et al., 1997: 23; Carlson/Perrewé, 1999: 523). Thus role conflict is a main demand and influencing factor of work-family-balance.

Finally, the extent to which a job appears as insecure and endangered by personnel cutbacks is a work-related demand. Employees who perceive their job as insecure have higher scores in work-family-conflict and a lower feeling of overall well-being (Beham et al., 2011: 117; Edwards/Rothbard, 1999: 112).

In summary, the quantity of work, the level of autonomy at work, commuting, different role demands in terms of behavior and the job insecurity are main demands arising in the work environment.

2.1.2 Individual-related Dimension

This section investigates the individual dimension and explains factors that are directly linked to the individual and affect the work-family-balance. The individual drivers of work-family-balance have been examined quite recently and can likewise be divided into resources and demands (Baltes/Heydens-Gahir, 2003: 1005).

2.1.2.1 Individual-related Resources

A major individual-related resource is the social support an individual receives in his or her non-work environment. In four different models Carlson and Perrewé test the relationship between family social support and work-family-conflict and conclude that the model which illustrates family social support as an antecedent of low work-family-conflict fits best (Carlson/Perrewé, 1999: 528). Regarding these results, Adams et al. confirm the relationship between higher levels of family support and lower levels of family demands interfering with work demands (Adams et al., 1996: 418). Social support in the non-work dimension can be the family or a circle of friends.

Research indicates that the intensity of certain personality traits has significant influence on the accessibility of an equilibrated work-family-balance and well-being in general (Ayree et al., 2005: 134). In this context the internal locus of control is critically important. People who perceive situations and results as consequences of their own doing have a high internal locus of control, whereas people who evaluate outcomes only as a result of external factors and chance, rank low on the measure of internal locus of control. A higher value of perceived internal locus of control serves as a resource and is negatively correlated to work-family-conflict (Clark, 2002: 104). Kaiser et al. report on the positive relationship between the personality trait of extraversion and satisfaction with work-family-balance (Kaiser et al., 2011: 85). Persons who score high on the scale of extraversion are regarded as very active and open-minded and have fewer difficulties in finding a satisfying work-family-balance.

Another important influencing factor on work-family-balance that is evaluated as a resource is the way individuals cope with stressful situations. Hall identifies three different coping strategies (Hall, 1972: 474):

Type I (structural role definition) describes the active effort in reallocating and splitting up role demands, thereby involving his or her social environment in order to contribute to the task.

Type II (personal role definition) implicates adjusting his or her own attitude regarding demands from the environment and goes along with assigning priorities.

Type III assumes that demands are fixed and unchangeable, and that by adjusting one's own behavior one tries to satisfy as many demands as possible.

Type I and II are directly related to satisfaction with work-family-balance, while coping Type III is said to be less effective (Beutell/Greenhaus, 1983: 44). Thus the correct coping type is an important resource in managing stressful situations.

Lastly, within the context of the personal-related resources, the physical condition plays an essential role. Those who maintain a high level of physical fitness have fewer difficulties in meeting the complex demands of family and work.

In summary, the main resources from the personal environment are the social support from the family and friends, certain personality traits, positive coping behavior and the physical fitness.

2.1.2.2 Individual-related Demands

The extreme involvement of an individual in the different domains can arise as an important individual-related demand (Carlson/Kacmar, 2000: 1042). That is to say, the intensity to which one's job or one's family life is central to self-image and beliefs can be very important (Kanungo, 1982: 342; Higgins et al., 1992: 67). If an individual focuses extremely on one life domain it is often to the detriment of the other domain.

Frequently managers have problems in delegating important tasks because they want to have them accomplished conscientiously and trust more in their own skills than in others'. This leads to a larger workload and growing demands which are individual-related. In general executives behave in an efficiency- and performance-oriented manner. This creates a self-imposed inner pressure to perform which is connected with psychological strain.

Just as certain character traits serve as individual-related resources, others represent individual-related demands because they complicate the achievement of an equilibrated work-family-balance. Specifically, the character trait of neuroticism is assessed to be closely linked to work-family interference (van Rijswijk et al., 2004: 288). Individuals who score high on the scale of neuroticism are less emotionally stable, undergo more intense states of stress, and are more fearful of novel situations.

In addition to demands of personality, an employee's family domain can be very challenging. Raising children can make substantial demands on employees' time and energy (Valcour, 2007: 1520). Thus the parental role is clearly one of the dominant individual-related demands. In particular, small children, as they require intensive care, represent one of the biggest demands in the individual-related dimension (Michel et al., 2011: 695).

In summary, main demands in the personal environment are: extreme involvement in one domain, delegation incapacity, self-imposed pressure, certain unfavorable character traits and family demands.

2.2 Conflicts

If there are not enough resources available to satisfy both domain demands or if demands are excluding each other, this results in a conflict. Adams et al. propose that "work-family conflict arises when demands of participation in one domain are incompatible with demands of participation in the other domain..." (Adams et al., 1996: 411). Originally the focus of research was on the conflict which results from work demands interfering with family demands. This was because the family domain

is more changeable and permeable than the work domain, thereby increasing the likelihood that work demands constrain family demands. In one of their early studies, Greenhaus and Beutell identify three major forms of conflict which arise in the work-family interface (Greenhaus/Beutell, 1985: 77). This kind of differentiation is recognized as the basic concept in modeling work-family-balance. The following research acknowledged the two directions of conflicts, thereby increasing demands from the work domain can interfere with family demands and vice versa (Frone et al., 1992: 72). The three forms of conflict and the two conflict directions combine to describe six different conflict types (Wolff/Höge, 2011: 144). They are displayed in Figure 2.

		direction of conflict	
		work-family conflict	family-work conflict
type of conflict	time	time-based work-family conflict	time-based family-work conflict
	strain	strain-based work-family conflict	strain-based family-work conflict
	behaviour	behaviour-based work-family conflict	behaviour-based family-work conflict

Figure 2. The six conflict dimensions
(Source: compiled by the author, based on Carlson et al., 2000)

These six dimensions constitute the framework of Carlson et al.'s measure to assess work-family-conflict, a differentiation which has become the common research standard in this field (Carlson et al., 2000: 251; Wolff/Höge, 2011: 143).

2.2.1 Work-Family-Conflict

If demands stemming from the work domain start to interfere with demands from the personal domain, this is called work-family-conflict. It is recognized as the predominant conflict that damages work-family-balance.

Time-Based Work-Family-Conflict: When the different role's time demands exceed a person's total time budget, a time-based conflict arises.

Example: The situation where a father has a late meeting at work and can therefore not attend the piano concert of his daughter represents a classical time-based work-family-conflict. These explanations correspond to findings of Pleck et al. who identify excessive work time as a major driver of work-family interference (Pleck et al., 1980: 29).

Strain-Based Work-Family-Conflict: This type of conflict occurs when the person has difficulties in fulfilling work-related demands from different social roles, for instance simultaneously as a supervisor, a parent and a friend. These roles have somewhat incompatible characteristics in the sense that strain created in the work role makes it hard to conform in the family or life role. It is noteworthy that substantial involvement in one specific role can also lead to strain-based conflict. Thus, time- and strain-based conflict may have similar sources of conflict (Greenhaus/Beutell, 1985: 81).

Example: A manager comes home from a long work day and is too tired for having a conversation with his/her spouse or is very irritable.

Behavior-Based Work-Family-Conflict: Often a certain pattern of behavior in the work role is incompatible with the family role.

Example: a successful male manager applies a masculine leadership style that is said to be strict and authoritarian (Schein, 1973: 99). At home with his family he is asked to be soft, comprehensive and benign. If the manager is not capable of adapting his behavior this may create a behavior-based work-family-conflict.

2.2.2 Family-Work-Conflict

At the beginning of research on the work-family interface, conflicts originating from the family domain and affecting the work domain have not been investigated in such an intense manner as the other direction, assuming that demands from the family domain can be buffered more easily than those from the work domain. Gutek et al. have introduced the idea of taking both conflict directions into account when studying the work-family interface (Gutek et al., 1991: 560). As illustrated for work-family-conflict, sources of conflict stemming from the family and interfering with the work domain can likewise be differentiated in time-, strain- or behavior-based conflicts.

Time-Based Family-Work-Conflict: When family obligations interfere with work obligations such that the time devoted to family tasks absorbs time that was designated for work activities, this is called a time-based family-work-conflict.

Example: The situation where a mother has to stay at home to take care for the sick child and hence cannot go to work can be evaluated as a time-based family-work-conflict.

Strain-based Family-Work-Conflict: This type of conflict occurs when an employee experiences stress and strain at home and therefore has problems to concentrating and focusing on job tasks during work time.

Example: If an employee has a discussion with his spouse concerning the common financial budget and afterwards goes to work, he or she will still be mentally involved in the previously held conflict and have difficulties in fulfilling his or her job in a concentrated manner.

Behavior-based Family-Work-Conflict: An employee who has learned that a concrete behavior model works very well at home but when applying this model at work the success is limited, will perceive a behavior-based family-work-conflict.

Example: An employee who has experienced that simple listening to his/her spouse is the best way to solve a problem may be judged as shy or without opinion when showing this behavior in the face of a problem at work.

2.2.3 Relation Between Work-Family-Conflict and Family-Work-Conflict

Overall, research results suggest that, in general, people report a significantly higher degree of work demands interfering with family than of family demands interfering with work (Gutek et al., 1991: 566).

Frone et al. state a “positive reciprocal relationship between work-family-conflict and family-work-conflict” (Frone et al., 1992: 72). That is plausible imagining a situation where work demands interfere with family demands (work-family-conflict). Then the unfulfilled demands of the family domain start to interfere with functioning at work (family-work-conflict). Thus the conflicts can trigger each other but have distinct antecedents.

2.3 Work-Family-Balance Measures

Measures and techniques which are employed in order to ensure a well-equilibrated work-family-balance by reducing existing conflicts either originate from the employer and thus are work-related, or they can be introduced by the employee and therefore are individual-related. This chapter gives an overview of existing measures and highlights, if research concerning the individual measure exists, the respective effectiveness. In general there is little research that analyses the relationship between employed measures and the employee's level of work-family-balance.

2.3.1 Work-related Measures

The measures which are offered by the employer are more popular than individual-related actions and can be divided into time-related, education-related or financial-related measures and direct services (Thompson et al., 2006: 285).

- Time-related measures are the most common strategies and can be differentiated between working time models and work leave options.

There are two types of working time models: they can either reduce the workload or they make the given workload more flexible (Kaiser et al., 2010: 235). Concerning the use of part-time work, which is a measure that reduces work demands by limiting the number of hours worked, van Rijswijk et al. show that the use of part-time work reduces the level of work interfering with family (van Rijswijk et al., 2004: 291). However, there are individual differences regarding the benefit of part-time work. Those employees who are in earner positions (technical, administrative or producing occupations) whose job plays a more subordinate role, derive greater benefits from part-time work as they feel freed of work pressures than do career employees (managerial or professional occupations), who are highly involved in their job-life (Higgins et al., 2000: 28). Part-time work is often linked with more basic, routine jobs and thus limits the use for career employees.

Flexibility of working hours, also known as flextime, has become a common measure in improving the feeling of job autonomy and control, thereby de-

creasing work-family-conflict (Anderson et al., 2002: 799, Thomas/Ganster, 1995: 11). Michel et al. show that those employees who are married or have a parental function benefit most from flexible work schedules (Michel et al., 2011: 707).

Compressed work weeks are working arrangements where the employee works the same number of hours as for regular employment, but compresses his/her work hours into fewer workdays which are longer. Latack and Foster conduct a study on the effects of compressed workweeks and find out that those employees who decided on their own to work on a compressed work schedule perceived higher levels of their productivity. For the employer this results in lower overtime and lower sick time costs (Latack/Foster, 1985: 88).

Working time accounts, and arrangements, where employees can accumulate working hours in an intense working period, and work less in times of low workload, fall into the same category. Offers such as telecommuting, which is also known as home office, have an ambivalent effect on work-family-balance. Employees who work part of their time from home report a lower incidence of work-family-conflict but a higher extent of family-work-conflict compared to those who have a regular employment contract (Golden et al., 2006: 1345). Shamir and Salomon see one possible reason in the elimination of physical boundaries between the two environments and the obligation to deal simultaneously with demands from the two domains (Shamir/Salomon, 1985: 460). Considering that not every work activity can be done at home, as for example the possibility of telecommuting for production plants is very limited, this is not an option in all cases.

Work leave options summarize possibilities like for instance maternity or paternity leave, where one parent stops working for a determined period of time in order to care for the child. Another leave option is a sabbatical, describing the work agreement in which the employee receives a reduced salary for a certain period of time in order to then get one year off when he or she still obtains a reduced salary. So far there is no research concerning the effectiveness of work leave options on work-family-balance.

- Education measures are personnel development actions such as coaching for the purpose of better stress management or training to eat a more balanced diet. These measures serve to strengthen the employee's resources in the scope of the work dimension. Scientific research evaluates this measure as least expensive and a priori most cost-effective possibility for employers (Zedeck/Mosier, 1990: 245).
- Financial-related measures are monetary supports offered by the company. These include special payments for the birth of a child or cost-saving in-house purchase. Promises on behalf of the company to guarantee re-employment after a longer period absence such as maternity or paternity leave can be likewise allocated in the category of financial-related measures, as they ensure financial security.
- Direct services provided are varied. The most common offer is on-site child-care, where parents can leave their children to be cared for during work. Youngblood and Chambers-Cook show that employees who take advantage of in-house day care for their children are more content and score lower on turnover intentions (Youngblood/Chambers-Cook, 1984: 45).

Some companies provide their employees with company-owned fitness studios or free fruit baskets in order to assure a healthy diet.

In addition to direct services "on the job" there are additional services to carry out private obligations including laundry service, cleaning services or errand services.

Relocation services such as assistance in finding a flat for the family, a new job for the spouse or the appropriate school for the children likewise fall in this category.

Smith and Gardner analyze the relationship between the use of work-family-balance measures and the perception of work-family-conflict and family-work-conflict (Smith/Gardner, 2007). For each employee they calculate the average employment

rate of initiatives, and find a strong negative relationship between their use and perceived work-family-conflict (Smith/Gardner, 2007: 9).

Finally, the company culture represents an essential lever to improve employees' work-family-balance. The introduction of a company culture that is results-oriented and not based upon mere physical attendance helps the employees to ameliorate their resource management (Stock-Homburg/Roederer, 2009: 29).

2.3.2 Individual-related Measures

Similar to the work-related dimension, individual-related measures can affect resources and/or demands. This domain can only be influenced by the employee and not by the company. Concerning existing demands it is essential for employees to define limits for the work load that can be managed without having a feeling of overload. These limits differ substantially between employees. They can try to strengthen their social, psychological and physical resources.

- Social resources include: the family, the circle of friends or the relationship with colleagues at work. These are vital resources which should be protected and fostered constantly (Stock-Homburg/Bauer, 2007: 32).
- Stress resistance and mental balance are psychological resources that can be learned and developed.
- The last pillar of personal resources is physical health. Various employees, and especially managers with large workloads, treat their bodies as machines. Often they don't care for physical needs and ignore warning signals. By doing physical exercise and making use of sport activities offered by the company, the employee enhances his or her power of endurance and maintains physical fitness (Lovelace et al., 2007: 380).
- In addition to sports, overall well-being can be enhanced by relying on balanced nutrition and getting sufficient time for sleep and regeneration.

In summary, work-family-balance measures offered by the company can only be effective if employees are willing to use them.

3 Case Study of Airbus

3.1 The Company

3.1.1 History

In the sixties, the European aircraft market was very nationalized. Main players were the Deutsche Airbus GmbH, which was a consortium of German aircraft manufacturers, the British company Hawker Siddely Aviation and the French Aerospatiale which was a merger of Nord Aviation and Sud Aviation. Each company tried to launch and establish its aircrafts in the marketplace, but it was evident that they would not be able to compete with the big American manufacturers such as Boeing and Douglas Aircraft Company which held more than 80% of the world-wide aircraft market (Airbus: Early Days, 17.03.2012). In response to the competitive market, the European companies Aerospatiale and Deutsche Airbus GmbH decided to establish a syndicate (“groupe d’intérêts économiques”) that would enable them to build an aircraft with complementary strengths, the A300, while remaining separate companies. In 1971, the Spanish aircraft manufacturer CASA joined the consortium. The British company British Aerospace, which emerged from the fusion of British Aircraft Corporation and Hawker Siddely Aviation, entered the group in 1979. In the eighties innovations such as the new fly-by-wire technology increased sales and Airbus succeeded in obtaining international purchase orders. They also increased orders by introducing the new A320 family.

In 1989, the German shareholder Daimler-Benz took over the Deutsche Airbus GmbH, calling it from then on DASA (Daimler Aerospace SA). In the early nineties, Airbus faced an economic downturn due to the gulf war, and the turnover dropped. Even after the end of the gulf war the economic situation stayed critical, but Airbus continued to invest in the expansion of the A320 family and in the development of its new project, the A340 family.

The second half of the nineties was characterized by growing passenger flows, particularly for long distances. This was the precondition of the new prestige project, the A3XX (later named A380), which was designed in the following years. In 1998, Airbus held 52% of the new aircraft market (Airbus: Record-breakers, 17.03.2012). In 2000 the legal status changed as Aerospatiale, CASA and DASA merged to form

EADS (European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company). EADS held 80% of Airbus, and British Aerospace held the remaining 20%. With the attacks of 9/11 the aviation industry collapsed. However, in the following years Airbus managed to acquire a new customer segment with the low-cost carriers which were very interested in the A320 family. In 2006, British Aerospace sold its stake in Airbus to the EADS group. In 2007 the first A380 was delivered.

3.1.2 Products and Production Facilities

Airbus S.A.S. designs, builds and sells aircrafts, mainly for civil use but also for military applications. Each type of aircraft is based on a certain program, for example the A380 program. These programs have a very long planning horizon and often run over many years or even decades. The market for wide-body passenger aircraft is dominated by the companies Airbus and the American competitor Boeing, that is to say there is a duopoly. In 2010, Airbus realized a turnover of approximately 30 billion Euros.

Airbus' headquarters is based in Toulouse (France) and has production facilities in four European countries. These are:

- France (Toulouse, Méaulte, Nantes, Saint-Nazaire)
- Germany (Hamburg, Bremen, Buxtehude, Stade)
- Spain (Getafe, Sevilla, Puerto Real, Ilesxas)
- United Kingdom (Filton, Broughton)

Furthermore, Airbus has a joint-venture with a Chinese company. Together they operate a production site (joint venture) in Tianjin.

3.1.3 Employees

Airbus S.A.S has almost 54,000 employees. About 40% are based in France, 30% in Germany and approximately 15% in England and in Spain. Women make up 15% of the Airbus workforce. The highest ratio of women is in France with 18.6%, the lowest in England with 7.3%. Nearly 29% of the Airbus workforces are blue-collar workers, meaning they directly assemble the aircrafts. Their tasks are physically demanding. Almost half of the jobs in England (45.1%) are blue-collar jobs; this also explains the low ratio of women. The lowest blue-collar rate is in France with 21.9%.

The average Airbus employee is 41 years old. In all four Airbus countries, the average blue-collar worker is younger than the average white-collar worker. Across the four countries, blue-collar workers are on average four years younger than white-collar workers. The detailed allocation is denoted in Figure 3.

	France	Germany	England	Spain	Total
Number Employees	22393	16684	8174	7664	54915
Relative Share	0,41	0,30	0,15	0,14	1,00
Male	18234	14439	7579	6430	46682
Female	4159	2245	595	1234	8233
Ratio of Women	18,6%	13,5%	7,3%	16,1%	15,0%
Blue-collar	4895	5042	3689	2204	15830
White-collar	17217	11439	4393	4479	37528
Not assigned	281	203	92	981	1557
Ratio Blue-collar	21,9%	30,2%	45,1%	28,8%	28,8%
Average Age Blue-collar	36,11	38,47	42,96	40,16	38,41
Average Age White-collar	41,75	43,17	43,23	42,25	42,47
Average Age	40,47	41,68	43,03	41,31	41,34

Figure 3. Geographical distribution of Airbus employees
(Source: compiled by the author, based on Airbus-internal data)

3.2 The Study

Purpose of the Study

The objective of the study is to obtain a comprehensive practical assessment of work-family-balance in a transnational company like Airbus. First, the interviews had the objective to assess the understanding and the relevance of work-family-balance in practice. Second, depending on the employees' satisfaction with work-family-balance, practical consequences for the employees and for the company are listed and compared with outcomes proposed by theory. Third, the focus of research is on the expert's judgment concerning the main drivers of work-family-balance, thereby identifying differences and similarities compared to scientific findings. In order to determine the actions of the company, interviewees were requested to name work-family-balance measures and their effectiveness. Aiming to control for other variables, the study ends with an appraisal of the relationship between culture and work-family-balance.

Survey

The study is based on 16 qualitative expert interviews that were carried out in January and February 2012. The experts are mainly executive managers who are working

in the human resource department of Airbus and deal with the issue of work-family-balance in their work. The study focuses exclusively on Airbus activities in Europe. Respondents work either in France, Germany, Spain or England. The average age of the interviewees is 40.3 years and the average corporate affiliation is 8.3 years.

A guideline of questions was developed for the interviews. Additional questions were added regarding the respective area of expertise of each interviewee. All questionnaires were answered verbally via telephone except for one which was answered in written form. The recorded interviews were then transcribed and returned to the respondents for validation. Then the experts had the opportunity to amend or confirm their answers and send it back to the author of this study.

3.3 Study Results

Following the structure of the theoretical approach, the study results start with an assessment concerning the relevance of the issue work-family-balance at Airbus (3.3.1). Section 3.3.2 displays the understanding and the definition of work-family-balance, which is then followed by possible outcomes (3.3.3). Section 3.3.4 highlights the drivers which are identified in practice while chapter 3.3.5 presents the measures implemented by Airbus. In section 3.3.6 those factors are listed, that do not have a direct or definite effect on work-family-balance, but which however may have a moderating impact. Throughout the entire presentation of the study results, similarities and differences between theory and practice are elaborated.

3.3.1 Relevance of the Topic Work-Family-Balance at Airbus

The issue of work-family-balance is evidently a high priority at Airbus as 81% of the interviewees evaluate the relevance of work-family-balance in the company as high or very high (Appendix A). Most of the experts observe an increasing importance of the issue over the past ten years. Whereas in the past, companies have focused mainly on physical stability of the employees, experts suggest that currently psychological risks and diseases are likewise taken into account.

This perception of an increased relevance in practice is consistent with the vast body of research that has been conducted on this subject.

Interviews reveal as a main reason for this increased relevance that work resources are becoming more mobile across companies and countries. This is due to increasing globalization and reduced legal working restrictions, especially in Europe. Employees adapt themselves to this development by doing international studies and working in international companies. Because of the demographic change there is a limited amount of young, well-qualified employees, and meanwhile the demand for them is increasing. This is why companies recognize the need to retain employees, and providing a satisfying work-family-balance is a means to reach this objective.

For jobholders, especially for the younger generation Y, which is born after the beginning of the eighties, the objective of a satisfying work-family-balance is becoming a focal point of interest, emphasizing the need of the family and increased flexibility. Expert K, who has the longest job tenure, reports that twenty years ago at the beginning of Airbus, employees had great flexibility and independency, also because of the limited size of Airbus. At the turn of the century Airbus grew considerably, and even though salaries increased, job satisfaction and satisfaction with work-family-balance decreased because of emerging stress and the neglect of personal life. In the past five years, according to Expert K, values have changed dramatically with an increasing consideration of both domains work and family.

Hence, while research accounts for the environmental changes of an employee as a main reason for the increasing issue relevance, some interviewees name the changing values and priorities as a cause.

Another factor for the growing importance of work-family-balance is the increasing trans-nationality of Airbus and its enormous size. The approach to work-family-balance becomes more structured, for instance, with the setup of a project team work-life-balance.

Another reason for more focus on work-family-balance is a disturbing trend in suicides at the French company France Telecom in the mid-2000s. Numerous suicides were linked to bad working conditions and this led to an increased consciousness about work-family-balance in the French industry. The scandal also has an impact at Airbus. Though topics like work-family-balance or burn-out have been discussed in

scientific research for decades, they were not present in practice until tragedies happened as seen at France Telecom or other companies.

However, there are also dissenting opinions. Expert O feels that the importance of work-family-balance is underestimated at Airbus and Expert L does not see a change regarding this issue, emphasizing that the success of a satisfying work-family-balance still depends more strongly on the supervisor and not on introduced company guidelines. Expert F thinks that a satisfying work-family-balance at Airbus is still difficult to find and that the workload of each employee is constantly increasing.

3.3.2 Definition of Work-Family-Balance at Airbus

The common understanding of work-family-balance means finding a satisfying relationship between the professional and the private life. It seems that theoreticians as well as practitioners strongly link work-family-balance to the outcome satisfaction.

Expert H defines work-life-balance as “ability to prioritize both work life and family life, without one suffering due to the other”. Thereby he displays the strong interrelation between the two domains, emphasizing that participation in one domain should not constrain participation in the other domain. This interpretation is what Greenberg and Beutell define as a low work-family-conflict (Greenhaus/Beutell: 1985: 77). Thus, the assumption of the author, that a high level of work-family-balance is equal to a low level of work-family-conflict and family-work-conflict is confirmed, if one follows the explanations of Expert H and Greenberg/Beutell.

Expert N states that “each employee has to find the right balance between his/her duties at work and the personal constraints”. This definition emphasizes the individualistic and subjective nature of work-family-balance and is consistent with the idea of work-family-balance delivered by Higgins et al. (Higgins et al., 2000: 19).

Expert C pictures work-life-balance as “the capability of an individual to prioritize between all the opportunities and constraints of the job and all the opportunities and constraints of the personal life”. This idea is comparable to the resource-based view that identifies demands in each of the two domains, which have to be satisfied with a limited amount of resources. Expert M argues in the same direction, stating that

work-family-balance is affected if the given resources are insufficient to satisfy existing objectives or demands. This interference is what research calls work-family-conflict or family-work-conflict. Thereby work-family-balance is not a permanent status but can change from periods of satisfaction to periods of unhappiness with work-family-balance.

For Expert L, work-life-balance is “to be efficient at work and simultaneously happy in private life”. This interpretation emphasizes the win-win-situation for employee and company.

Comparable to the definitions of scholars presented in section 1.2, Expert P and Expert J underline in their definitions possible outcomes of a satisfying work-life-balance like for example overall well-being or the health status.

Expert P also points out the very individualistic nature of work-life-balance which is already mentioned by Expert N, meaning that every employee has his or her own equilibrium between the two domains.

Expert D stresses in his definition of work-life-balance the different dimensions of time strain and psychological strain. This multi dimensionality can be likewise observed in the theoretical approach to work-family-conflict in section 2.2.

Overall, the definitions delivered by the experts are close to those provided by scholars except for two differences.

1. Practitioners speak of work-life-balance even though they refer to the challenge of harmonizing work-life and family-life. In this context scholars use the term work-family-balance.
2. In contrast to existing literature, none of the interviewees links his/her explanations directly to the construct of work-family-conflict. Thus work-family-conflict is a term which is prevalent in scientific research but not common in practice.

3.3.3 Outcomes of Work-Family-Balance at Airbus

The consequences or outcomes for the company are strongly connected with those for the employee. Most of the interviewees picture the following cause-effect-relationship: a favorable work-family-balance leads to positive outcomes for the em-

employees and this in turn determines positive outcomes for the employer, implying a win-win-situation for both sides. Expert F evaluates positive employee outcomes as a precondition for positive company outcomes. However, the same relationship exists likewise in the negative sense, implying a “lose-lose-situation” in the long run.

3.3.3.1 Outcomes for the Employees at Airbus

The main outcome for the employees which is listed by all experts is engagement (Appendix A). Those employees who are content with their work-family-balance like their work and are ready “to go the extra mile,” in other words, they endeavor to achieve their goals. They are more loyal, more motivated and more creative. This in turn entails an improved company performance, as direct positive employee outcomes serve as indirect positive outcomes for the company. Expert N refers in this context to the win-win-situation.

Expert I makes a clear distinction between satisfaction and engagement. Employees are evaluated as satisfied when they receive their steady remuneration and perceive a certain job security. When employees are working because they want to work and to be part of the whole, then they are judged as engaged. Thus the main difference lies in the degree of involvement.

Half of the interviewees (50%) mention the health status as a main outcome for the employee (Appendix A). Thereby a high degree of satisfaction with work-family-balance implies an enhanced fitness, physically but also psychologically.

The third most frequently listed outcome, given a negative perception of work-family-balance, is stress (Appendix A). Those employees who are constantly experiencing stress are more likely to perceive feelings of burn-out and over-strain. Contrary, employees who are satisfied with their work-family-balance are able to handle stressful tasks or situations in a more objective and relaxed manner.

Expert P describes work-family-balance as a security net. If, for instance, there is a sick family member, an employee who feels satisfied with work-family-balance will find support and understanding in his company environment and thus can handle increasing personal demands. In case that the work-family-balance is not satisfying,

the employee depends exclusively on one element. “And normally if then something goes wrong at work and they have already sacrificed their family, then they are free falling and will experience a big personal crisis” (Expert P).

Another outcome of a positive work-family-balance is “the feeling of having accomplished something in life”, meaning a feeling of self-fulfillment in both domains, personal and professional (Expert F). This is consistent with research on overall well-being that is mentioned by scholars in section 1.3.1.

Further outcomes include an increased feeling of commitment and better teamwork capabilities, which are crucial to positive outcomes for the company. In turn a work-family-balance that is negatively evaluated leads to a lack of motivation, higher frustration, burn-out and depression.

3.3.3.2 Outcomes for the Company Airbus

The most important outcome for the company is enhanced performance, given the situation where employees are satisfied with their work-family-balance. 69% of the experts mention improved company results which can be measured in real key performance indicators as a main outcome (Appendix A). There are other outcomes as listed below, but in the end they lead to one main outcome and this is company performance (Expert B).

This appraisal is consistent with findings from Perry-Smith and Blum, who find a positive relationship between work-family policies, thereby improved work-family-balance, and the company performance (Perry-Smith/Blum, 2000: 1112).

Every second expert (50%) evaluates the increased company attractiveness and reputation as an important outcome for the company, subject to the condition that employees are content with their extent of work-family-balance (Appendix A). Expert E stresses the improved credibility of Airbus in industry and society. Scientific research, at least those used in this study, does not focus on these outcomes. Thus attractiveness of the company in order to allure new talents seems to play an essential role in practice.

38% of the experts refer to the negative relationship between satisfaction with work-family-balance and the labor turnover rate (Appendix A). A low fluctuation rate is crucial for Airbus as projects are based on long-term perspectives and as the employees are highly specialized in what they are doing and difficult to replace. Thus the adjustment to a new job is time- and cost- intensive.

Airbus has a low labor turnover rate (Expert G). This is also reflected in the background of the interviewees. Although the average age is 40.3, the average corporate affiliation reaches 8.3 years. This is rather long, taken into account that the age range of 30-40 is characterized by increased change of employment.

With the same frequency (38%) a reduced absenteeism rate is listed as a main outcome of employee satisfaction with work-family-balance (Appendix A). Additionally, a better work-family-balance leads to a higher degree of concentration and attentiveness which leads to fewer accidents at work (Expert K). Costs of absenteeism are crucial to the success of a company and Airbus has introduced a project team which is exclusively dealing with countermeasures in order to decrease the absenteeism rate (Expert D).

Company outcomes in the context of a negatively perceived work-family-balance are decreased productivity and a higher rate of absenteeism of the employees (Expert F, Expert O).

3.3.4 Drivers of Work-Family-Balance at Airbus

This chapter describes the drivers of work-family-balance that are mentioned by the interviewees and determine work-family-balance. As suggested by the resource-based-theory, the following drivers can be divided into those stemming from the work-environment and those stemming from the personal environment. Interviewees name more drivers in the work-related dimension than in the personal-related dimension. Thus the influencing factors arising from the work environment seem to play a predominant role. This may be due to the work domain, being less permeable than the private domain.

3.3.4.1 Work-related Dimension

Figure 4 displays the drivers mentioned in the work environment. Asked for the main drivers of work-family-balance in the context of the work-related environment, the most frequently named factor is supervisor support, meaning the immediate manager (Appendix A). 75% of the interviewees name this factor as essential in realizing a satisfying work-family-balance. Expert H reports on a supervisor who didn't like when his team members left the office before him, thus leading to a situation where employees stayed late in the office, implying a significant deterioration of work-family-balance in the entire team.

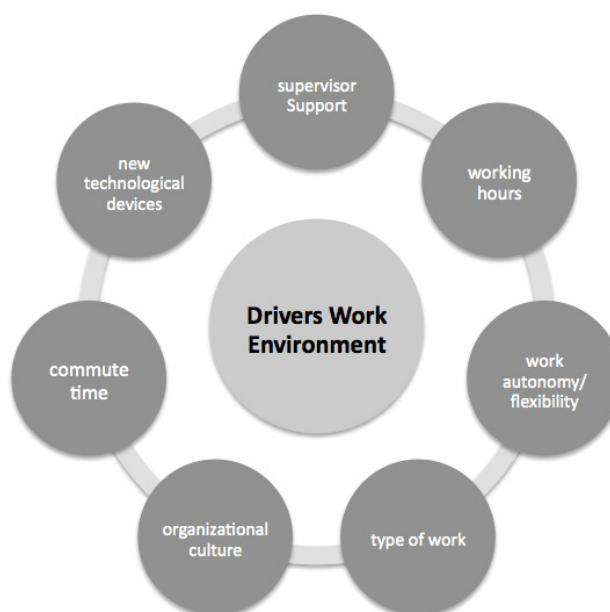


Figure 4. Drivers originating from the work environment
(Source: compiled by the author)

According to Expert P, “the supervisor has all means in his hands to support employees’ work-life-balance positively, or to destroy it”. Thus this qualitative study confirms the significant influence of supervisor support on work-family-balance, a relationship which is already referred to by Thomas and Ganster (Thomas/Ganster, 1995: 10). In the context of social support inside the company, the level of trust and backing that an employee experiences from his/her colleagues is a positive driver of work-family-balance (Expert N). Comparing theoretical with practical results, both perspectives highlight the importance of social support and understanding originating from the supervisor and from the colleagues.

The second most often cited driver is the net working time. 69% of the interviewees mention this factor as a main negative driver (Appendix A). Expert I, who has been working in the aviation industry for many years, observes an increase in working hours over the last decade, which implies growing demands in the work environment. Other experts share this view as for example Expert C explains that in the past, one program used to be developed sequentially after another. Today different programs are developed at the same time, which leads to higher demands for the employees. Expert B confirms that with the same means, such as a constant number of employees, the company tries to produce more and more profit each year. Overall this means greater time demands and more pressure for the employees. As a result, if the resources are not improved or the demands reduced, this causes significant deterioration of work-family-balance.

Theory especially refers to the low wage sector, where employees have to work increasingly more to obtain the monetary equivalent that they are used to. Financial pressures are only mentioned by one expert at Airbus (Expert Q).

Linked to the net working time are the patterns of work. A blue-collar worker who works in a three shift system feels a higher burden than an employee who has a regular working time, that is to say starting in the morning and finishing in the late afternoon/evening (Expert D). The shift worker will experience more difficulties in balancing work and family demands due to a missing work rhythm. Additionally, work demands, as in shift work, can limit the social support through friends, sport clubs, etc, as the unsteady work pattern often conflicts with personal activities.

Another factor in the organization of work is the clearly predefined work processes for the shift worker. His or her autonomy to decide when to work on which activity is very limited as operating procedures are predetermined and have to be fulfilled within a certain time slot. This situation reduces the feeling of control which in turn increases work-family-conflict (Frone et al., 1992: 69).

In addition to net working time and how the work is scheduled, the type of work itself plays an important role. For Expert J and Expert N, the main driver of work-family-balance in the work environment is the quality/type of work tasks. Taking for

example, a working day which is loaded with meetings that often lead to inefficient and time wasting discussions is perceived more negatively than a working day with clearly defined tasks and visible results. That is to say, the ratio of time input and outcome equally affects work-family-balance and well-being in general (Expert L). If the scope of activities is clearly defined and each employee knows his/her role and responsibilities, this alleviates conflicts in work life and positively influences work-family-balance (Expert O).

If tasks are challenging and complex, a successful handling of the tasks requires the existence or the development of certain skills or means like organizational and planning competencies, which facilitate the achievement of work-family-balance. Thus, having the right skills or capacities to resolve work problems is important (Expert O). This fits with findings of Valcour (Valcour, 2007: 1513). However the idea suggested by theory, that highly complex jobs tend to be managed by highly skilled employees, is not supported in practice (Valcour, 2007: 1515).

The interviewees do not refer to the negative relationship between physical demands in jobs and work-family-balance as it is pictured in theory (Pleck et al., 1980: 30). Regarding the type of work, the different functions within a company seem to have an impact on work-family-balance.

Expert H states that employees in, for instance, the finance or HR department, have smaller problems in balancing work and family, as their work flow is quite constant, compared to those employees who work in aircraft programs like for the A380 and have very discontinuous workloads and challenging deadlines. Expert Q shares this point of view, referring to a sales manager with 24-7 availability for the clients, for whom this will obviously have a negative impact on his work-family-balance. In contrast, Expert K does not see any dependency between department type and work-family-balance. For her, each employee has a functional role and wants to perform this concrete role, independent from the respective work flow or work quantity.

Though scientific research integrated the type of work, for instance the degree of intellectual challenge, into the framework of work-family-balance, the impact of the department type and the linked types of work on work-family-balance has not yet

been analyzed. The results of this study support the idea of a relationship between type of department and work-family-balance.

In the category of work type, the occurrence of business trips is critical. Those employees who have frequent business trips have longer periods when they cannot see their families and often struggle with jetlag and sleep deprivation (Expert G). As business, especially for Airbus, is becoming more and more transnational, travel increases and has a negative influence on work-family-balance (Expert Q). The obligation to have worked several years abroad before starting a management career is not mentioned by the interviewees.

The organizational culture is likewise a main driver as every second interviewee (50%) sees this factor as crucial for work-family-balance (Appendix A). Expert L describes her perception that the company culture sometimes encourages using all energy and resources for work life, leading to expectations and pressure on employees that may worsen their work-family-balance. If this results in a culture where employees commonly are only physically present, then the performance of the company and the work-family-balance of the employees' worsen (Expert G).

Within the framework of the organizational culture, the type of communication is essential. If employees dare to dissent from predominant beliefs and are not disadvantaged by doing so, this way of open communication enriches company performance and leads to increased self-esteem and well-being on the employee side (Expert P).

All Airbus production facilities are close to areas of high population density and intense traffic. This problem seems to be critical in the region of Toulouse. The traffic in this region is very difficult to anticipate, thus employees have to calculate a large time buffer, which in turn draws on the employees' time and strains resources. Calculating in regular working time, one third of the employees in Toulouse spend in addition to the ten month of work in a year (two months holidays, public holidays included) additional six weeks in their car, just for commuting.

Nearly every second interviewee (44%) mentions the daily commute as a main negative driver of work-family-balance (Appendix A). This results from significantly

increased traffic volume in the last two decades. Consequently, this driver seems to be much more present in practice than it is in theoretical research.

The new technology and electronic devices that found their way into employees' lives have an ambivalent effect on work-family-balance. On the one hand, as stated by Expert N, technical progress can be a positive driver. For example, it enables working from home through the use of laptops and the capability to log on to corporate networks remotely.

On the other hand, as Expert I argues, the new communication technology, with the success of smart phones, leads to a feeling of constant, 24-hour availability, thereby violating the ancient boundaries between work and family life. Thus he evaluates the new technology as a negative driver of work-family-balance. Expert B and Expert K criticize in the technological context the increasing "floods" of emails sent in work life, often time-demanding without real information content.

In general, the direction of influence that stems from the new technology depends on the discipline and sense of responsibility of each employee (Expert K). Additionally, the extent to which the company sets limits concerning the use of technical devices determines the impact on work-family-balance (Expert N).

As for the commute time, the influence of technological progress on work-family-balance increased during the last twenty years and has not yet been systematically considered in scientific research dealing with the interface of work life and family life. At Airbus it seems to be a critical influencing factor as the majority of interviewees that mention the technological change as a driver of work-family-balance, evaluate it as a negative impact.

The negative relationship between the management level and work-family-balance which DiRenzo et al. investigate in their study seems to hold for this study at Airbus (DiRenzo et al., 2011: 309). Expert F and Expert Q confirm this connection. Expert C explains that the management responsibilities that go along with more senior positions often have to be managed on top of the day-to-day obligations. This appears to be logical as top management, compared to the average employee, has much higher

work demands and strain levels like for example extreme working time or performance pressures, but not necessarily more resources to draw on.

Research clearly identifies job insecurity as being negatively correlated with work-family-balance (Beham et al., 2011: 117; Edwards/Rothbard, 1999: 112). None of the interviewees mention this driver, suggesting that among the managers, Airbus is at present perceived as a secure and reliable employer.

3.3.4.2 Personal-related Dimension

In the context of the personal-related dimension, the most important driver is obviously family life. Though every expert mentions family life as a main influencing factor, ideas on how family actually affects work-family-balance differs substantially. Whereas one group of experts emphasizes the backing and aid which arise from family life, the other group points out the obligations and demands that stem from this domain. The drivers of the personal environment are displayed in Figure 5.

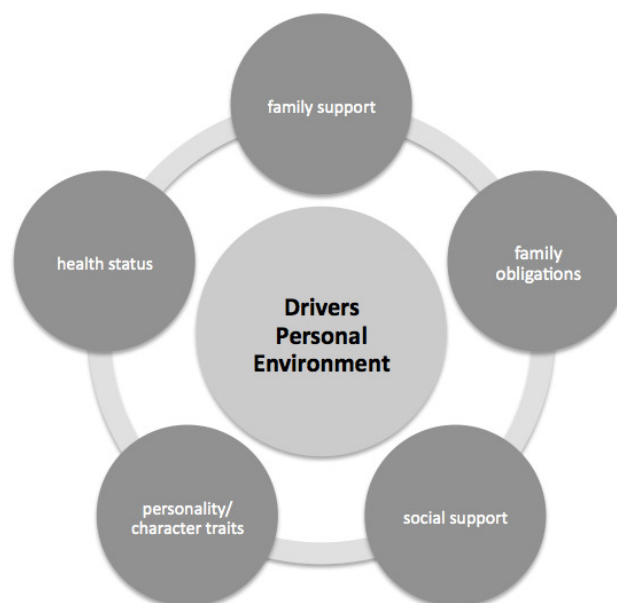


Figure 5. Drivers originating from the personal environment
(Source: compiled by the author)

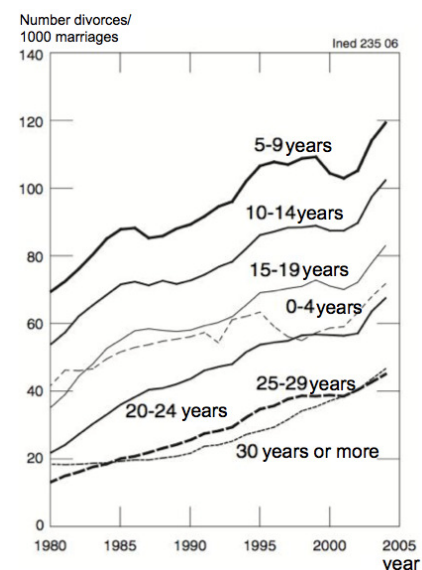
56% of the interviewees mention family life as a support that employees receive and thus evaluate it as a positive driver of work-family-balance (Appendix A). A reason for this opinion is that family life enables an employee to step back, take a different point of view compared to the work view and thus set limits on the work dedication (Expert M). The company seems to provide employees with a family with more sup-

port for obtaining an acceptable work/non-work-balance than those without family (Expert G). The degree of support provided by the family is related to the proximity of the workplace.

44% of the interviewees evaluate family life and having children as a negative driver of work-family-balance that creates a day-to-day struggle and running to satisfy demands from the work and simultaneously from the family domain (Expert L). Employees with family need more flexibility in order to satisfy all demands (Expert O). Especially employees with young children seem to have frequently difficulties in finding a satisfying work-family-balance (Expert G, Expert M). These two sides of family life are also reflected in the theoretical findings of Michel et al. (Michel et al., 2011: 699). Spousal employment is evaluated as a negative driver as both parents have less time to fulfill family demands (Expert M). Expert F argues that if there are no family obligations, it is easier to satisfy demands in the work environment.

The fact that nearly every second expert at Airbus evaluates the matter of having a family life and children as a negative driver of work-family-balance may have two explanations. Either the majority of experts themselves has very young children who are generally very time-demanding and strain-causing and thus is somehow biased, or the reconcilability of work life at Airbus and raising children is limited.

Occasionally, demands in the family domain can be extreme. Expert D explains that at Airbus, “8% of the employees have extraordinary family obligations like for example caring for a parent who has Alzheimer or raising a handicapped child”. Additionally, the stability of families and relationships has decreased over the last two decades. Figure 6 displays the number of divorces in France per thousand marriages (y-axis) with regard to the observed year (x-axis) and the duration



of the marriage. As is evident, the divorce rate grew constantly over the past 25 years and is especially

Figure 6. Development of the divorce rate
(Source: Prioux, 2006)

high for those marriages that exist between five to fifteen years.

This development is similar in the UK and in Germany. In Spain and in other South European countries the divorce rate is much lower (Prioux, 2006: 412). In France in the year 2005, the average age of marriage for women was 29.5 and for men 31.1 (Quelle Prioux, 2006: 410).

Regarding the sample of interviewees, the average age was 40.3 and 50% were within the age range of 35-45.

If the sample is generalized, the average Airbus employee belongs to the marriage group with the highest divorce rate. Expert D confirms this appraisal of a decrease in the personal continuity, implying stress and extreme emotional strain for the employee. Expert N explains that there is an increasing percentage of single-parent-families that manage parental and work demands on their own. Theoretical research likewise emphasizes the ambiguous influence of family life on work-family-balance (Adams et al., 1996).

In addition to the family domain, the social network of friends and participation in associations and sport clubs is an important positive driver in the personal environment that affects work-family-balance. There are many expatriates who had to leave their original, well-known social environment in order to work at the headquarters of Airbus in Toulouse. Expert P explains that when employees move to Toulouse, with or without their family, Airbus has to support them in establishing a new social environment, in making friends and thereby receiving support from them. Expert B states that this relocation support for new arrivals is at present non-existing or very small. Moreover, the company has to accept that an employee and his/her family may prefer to not relocate and remain in the familiar social environment and to guard this personal social resource (Expert P).

The personality of the employee him-/herself has a significant impact on work-family-balance. The personal capacity to take some distance from work and to unwind from job life is crucial in balancing work and personal demands (Expert F). Energetic employees have more power to fulfill all demands and thus have better chances to achieve a satisfying work-family-balance (Expert B). In the context of personality, Expert P refers to the highly vulnerable group of excessive workers, so-called workaholics. These employees are extremely involved and focused in work

life and tend to neglect their private life. This extreme participation in work life is a negative driver of work-family-balance (Higgins et al., 1992: 67). Often the problem of extreme participation in work life goes along with the incapacity to delegate tasks to team members and to hand over control (Expert M). This implies more workload and a negative influence on work-family-balance.

Compared to theory, the experts' knowledge about the relationship between certain personality traits and work-family-balance was rather vague.

The health status of an employee functions as a driver and as an outcome of work-family-balance (Expert K). Those employees who possess a good physical fitness perform well even under pressure and are, for instance, more able to stand work demands such as regular business trips and jetlag, or family demands such as a lack of sleep due to childcare at night.

3.3.5 Work-Family-Balance Measures at Airbus

For better transparency, the measures used at Airbus are divided into categories that have already been deployed in the theoretical approach, that is to say time-related, education-related or financial-related measures and in direct services. It has to be noted that the range of work-family-balance measures that are offered differ between the four Airbus countries. Moreover, the involvement of works councils varies between countries. The prevailing expert opinion is that the range of work-family-balance measures and their acceptance is the highest in Germany.

- In the context of time-related measures there is the differentiation between working time models and work leave options. Airbus offers part-time work in each country to adapt the workload at the request of each employee. In Germany this system is very widely spread, in France it is becoming more and more accepted but it is not yet very common (Expert G). In Spain part-time work is not common at all.

In order to make the workload more flexible, Airbus introduced working from home. This is implemented widely in Germany and runs as a pilot project in France. In the UK, telework shall be introduced with the opening of the new campus at Filton. In Spain there is no working from home.

Flextime programs enable the employee to start and finish work within a flexible time frame (Expert N). Flextime exists in Germany, France and the UK.

It has to be noted that working from home and flextime are only available in the white-collar and not in the blue-collar sector.

Employees in Germany can use life work time accounts to define, on their own, intense work periods in their life and the beginning of retirement.

Work leave options include: daily leave options, sabbaticals, maternity and paternity leaves and exist in all four Airbus countries in Europe. Leave options likewise comprise part-time MBAs. When selecting employees for the MBA program, Airbus does not merely check if people are able to manage the additional workload but rather if people are still able to ensure a healthy work-life-balance (Expert G).

- Regarding education-related measures, there are workshops for shop floor workers to make the workplace more ergonomic. A program was introduced called “well-being at work”. This program measures the level of stress in each working group and proposes specific actions. For example trainings on stress management are offered (Expert I). There are workshops available on psychological risk prevention (Expert B). In Germany there is counseling available on drug addiction and family-related problems.
- Financial-related measures include the non-monetary recognition approach. This approach aims at direct and individualized rewards for employees with outstanding performance at work, as for example, a mountain bike would be awarded to an employee who enjoys sports or a voucher for an exclusive restaurant could go to an employee who is a gourmet (Expert P). If employees take longer parental leaves they have the possibility to be reemployed after the period of leave. Employees, who have extraordinary expenses like for instance the purchase of a house, can arrange loans from Airbus. (Expert J). These financial measures exist only in Germany and France.
- In the field of direct services, measures vary broadly between the four Airbus countries. In France it is very much the works council which is in charge of

daily and social services and Airbus contributes financially. The Airbus Staff Council (AISC) in France organizes leisure and sport activities for employees and their families. In Germany there are crèches on site to provide childcare, as well as a post office counter and a small supermarket. So far these measures only exist in Germany and are not yet implemented in France or the other Airbus countries. Moreover, there is holiday childcare in Germany and in England. Coffee areas where employees can have a break and chat with their colleagues are regarded as a useful way to balance work time (Expert Q).

The “Employee Assistance Program” (EAP), exists to provide assistance to expatriates in finding a house or sorting out tax issues (Expert N).

There is no clear agreement as to why these measures are employed. The approach stems from a need that needed to be filled. (Expert D). For example flexible working schemes give employees the flexibility to better combine work and family duties.

With respect to the effectiveness of the measures, there are no concrete and clear results (Expert I). As long as employees feel that with the use of certain work-family-balance measures they will risk their career, these measures will only have a medium effect (Expert G, Expert J). This is the essential trigger of the measures’ effectiveness as social acceptance will lead to an increased willingness of the employees to take advantage of certain services or working time arrangements.

So far, there has not been a survey to evaluate employees’ work-family-balance at Airbus. The only survey conducted was on the engagement of employees.

The only survey conducted relating to employed measures was in Germany regarding the usefulness of home office working. Employees using home office work, as well as their supervisors were surveyed and the results were positive. Main advantages for the employer are a greater productivity and a greater work satisfaction. Employees benefit from better opportunities to resume work after a parental leave, no commuting, a flexible working time and in general a higher quality of life. Telework is especially employed in the engineering, finance, procurement and information department.

However it has to be ensured that colleagues working from home maintain in communication with their supervisor and their colleagues and don't become isolated (Expert C).

Often measures are judged as successful or effective if they are well accepted and highly demanded (Expert Q, Expert E).

Expert N states that she would like to have further feedback on the benefit of other measures.

There are two problems arising within the context of work-family-balance measures. First, the top management may speak of existing measures but these measures only exist on paper (Expert P). Expert L confirms this problem, stating that measures concerning work time flexibility exist only virtually and not in everyday work life. In the other case, there are measures provided by the company but the employees do not know about them, implying a communication problem (Expert L, Expert N).

3.3.6 Additional Variables in the Context of Work-Family-Balance

In addition to the drivers mentioned in the previous chapter, there are other variables that may influence work-family-balance, but whose actual impact on work-family-balance cannot be clearly defined. An aim of the study is to examine whether the different cultures in the four European Airbus countries have an influence on the organization of work and personal life and therefore affect work-family-balance. 75% of the experts feel that cultural differences influence the expectations and habits concerning work-family-balance (Appendix A).

These differences are evident in the organization of the work day and the work rhythm. Expert L states that for instance the lunch break in Germany is in average 40 min long whereas in France it is 90 min. Thus on average, French realize a higher "work-life-balance" during lunch time, but in return Germans have a better "work-life-balance" in the evenings as they return earlier from work than French and have time for family or leisure activities. French employees may work longer hours and stay later in the office, but in return take longer lunch breaks and have more holidays (Expert Q). If there is a direct effect of the different work day organization on the overall work-family-balance is not clear.

Several interviewees have the impression that in France or Spain presence culture is predominant, meaning that “the more hours you spend at work, the more you are regarded as a hard-working employee” (Expert O, Expert N, Expert F). This is also why telecommuting is not common in the existing cultures in France and Spain.

The German and English cultures are more known as task-oriented, meaning that when things are done employees go home and those who stay in the office all night are regarded as organizing their job poorly (Expert O). In England telecommuting is likewise at present not very common, also because supervisors prefer to keep a certain level of control (Expert Q).

Expert K has the opinion that though the way to get to the results maybe very different and often more time demanding in France and Spain than in Germany or England, the quality of outcome is often very much the same. She is convinced that cultural differences are more enriching than conflicting for the company as they offer different perspectives. Expert M feels that in Germany it is easier for an employee to separate between work and private life, maybe also because the companies accept the private life to a greater extent, whereas for French the two domains are closer linked and interfere more often with each other. Cultural differences likewise stem from the educational system. Expert C believes that in France the business schools do not teach to act in both domains. Instead students are trained to work and to function.

For Expert J, it is not necessarily the nationality that affects work-family-balance; rather it is the family and social policies that differ between the four countries, affecting expectations of the employees and usefulness of work-family-balance measures. For example the system of public crèches and nursery services is well developed in France, thus executives in France don’t expect to have childcare service on site (Expert I). In Germany primary school ends about noon, and the system of state-run childcare is far less developed. Hence the childcare on site offered by Airbus in Germany is a big success.

While some drivers are culturally influenced, others are not. Expert N states that the changes observed concerning the family structure or the technological progress concern all nations, implying that in this regard there are no cultural differences.

Another parameter, which is regularly mentioned are the different values and priorities of each generation, especially the difference between the Generation Baby Boomers/Generation X and the Generation Y.

Whereas the Baby Boomer Generation (born 1955-1965) and the Generation X (born 1960-1980) are seen as fully engaged in work activities that sometimes lead to problems in private life, the Generation Y (born 1980-2000) follows a more balanced approach and take their personal life more intensively into consideration (Expert D). Expert N mentions that the work role for the younger generation is diminishing. Derivates of the Generation Y have no problems in demanding for more tolerance with regard to their personal life. If this rests only a request, or if the generation Y objectively realizes a better work-family-balance remains unsettled.

Expert H feels that the industry culture affects work-family-balance. Thereby the IT industry has a different approach to work-family-balance than the manufacturing industry, which in turn has a different approach than the banking industry. For instance, employees working in more internet-based companies can practically work from wherever they want. This is not possible for employees working in a manufacturing company (Expert H). But whether there is an overall influence of the industrial culture on work-family-balance is not proven.

Research results regarding the influence of gender on work-family-balance differ considerably. Gutek et al. state in their study that women score higher than men in work-family-conflict and identically in the family-work-conflict scale, implying that on average, working women have bigger problems in realizing a satisfying work-family-balance than working men (Gutek et al., 1991: 567). Contrary to this view, Byron suggests that the difference of the relationship between gender and work-family-conflict or family-work-conflict is small, implying that gender is a poor driver of work-family-balance (Byron, 2005: 186; Ayree et al., 2005: 141). The expert interviews at Airbus do not provide information about the relationship between gender and work-family-balance.

4 Discussion

The previous two chapters of this thesis offer a theoretical approach to the construct of work-family-balance with complementary opinion from the practice at Airbus. In order to categorize drivers of work-family-balance, the Resource Drain Theory distinguishes between resources and demands that stem from the work- or the personal-related environment. The analysis at Airbus shows that this is a suitable approach. The result of this study is that numerous drivers which were named in scientific research were likewise acknowledged in practice, but to different extents.

Thus the practical part supports the scientific findings but likewise highlights additional influencing factors which in theory have not been named yet or only briefly.

In the work environment, the main driver of work-family-balance which the experts describe is the extent to which the direct supervisor supports his/her team members in balancing work and personal demands.

Beside the supervisor support, the organizational culture can function as a facilitator of work-family-balance if it respects the personal life in addition to work, but can in a negative sense exacerbate work-family-conflict. Scientific researchers as well as the experts at Airbus name this driver.

Within the scope of the work's nature, the net working hours, the work flexibility and the actual type of work influence work-family-balance and are mentioned in the theoretical and the practical approaches.

A driver which seems to evolve in practice and which is not yet systematically examined is the use of new technological devices. It enables working remotely and thus can facilitate coordination of work and family requests but at the same time blurs the boundaries between work and personal life which can increase work-family-conflict. A negative driver which appears as a result of the study and which is only partially investigated in theoretic research is increasing commute. Nearly half of the experts mention commute time as a main driver of work-family-balance.

In the personal environment, experts evaluate the family life as a main driver. On the one hand it can serve as a strong social support and enables the employee to step

back; on the other hand it can entail extreme demands as for instance childcare or eldercare. Research likewise points out the ambiguity of family life.

Another important driver in the personal environment is the support provided by friends. Hence the participation in clubs or associations helps buffer work and personal demands. This driver is examined in theory as well as in the interviews at Airbus. Several experts at Airbus evaluate the physical fitness of employees not only as an outcome but likewise as a central driver, more precisely a positive driver, of work-family-balance.

Finally, the study and theoretical works state that the personality of an employee influences the accessibility of work-family-balance as certain character traits help in finding a balance whereas others hinder it.

Managerial Implications

Existing work-family-balance measures either try to diminish/satisfy work or family demands or they aim to strengthen work or family resources. The following recommendations are directed to improve existing measures and their execution in practice or to propose new ways to ameliorate employees' work-family-balance. Thereby the focus is on the main drivers that are explained above as they seem to be the essential adjusting levers.

- As Expert P states, “the supervisor has all means in his hands to support employee's work-life-balance positively or to destroy it”. Supervisor trainings where managers learn to respect the team member's personal life and to see the “family behind the employee” are an effective means to improve employees' work-family-balance. This fits with the manager's development of empathy and sensitivity.
- The acknowledgement of seeing “the human being behind the employee” should be a key objective within the corporate culture and implemented in the company guidelines to ensure a maximum of support and transparency for the employee.
- The considerable negative impact of commuting has to be limited. This can be achieved with an extension of flexible working schemes. This would reduce the necessity to commute at peak times, as commuting during rush hours

is the biggest problem. Working from home would also ease the problem of commuting, but this arrangement has to be decided by the employee and the employer together.

- The advance of technological devices such as smartphones, laptops can be a threat for work-family-balance. The company has to set up rules to restrict the use of smart phones and the regular writing of emails to team members outside the normal working hours as it sets pressure on the recipient.
- Meetings should not be scheduled in the fringe time, that is to say very early in the morning or very late in the evening, as this leads to increased time-based work-family-conflicts for employees with family.
- The unanimous experts' opinion is that relocation services are not sufficient. Managers, eventually with their families, who left their social network in their home country, should obtain support by the company to get integrated in local associations, clubs etc. at their new living environment.
- Existing measures have to be communicated in an open manner. It is essential to precise that with the use of proposed measures, the employee doesn't suffer negative consequences as career damage or disapproval of the colleagues.
- The company should actively ask for feedback from employees and supervisors with regard to existing measures. This can be realized by means of surveys, as for instance already conducted concerning Telework in Germany.
- The company and the works council should regularly challenge existing habits. If a system is working, for example the private nursery system in France, this does not mean that it is the most cost-efficient/effective one.

Methodological Considerations

The original objective of this study was to conduct a quantitative survey in the entire human resource department (approximately 600 employees) at Airbus. The survey included items to measure the extent of work-family-conflict and family-work-conflict for each employee. Additional items comprised statements geared to the supervisor support, the organizational culture and the numbers of hours worked. The aim was to statistically assess the relationship between these three drivers and work-family-conflict. Further questions dealt with the employment of work-family-balance measures. Thus the effective influence of individual measures on work-family-

balance should have been determined. The complete survey can be reviewed in the appendix (Appendix C).

After eight weeks of consideration, the executive vice president human resources refused the study without a concrete reason. This reaction may illustrate that work-family-balance and possible surveys in this field are still delicate topics. Thus the input of the study grounds henceforth on qualitative interviews.

The sixteen expert interviews yielded extensive insights on the practical view of work-family-balance and its drivers. However, the generalizability of these findings is limited due to a missing representativeness. Qualitative interviews are always to some extent biased by the experts' personal experiences. Thus the objective of the study changed to a more investigative approach, where not only common drivers were confirmed, but also new drivers identified.

Fields Requiring Future Research

Future research should focus on the impact of individual work-family-balance measures on employees' work-family-balance. There are no scientific works that try to assess the effectiveness of a separate measure on work-family-balance.

The idea of several experts at Airbus is that the accessibility of work-family-balance is related to the department type, e.g. sales, finance or HR (Expert H, Expert Q). Pleck et al. measure the relationship between certain job characteristics and work-family-conflict, but do not combine it with different department types (Pleck et al., 1980: 31). Thus this hypothesis requires future research.

Moreover, the study results indicate that cultural differences influence the perception of work-family-balance. However the actual direction of effect is not clear.

For example the Asian culture respects and values to a large extent the principles of Confucianism, and the most important value of this mindset is the preservation of family harmony. Thus the relationship between work demands and work-family-conflict is stronger for Chinese people. In general Chinese people perceive work-family-conflict as more interfering with overall well-being than family-work-conflict and have higher levels of work-family-conflict than family-work-conflict (Ayree et al., 1999: 503; Yang et al., 2000: 120). Contrary the average American scores higher

on family-work-conflict than on work-family-conflict (Frone et al., 1992: 69). But as work-family-balance is equivalent to low scores on work-family-conflict *and* family-conflict, one cannot clearly deduce the level of work-family-balance from the cultural background. Thus there is a need for more research to better understand the interdependencies between cultural background and work-family-balance.

Conclusion

This study outlines the importance of work-family-balance in today's society and determines in detail the drivers in the work- and in the personal-related dimension. On the one hand certain drivers identified by established research have been confirmed in practice; on the other hand new drivers influencing work-family-balance have been identified.

Factors such as the changing mindset of the new Generation Y or the increasing scarcity of well-trained employees urge the executive management to consider innovative forms of deployment or working habits.

The initial reluctance of companies to consider work-family-balance measures is due to the need to invest money in the short-term and don't take credit for this investment until the long future. But as soon as the importance of positive company outcomes as staff retention and employer branding increases, likewise the willingness of companies to provide a satisfying work-family-balance for their employees will augment. Consequently, also the levers of work-family-balance, which were in the focus of this study, will edge ever closer to the middle.

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6 Appendix

Appendix A: Data Evaluation

Drivers work environment						Drivers personal environment						Outcomes company				Outcomes employee			Relevance work-life-balance			Cultural influence	
Supervisor Support	Organizational Culture	Type of work	Number of hours worked	work autonomy/ flexibility	new technological devices	Commute Time	Family Support	Family Obligations (childcare, eldercare)	Social Support (friends, clubs, associations)	character traits	physical/psychological fitness	Attractiveness of the company	Labour turnover rate	Absenteeism	Company performance	Engagement	Stress	Health Status	low	high	no answer	low	high
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
75.00%	50.00%	31.25%	68.75%	37.50%	43.75%	43.75%	56.25%	43.75%	37.50%	37.50%	25.00%	50.00%	37.50%	68.75%	100.00%	18.75%	50.00%	12.50%	81.25%	6.25%	25.00%	75.00%	

Appendix B: Interview Guideline

Introduction of the Research Issue



Dear all,

My name is Jan Ullrich and I am currently writing my thesis in the human resource department of the University Cologne.

The thesis serves as an empirical approach to better understand drivers/ influencing factors of work-life-balance. Therefore I complete theoretical findings in this domain with practical knowledge.

Besides writing my thesis I am working for the HR consultancy Kienbaum which works together with Airbus on Development Centers and Gates for the Band V/IV level.

The purpose of this interview is to obtain your practical expertise concerning work-life-balance in a globally acting company like Airbus. Therefore I prepared the questions which you find on page 2.

It would be very kind of you to take part in this scientific research which might yield additional benefit for Airbus.

The procedure is the following:

1. You read the questions and make up your mind about your answer.
2. We fix a telephone call where you will answer the questions orally. I will record them, note them down and write you an email with your answers. You can agree to your answers or make modifications.
3. At the end of the study you will receive the study results.

If you have any questions feel free to contact via mail or phone.

Thanks a lot in advance, best regards,

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Drivers of Work-Life-Balance

1. a.) What is your role/position at Airbus?
b.) What is your perimeter of action (France, Germany, Spain, UK, all)?
c.) How long have you been working for Airbus?
2. What is your definition of work-life-balance?
3. a.) Which drivers/influencing factors of work-life-balance do you identify in the context of the *work/professional* environment?
b.) Which are in your opinion the three most important drivers/influencing factors in the context of the *work/professional* environment and why?
4. a.) Which drivers/influencing factors of work-life-balance do you identify in the context of the *personal/private* environment?
b.) Which are in your opinion the three most important drivers/influencing factors in the context of the *personal/private* environment and why?
5. What are in your opinion the main outcomes/consequences for the *company* if an employee evaluates his/her work-life-balance as satisfying/unsatisfying?
6. What are in your opinion the main outcomes/consequences for the *employee* if he/she evaluates his/her work-life-balance as satisfying/unsatisfying?
7. a.) How relevant is the issue work-life-balance at Airbus?
b.) Did you feel a change over time?
8. a.) Which measures aiming to improve employee's work-life-balance are provided by Airbus at your place of work?
b.) Why are especially these measures employed?
9. How do you evaluate the measures in terms of their individual effectiveness?
10. Do you think that cultural differences influence the perception of work-life-balance? If yes, to which extent?
11. What is your age? (optional)

Project: Survey Work-Life-Balance

Page: First page

Hello, thank you for participating in this survey concerning your Work-Life-Balance which will take about 5min to answer. This survey is anonym. Anonymity is ensured by the numerical system which you used to log in.

Folder:

f1 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often have you not had enough time for yourself because of the job?
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f2 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often have you not had enough time for your family or other important people in your life because of your job?
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f3 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often have you not had the energy to do things with your family or other important people in your life because of your job?
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f4 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often have you not been able to get everything done at home because of your job?
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5

f5 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often have you not been in a good mood at home because of your job?
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f6 single punch	My supervisor is supportive when I try to satisfy both, work and personal demands.
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f7 single punch	My supervisor is fair and doesn't favor those employees who live a very work-focused life.
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f8 single punch	My supervisor encourages me when I have family or personal business to take care of - for example medical appointments, meetings with the teacher of my child , etc.
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f9 single punch	My supervisor is understanding when I talk about personal or family issues that affect my work.
---------------------------	--

	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f10 single punch	I feel comfortable bringing up personal or family issues with my supervisor.
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f11 single punch	My supervisor really cares about the effects that work demands have on my personal and family life.
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f12 single punch	At the place where I work, performance is defined by the time spent in the office. Those who stay the longest at night in the office have the best chances to advance in our company.
	1: 1
	2: 2
	3: 3
	4: 4
	5: 5
	6: 6
	7: 7

f13 single punch	There is an unwritten law at my place of employment that you can't take care of family needs on company time.
	1: 1
	2: 2

f14 single punch	At my place of employment, employees who put their family or personal needs ahead of their jobs are not looked on favorably.
	1: 1 2: 2 3: 3 4: 4 5: 5 6: 6 7: 7

f15 single punch	At my place of employment, employees have to choose between advancing in their jobs or devoting attention to their family or personal lives.
	1: 1 2: 2 3: 3 4: 4 5: 5 6: 6 7: 7

f16 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often has your family or personal life kept you from getting work done on time at your job?
	1: 1 2: 2 3: 3 4: 4 5: 5 6: 6 7: 7

f17 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often has your family or personal life kept you from taking on extra work on your job?
	1: 1 2: 2 3: 3 4: 4 5: 5 6: 6 7: 7

f18 single punch	In the past 3 months, how often has your family or personal life kept you from concentrating on your job?
----------------------------	--

- 1: 1
- 2: 2
- 3: 3
- 4: 4
- 5: 5
- 6: 6
- 7: 7

f19

open end

From the 120hours of an average week, how many hours do you spend for the following activities?

- 1: Working: []
- 2: Commute (Transport): []
- 3: Sleeping: []
- 4: Housework: []
- 5: Sport: []
- 6: Time spent with your family or other important people in your life: []
- 7: Other activity (please name activity and time spent in hours) []
- 8: Other activity (please name activity and time spent in hours) []

f20

open end

From the 48hours of an average weekend, how many hours do you spend for the following activities?

- 1: Working: []
- 2: Commute (Transport): []
- 3: Sleeping: []
- 4: Housework: []
- 5: Sport: []
- 6: Time spent with your family or other important people in your life: []
- 7: Other activity (please name activity and time spent in hours) []
- 8: Other activity (please name activity and time spent in hours) []

f21

matrix

Do the following measures and offers exist at your place of work?

- | | yes | no |
|---|-----|----|
| 1: Home Office | | |
| 2: Part-time work | | |
| 3: Flexible work time | | |
| 4: Workshops (e.g. concerning healthcare, stressmanagement) | | |
| 5: Support for childcare | | |
| 6: Household Services | | |
| 7: Relocation Services | | |
| 8: Maternity or Paternity leave | | |
| 9: Sabbatical year | | |

f22 matrix	Please evaluate the following measures.										
	yes	no	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I cannot judge	
1: Show item if (f21.1(yes) = ticked) <i>Home Office</i>											
2: Show item if (f21.2(yes) = ticked) <i>Part-time work</i>											
3: Show item if (f21.3(yes) = ticked) <i>Flexible work time</i>											
4: Show item if (f21.4(yes) = ticked) <i>Workshops (e.g. concerning healthcare, stressmanagement)</i>											
5: Show item if (f21.5(yes) = ticked) <i>Support for childcare</i>											
6: Show item if (f21.6(yes) = ticked) <i>Household Services</i>											
7: Show item if (f21.7(yes) = ticked) <i>Relocation Services</i>											
8: Show item if (f21.8(yes) = ticked) <i>Maternity or Paternity leave</i>											
9: Show item if (f21.9(yes) = ticked) <i>Sabbatical year</i>											

f23 matrix	To which extent the following character traits match with your personality?						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1: <i>Relaxed</i>							
2: <i>Moody</i>							
3: <i>Jealous</i>							
4: <i>Temperamental</i>							
5: <i>Envious</i>							
6: <i>Touchy</i>							
7: <i>Fretful</i>							

f24 single punch	I have a close circle of friends and feel socially integrated.
1: 1	
2: 2	
3: 3	
4: 4	
5: 5	
6: 6	
7: 7	

Folder:

f25 open end	Which suggestions do you have to improve your balance between work and private life?
------------------------	---

1: <i>Text</i> []

Page: personality

f26 single punch	Age
----------------------------	------------

1: 17-25
2: 25-30
3: 30-35
4: 35-40
5: 40-45
6: 45-50
7: 50-55
8: 55-60
9: 60-65
10: >65

f27 single punch	Sex
----------------------------	------------

1: <i>female</i>
2: <i>male</i>

f28 single punch	Nationality
----------------------------	--------------------

1: <i>French</i>
2: <i>German</i>
3: <i>English</i>
4: <i>Spanish</i>
5: <i>other:</i> []

Page: personality

f29 single punch	What is your highest professional degree? zu überarbeiten (vielleicht mit Mmt-Stufen von Airbus?)
----------------------------	--

1: <i>university degree</i>
2: <i>BTS</i>
3: <i>school (lycee,gymnasium, high school)</i>

f30 single punch	What is your management-level at Airbus?
----------------------------	---

1: <i>A</i>
2: <i>B</i>

f31 single punch	What is your total annual salary (in thousand Euros)?
	1: 2: 25-30 3: 30-35 4: 35-40 5: 40-45 6: 45-50 7: 50-55 8: 55-60 9: 60-65 10: 65-70 11: 70-75 12: 75-80 13: 80-85 14: 85-90 15: 90-95 16: 95-100 17: >100

Page: personality

f32 single punch	To which production facility do you belong to?
	1: <i>Toulouse</i> 2: <i>Hamburg</i> 3: <i>Filton</i> 4: <i>Getafe</i>

Page: personality

f33 single punch	Are you married or living in a relationship which can be compared to marriage?
	1: <i>yes</i> 2: <i>no</i>

Show question if (f33.1 = ticked)

f34 single punch	Is your husband/wife or your partner also employed?
	1: <i>yes</i> 2: <i>no</i>

Page: personality

f35 single punch	Do you have children which are living in your household?
----------------------------	---

1: *yes*2: *no*

Show question if (f35.1 = ticked)

f36

single punch

How many children do you have?

1: 1

2: 2

3: 3

4: 4

5: 5

6: 6

7: >6

f37

single punch

Are you currently providing care for someone aged 65 or older (or disabled dependent)?1: *yes*2: *no***Page: Last page**

End! Many Thanks for answering this questionnaire