Chapter 3

Work and family: what quality of life?
An exploratory analysis of the services sector

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Introduction

This chapter presents an extensive and exploratory study of some factors associated to different levels of work satisfaction and subjective well-being in a sample of Portuguese workers from the service sector. Special focus is given in the analysis to the work domain, highlighting in particular the existing relations between different patterns of articulating work and family and individual levels of well-being as evaluated by the workers in the study. The results obtained are presented in two main stages; firstly, an analysis will be made of a set of variables related to working conditions and forms of professional insertion, addressing the various ways in which these differentiation factors are associated to the evaluations made of work and well-being. Then, the way in which this same set of variables affects the individuals' evaluations of the work-family relationship will come under analysis; again, the main aim of this is to shed light on the factors in question when examining levels of work satisfaction and well-being.

One of the main objectives of this study involves an explanatory analysis that tests some indicators of the quality of work, satisfaction with the work-family relation and well-being and the proposal of some provisional hypotheses. A straightforward analysis is used to identify relations between variables that can act as the first indicators of important patterns from the sociological viewpoint. Subsequent analyses will allow more complex and sustained advances to be made towards the various research tracks identified here.

This work comes within the scope of an European project, *Quality of Life in a Changing Europe,* the overall aim of which was to map the levels and profiles of well-being and quality of life of European workers in the service sector. One dimension of the project involved the use of an international and predominantly comparative approach to conduct a questionnaire enquiry in

each country in companies from the service sector: telecommunications, retail, finance and health.[1] Indeed, this activity sector has become central to the organisation of contemporary societies, not just in broad configuration terms, but also in the determining of the life opportunities of individuals, their working contexts and the way in which they move between work and family life (Cardoso *et al.,* 2005). Hence, preference was given to a perspective that centred on these workers, notably by the collection of empirical data that allowed comparative analyses to be made of highly qualified segments.

As already referred, in this first exploratory exercise we will present some of the main patterns of satisfaction with work and well-being in accordance with the answers obtained from the questionnaires administered in Portugal.

To what extent are the perceptions and evaluations of satisfaction and general well-being and levels of quality of work associated? How far are various key factors in the professional domain linked to subjective individuals' assessments of their quality of life? On the other hand, how do these representations and appreciations vary when we look at patterns of articulating work and family? In general terms, what can be said about the inter-relations between the quality of work and the quality of work-family relations on one hand and satisfaction with work and well-being on the other?

These were some of the questions guiding the preliminary analysis of the quantitative data presented in this chapter. The structure of the text in both sections of the empirical analysis is as follows: a brief overview of the main analytical coordinates is followed by an explanation of the various indicators used, notably: quality of work (control and inter-relational support), satisfaction with work, satisfaction with work-family relations, negative interference of work in the family and the family in work and, finally, subjective well-being. The description and interpretation of the empirical elements includes the identification of some associations considered to be relevant, the discussion of some hypotheses and research tracks opened on the data presented.

Quality of life and well-being: brief theoretical background

Research in the social sciences on the quality of life and well-being has flourished in recent decades, linked to the development of attempts to go beyond more restricted approaches of individuals' material living conditions. These approaches have tended to focus primarily, and sometimes exclusively, on economic aspects and on the various forms of unequal access to material

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1   In Portugal, 1,373 questionnaires were administered to a randomly selected sample of workers in the various activity sectors.

resources. Though recognised as fundamental, this approach is considered insufficient to explain the complexity of factors that affects everyday lives and other analytical formats have therefore been developed so as to introduce key dimensions in the sociological approaches of the framing of individuals' lives, such as policies and welfare measures, levels of social integrations and exercising citizenship, the differentiated insertions and experiences in work and family, the different patterns of articulating these two central domains and the various forms of consumption and cultural practices (Diener, 2006; Diener and Suh, 1997; Phillips, 2006; Rapley, 2003; Sirgy *et al.*, 2006; Veenhoven, 2000).

The development of the sociological issue of the quality of life is also partly associated with what in some instances has been designated a change in the structuring paradigm of social values. Accordingly, the "materialist" values in which economic security and material survival predominate would become progressively less important in relation to "post-materialist" values where self-expression and the more intangible aspects of people's lives are highlighted (Inglehart, 1990; 1997). In this context, a broad notion like quality of life gained greater visibility and became an urgent matter in the more developed societies of Europe and also the United States, precisely where mere economic survival was supposedly no longer the main focus of people's lives insofar as this would have been assured for the overwhelming majority of the population.[2]

One of the main lines of analysis of quality of life, often known as the "social indicators" approach, began by devoting special attention to social formations of appreciable dimension such as regions or countries. This perspective contributed to the development of a comprehensive and extremely important battery of indicators of objective living conditions (average life expectancy, literacy levels, infant mortality, etc.) distinct from those intended to evaluate the unequal distribution of economic resources (Diener and Suh, 1997). These various measures not only provided a deeper and fuller insight into the differentiated societal profiles of well-being and welfare, but they also assured a broader understanding of the complexity of the quality of life notion.

In another relatively recent but important line of research that can be articulated with the more general topic of quality of life, special attention is focused on the cultural and subjective dimensions of well-being and satisfaction (Campbell, Converse and Rodgers, 1976; Diener, 1994; Diener and Suh, 1997; Diener *et al.*, 1999; Veenhoven, 1996). The central notion of this approach is that the evaluation of material living conditions and the consideration of

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2   For some years quality of life in its various ramifications has been integrated into the policies and recommendations of the European Union itself (Alber, Fahey and Saraceno, 2008; European Commission, 2001).

"objective" variables are essential but are only revealing and acquire deeper significance if they integrate other dimensions of life in the analyses as well as the perceptions and subjective evaluations supplied by the agents themselves. In the course of previous research on the quality of life, some "paradoxes of satisfaction" were identified, in other words, the very favourable material living conditions and the very high levels of owning economic resources often failed to correspond to expected levels i.e. also high, of satisfaction with life and subjective well-being. On the other hand, there was no linear expression of certain living conditions that were seen to be unfavourable in negative appraisals and low levels of well-being. That is, whilst not questioning the existence of a strong relation between the differentiated possession of material resources and people's quality of life which have already been extensively studied and demonstrated, here we are essentially recognising the existence of other key dimensions of individual existence which also structure subjectivities: work, family, the paths circulating between these two domains, and socialising for example. Other variables such as cultural values and expectations, the individual and family strategies developed in response to everyday needs, and the social comparison processes and subjective evaluation were systematically integrated into the sociological analyses and served to progressively deepen the issue of the quality of life. Various conceptualisations and useful indicators have been developed in this scope: scales of satisfaction with different domains (family life, work, health, leisure, etc.), with the aim of capturing cognitive appreciations and emotional experiences, and multidimensional indices of well-being and quality of life for example (Diener, 2006; Diener and Diener, 1996; Diener *et al.*, 1999; Myers and Diener, 1995).

As can be seen from these brief considerations, the quality of life issue is a comprehensive "theoretical umbrella" that encompasses a varied range of perspectives. This gives rise to considerable diversity in the analytical proposals that are made for methodological strategies and measurement choices (Phillips, 2006; Rapley, 2003; Sirgy *et al.*, 2006; Veenhoven, 2000). It should also be noted that, although some sound empirical regularities have already been identified, some of the main research questions in the field of quality of life remain unanswered and have been the target of various attempts of find solutions. Notwithstanding, there have been some fruitful attempts at a synthesis; notably, the emphasis has been placed on the simultaneous and articulated use of both "objective" and more "subjective" indicators.

Erik Allardt (1976 and 1993), for example, developed a conceptualisation of the quality of life which includes three dimensions: "having" (referring to material resources and living conditions), "loving" (relating to family and affective relations) and "being" (that refers to questions of social integration and feelings of belonging and collective confidence). This proposal is evolved in a multidimensional analytical research project on the satisfaction

and well-being that have been used in research studies in the scope of the European Union (Alber, Fahey and Saraceno, 2008; Böhnke, 2005; Fahey *et al.,* 2004; Kapitány, Kovacs and Krieger, 2005; Saraceno, Olagnero e Torrioni, 2005; Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007). The "having" dimension has been measured using indicators such as available income, housing characteristics, working conditions, state of health, levels of schooling, etc.; the "loving" dimension has been made operational by measuring the frequency and styles of contact with relatives and friends, for example; the "being" dimension implies the use of indicators such as the kind of involvement in citizenship or leisure activities, the opportunities to do meaningful and rewarding work, the level of freedom and potential control over various aspects and domains of life and the available opportunities to participate in decision making processes at various levels. The author underlines the need for the articulated use of objective and subjective indicators in each of the three dimensions of analysis mentioned above so that a full panorama of the patterns of well-being and quality of life can be depicted (Allardt, 1993).

Other authors have worked in the scope of the so-called perspective of the "domains of life" which has proved particularly fruitful in relation to the analysis of the articulations between work, family and quality of life. In accordance with this approach, the evaluations of satisfaction and subjective well-being are dynamic and vary in line with the plurality of experiences that take place in a diversified and complex set of life spheres that the individuals encounter on a daily basis, such as family, work, socialising, leisure etc. (Rojas, 2006; Sirgy *et al.,* 2001, 2006; Sirgy and Michalos, 2002). The salience of each of these domains in determining the quality of life also varies; various hierarchical articulations can be proposed to explain the complexity of factors that influence the levels of well-being, the various stages of analytical clustering. These analyses also confer privileged space to a set of inter-related socio-psychological processes resulting from the insertions of individuals in the various spheres: "spillover" processes in which experiences and evaluations in one specific domain affect and influence those that take place in another; segmentation processes that relate to the effort to separate or define the boundaries between domains of life; and compensation processes that recognise the efforts taken to balance diverse emotions, experiences and evaluations — and sometimes the contrary — that take place in the different domains, notably through the choice of investment/de-investment of time and other resources (Sirgy *et al.,* 2001; Staines, 1980).

In the literature on subjective well-being, other relevant socio-psychological process such as adaptation/adjustment and social comparison are also discussed (Diener, 1994; Diener and Suh, 1997; Diener *et al.,* 1999; Veenhoven, 1996). The former terms refer to the dynamic articulation that usually exists between material living conditions and the subjective evaluations thereof — which tend to be adjusted with varying timings and levels of inertia to what is

perceived as being "reasonable" to want and expect in specific circumstances. Social comparison processes should also be considered when taking into account the answers given by people questioned about their quality of life and well-being: the distance or proximity of each situation in relation to the conditions that positive or negative reference groups are understood to have tend to work as the important aspect for evaluating life (Merton, 1968). Experiences and past events, as well as objectives and culturally established circumstances such as ideal standards of satisfaction and well-being also come in to the complex definition of the answers given by people when urged to talk about their quality of life in many domains.

In short, it can be said that the issue of quality of life provides sufficient scope to develop multidimensional analyses that can go beyond some approaches based on a limited number of indicators related to material conditions (e.g. levels of individual income or GDP per capita). This wider ranging perspective has been developing rapidly in recent years and already involves a battery of research questions and empirical indicators. These findings are inseparable from another that underlines the complex and multidimensional nature of the notion of quality of life: different analytical levels and various research emphases will help delimit the choice of approach at each stage, the research methods and the empirical measures. Material conditions, housing, health, family and work are fundamental domains when determining people's well-being and quality of life (Alber, Fahey and Saraceno, 2008; Phillips, 2006; Rapley, 2003); notwithstanding, many sociological questions remain open with regard the social patterns of articulation between the various domains and to the way they structure not only the concrete circumstances of each individual but also the perceptions they have of these circumstances.

Clearly, this work will focus only on one selected aspect of the issue of quality of life. The analytical focus will be placed on the identification and questioning of some key factors in the domains of work and work-family articulation that are associated to the different levels of well-being stated by the individuals.

Following this brief summary of some of the basic coordinates of the studies that have been conducted on this matter, the concepts and indicators used herein must also be specified. This is done at the start of the next two sections so as to provide the framework for the subsequent discussion on the empirical elements selected for presentation.

Quality of work and well-being

In recent decades, a series of extensive changes have been witnessed in the world of work linked to the broader dynamics of globalisation, economic restructuring, flexibilisation and the increase in precarious and insecure jobs, the growing use of information and communication technologies and the

development of new management models and work organisation methods (Beck, 2000; Cooper and Burke, 2002; Guerreiro *et al.,* 2004, Kóvacs, 2002). The generalised acceptance of the importance of these changes can be associated to an increased interest in a set of questions and problems linked to the issue of the quality of life, notably with regard the impact these change factors have on levels of satisfaction with work and also their more general effects on the level of well-being and the quality of life of European citizens (Alber, 2008; Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007; Wallace and Pichler, 2008).

However, these far-reaching changes in the world of work do not prevent this remaining as one of the central domains of the structuring of people's lives not only in terms of the use and organisation of time but also as a means of obtaining economic resources and identity building. Hence, it is to be expected that the work sphere is also of great importance in determining well-being and quality of life (Alber, Fahey and Saraceno, 2008; Diener and Suh, 1997; Fahey *et al.,* 2004). The effective and relative impact of the various factors that are linked with people's concrete insertion in the world of work and in companies and organisations has been the subject of lively debate. Therefore, in the various studies conducted recently on the quality of work and respective articulations with the broader issue of the quality of life, many questions remain unanswered: theoretical and methodological questions, indicators used, techniques and instruments for empirical collection (Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007; Wallace and Pichler, 2008). Obviously, this does not mean that the various sociological studies that have focused on this issue have not already contributed to identifying some coordinates that are important points of departure for any work analysing the existing articulation between the variables related with insertion at work and the quality of work and between these and levels of well-being. Before beginning our analysis of some preliminary empirical data, it is therefore fruitful to provide some of these elements for contextualisation purposes.

First and foremost, the working situation emerges as a strong differentiating variable, notably when we speak of unemployment. Clearly, this not only occurs due to access to material resources that the job provides but also because of its centrality in the identity building and social integration processes of men and women (Caetano, Tavares and Reis, 2003; Kovács, 2002; Torres, 2004). Thus, some research has demonstrated that the levels of satisfaction with life and well-being among the unemployed are lower than among those with a job (Fahey *et al.,* 2004; Gallie and Russel, 1998; Kapitány, Kovacs and Krieger, 2005; Ouweneel, 2002).

The aim of this study, however, is to look firstly at the factors related to insertion in work that are associated to the differentiated levels of quality and satisfaction with it, and then to the patterns formed by the articulation between the quality/qualities of work and quality of life. Thus, we will always be speaking of people who were employed at the time of the study. There are

many factors which have a strong impact on the quality of work: wages, physical and environmental conditions, security, autonomy, creativity, organisational culture and forms of integration are important variables in the determination of people's levels of satisfaction with work, although there is great diversity in the way they articulate with each other in each concrete case (Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007; Wallace and Pichler, 2008). Other domains with an impact on the labour sphere, such as the different Welfare State systems also contribute to structuring the opportunities and constraints which people come up against on a daily basis. In other words, in both the work domain and in the other domains with which it articulates there is a wide range of factors that are relevant to the explanation of the differentiated patterns of quality of work and its impacts on the levels of well-being: norms of insertion in a job, working conditions, forms of social integrations and other economic, cultural and also political variables (Kóvacs, 2002).

The strong inter-relations between the quality of work and the levels of well-being were first demonstrated a very long time ago and this has led to questions being raised about the different variable components of this "quality" (Campbell, Converse and Rodgers, 1976; Kapitány, Kovacs and Krieger, 2005). From the outset, factors such as the workers' remuneration levels, number of working hours, higher or lower safety standards, greater or less precariousness are fundamental to the explanation of job satisfaction; nevertheless, the notion of quality has a broader scope and other relevant dimensions must be included in the analysis and people's subjective appreciations about their circumstances play a more marked role. The opportunity to do the job more creatively and autonomously, forms of harmonious integration in the work place in terms of interpersonal relations with colleagues and superiors, as well as positive appraisals of the interest of the work done are also found to be general tendencies associated with the higher levels of quality of work (Alber, 2008; Caetano, Tavares and Reis, 2003; Clark, 2005; Wallace and Pichler, 2008). More recently, the ambivalent impacts that the increasingly conspicuous flexible forms of work can have on how people experience and evaluate this central domain of their lives have also been explored.

The spillover theories also draw attention to the possible impacts that the day to day experiences in the world of work can have on the quality of life generally (Sirgy *et al.*, 2001): the (positive and negative) patterns of satisfaction and well-being associated to a certain central "sphere" can affect or "spill over" into other such as the family. In this context, the importance played by the mechanisms people find to conciliate work and family in the determination of the quality of work and the quality of life becomes very apparent (Fahey *et al.*, 2004; Kapitány *et al.*, 2005).

Nevertheless, the analysis of the way in which the patterns of conciliating work and family are articulated with different levels of subjective well-being is likely to be made partially autonomous; focus will be given to this

analysis later in the chapter. Meanwhile, with the aim of the abovementioned exploratory approaches, the factors associated to some selected dimensions of the quality of work and job satisfaction will be highlighted; some provisional considerations will also be made about how quality of work and the appraisals of well-being are articulated.

Indicators

As we have seen, the general question of the quality of life is diverse and has led to a considerable number of theoretical approaches and proposals to make it operational. On the other hand, it is found to be a multidimensional concept that can equally be explored from a range of objectives. The European Commission for example refers to 31 indicators that may contribute to its measurement through a set of dimensions (Kapitány *et al.,* 2005: formal skills, forms of lifelong learning, career opportunities, gender equality, health and working conditions, flexibility and security, access to and inclusion in the labour market, methods of organising tasks, social dialog and the involvement of the workers in decision making processes, policies and opportunities to conciliate work and family, etc.

Recently, Green (2006) called attention to the importance of the characteristics of the job that boost workers' skills and encourage their well-being; this proposal is linked to Amartya Sen's capability approach (1993). Adjusted remuneration, feelings of security and control over the work (tasks, pace, etc) and positive integration, in support terms, in the network of inter-relations with colleagues and superiors, are seen as important factors; they allow people to take advantage of their circumstances and improve them and also to reach their goals and fulfil their personal expectations in the various areas of life (Green, 2006).

In light of the limited scope of this paper, a brief analysis will be made of a set of indicators of the quality of work; this also aims to test some of the composite measures with a view to pursuing the analysis in the following stages of more detailed research. Accordingly, autonomy and creativity, which can be understood as two dimensions of control over work (Karasek and Theorell, 1990), were taken into account, as were integration in support networks formed by colleagues and superiors which refers to the important relational dimensions of the forming of the work contexts (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Job satisfaction is also an indicator of the more far reaching notion of the quality of work, insofar as it puts the various ways in which the people themselves experience and evaluate their work into perspective. Generally speaking, indicators such as those used that essentially translate the subjective perceptions of the agents about their work in conjunction with other more objective indicators allow a better picture to be drawn of the framework of the quality of work and quality of life (Sirgy *et al.,* 2001).

Thus, three indicators were mobilised to measure some aspects of quality of life: control over work, inter-relational support and satisfaction. Yet, again, it should be said that on selecting these three analytical dimensions, other equally important factors in the delineation of the quality of people's work will be left aside. However, it is beneficial to look at how these dimensions are articulated with other factors related to the sphere of work, as these articulations are relevant when determining the individual experiences and appraisals that are of interest here: working hours, flexible practices in the organisation of work, (in)security and creativity, for example (Clark, 2005; Kapitány *et al.,* 2005; Sirgy *et al.,* 2001; Sparks, Faragher and Cooper, 2001; Wallace and Pichler, 2008); but there are also others such as whether or not there is a feeling of solidarity between colleagues and superiors and the degree of control the workers have over their own tasks and undertakings (Allen, 2001; Clark, 2005; Danna and Griffin, 1999). After some reflections on the most relevant effects of these different factors on the quality of work, we move to the next stage in which an analysis is made of how far the various dimensions of the concept are associated to the different levels of satisfaction and subjective well-being. In doing so, our aim is to a certain extent to raise the hypothesis that quality of work is presented as a mediating notion, like others, among the various structuring components of the individual insertions in the working world and the quality of life of its agents.

Throughout the text, *subjective well-being* was measured by means of an index composed of the following five items (Cronbach's a =. 877): a) In most ways my life is close to my ideal; b) The conditions of my life are excellent; c) I am satisfied with my life; d) So far I have got the important things I want in life; e) If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing. The answers to each question were given on a seven-point scale (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"); the highest figures therefore indicate the highest levels of well-being (Pavot and Diener, 1993).

The levels of *control over work* were obtained by means of an eight item instrument (Cronbach's a =. 796): a) Do you get to learn new things in your job?; b) Does your job require creativity?; c) Does your job involve repetitive tasks?; d) Are you free to decide how your job is to be done?; e) Are you free to decide what your job involves?; f) Does your job require you to invent your own tasks?; g) Are you free to decide when you do your work?; h) Are you free to decide to work wherever is best for you — either at home or at work? It should be noted that this concept is made up of two principal dimensions — creativity and autonomy — although an overall index is used here (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). This means that in later stages it will be possible to study these two analytically distinguishable dimensions in greater depth. The highest figures in this indicator reflect greater levels of control over work; the answer to each item was given on a four-point scale (from "never" to "always" and inverted for item c).

The concept of *inter-relational support in the workplace*, referring to the respondents' evaluation of the kind of relations established with colleagues and superiors, was measured using a five item score (Cronbach's a =. 841): a) There is a good spirit of unity; b) My colleagues are there for me; c) People understand that I can have a bad day; d) I get on well with my superiors; e) I get on well with my colleagues. These questions were answered on a five-point scale (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"); the highest figures therefore correspond to what the respondents perceive as the greatest level of support given by colleagues and superiors (Karasek and Theorell, 1990).

Lastly, *job satisfaction* was measured with the following indicator: Broadly speaking, how do you feel about your current job?; the answers vary on a five-point scale between "very bad" and "very good".

Due to the subjective nature of the indicators chosen, the following analysis essentially addresses the respondents' representations of the different aspects of their job. First of all, the associations found between various factors of professional insertions and the differentiated levels of control and inter-relational support in the workplace, as well as satisfaction levels are examined; we then strive to identify some useful points of analysis so as to articulate these selected dimensions with more general levels of well-being.

Work and well-being: factors and levels of quality

The data presented in table 3.1 is used to analyse how the control, support and satisfaction in relation to work are unequally associated to different profiles of professional insertions and subjective evaluation. In the following paragraphs, we highlight some of the correlations between the three indicators selected in relation to quality of work and the other demographic, socio-economic and work factors that are worthy of note.

As might be expected, autonomy and creativity can characterise the more qualified professions so that directors, managers, professionals and mid-level technicians have higher levels of control over what they do at work, while clerical workers have the lowest score. The latter also say they have the least support from colleagues and superiors. It is therefore important to underline that a key variable like profession is not only strongly associated to objective aspects in the definition of quality of life and determining material opportunities, but it also seems to be associated with dimensions of subjective appraisal that contribute to people's definition of well-being as well: the people with more qualified professions also give a more positive evaluation of their opportunities for autonomy and creativity. This does not then have a completely linear transfer in the satisfaction levels which is a variable that we will see intersects differently with other factors related to the sphere of work and also to other domains which are more homogeneous in the various professional categories. Nevertheless, yet again the results

Table 3.1   Work patterns and quality of work (averages)

Variables (%)	Control over work	Workplace support	Job satisfaction
Sex			
Female (53.9)	2.36	3.89*	3.59
Male (46.1)	2.41	3.97*	3.61
Age			
24 or less (3.4)	2.28*	4.22*	3.80*
25 to 34 (44.0)	2.35*	3.97*	3.60*
35 to 44 (35.6)	2.40*	3.85*	3.53*
45 to 54 (13.0)	2.43*	3.88*	3.62*
55 to 64 (4.0)	2.56*	3.99*	3.98*
Education (ISCED)			
Primary (2.2)	2.33	4.23	4.07
Lower level secondary (6.9)	2.46*	4.05	3.87**
Upper secondary (30.4)	2.31*	3.90	3.62**
1st stage of tertiary (54.3)	2.41*	3.92	3.54**
2 nd stage of tertiary (5.8)	2.51*	3.87	3.63**
Occupation (ISCO)			
Managers (6.9)	2.77**	4.12**	3.86*
Professionals (28.4)	2.46**	3.93**	3.55*
Technicians and associate professionals (33.9)	2.47**	3.94**	3.60*
Clerks (25.5)	2.10**	3.80**	3.53*
Service workers and shop and market sales workers (4.0)	2.32**	4.08**	3.82*
Supervisory responsabilities			
Yes (32.3)	2.64**	4.01*	3.76**
No (67.7)	2.26**	3.88*	3.53**
Monthly income (in €)			
More than 5000 (7.7)	2.59**	3.89	3.77
3000-5000 (17.3)	2.53**	3.95	3.62
2000-3000 (27.6)	2.39**	3.92	3.58
1000-2000 (36.8)	2.31**	3.94	3.59
Menos de 1000 (10.6)	2.23**	3.90	3.52
Employment contract			
Permanent (85.5)	2.40*	3.91*	3.60
Non-permanent (14.5)	2.29*	4.07*	3.62
Working hours			
Less than 30 (3.1)	2.23**	4.01	3.50
30 a 40 (29.5)	2.25**	3.88	3.59
41 a 50 (55.0)	2.42**	3.95	3.60
More to 50 (12.4)	2.58**	3.91	3.61

Variables (%)	Control over work	Workplace support	Job satisfaction
Overtime on short notice			
Never (18.5)	2.39	4.02*	3.78**
Sometimes (42.7)	2.36	3.96*	3.66**
Often/always (38.8)	2.41	3.85*	3.45**
Used flexible starting and finishing times (last 12 months)			
Yes (39.4)	2.53**	3.99*	3.68*
No (60.6)	2.29**	3.88*	3.54*
Worked from home (last 12 months)			
Yes (11.1)	2.81**	4.16**	3.79*
No (88.9)	2.33**	3.90**	3.58*
Job requires too much input from worker			
Never (8.3)	2.23*	4.04*	3.58**
Sometimes (49.8)	2.38*	3.97*	3.71**
Often/always (41.9)	2.41*	3.86*	3.48**
Worker has enough time to complete tasks			
Never (4.4)	2.30	3.66**	3.00**
Sometimes (42.2)	2.35	3.87**	3.51**
Often/always (53.4)	2.42	3.99**	3.73**
Job involves teamwork			
Never (1.5)	2.03**	3.36**	3.20**
Sometimes (9.5)	2.22**	3.68**	3.35**
Often/always (89.1)	2.41**	3.96**	3.63**
Work-related stress (last month)			
Never (8.8)	2.37	4.13**	3.97**
Sometimes (48.9)	2.40	4.02**	3.73**
Often/always (42.3)	2.37	3.78**	3.37**
Afraid to lose job			
Agree (31.8)	2.27**	3.85**	3.52**
Neither agree nor disagree (25.6)	2.38**	3.88**	3.52**
Disagree (42.6)	2.47**	4.01**	3.71**
Looked for another job (last 6 months)			
Yes (22.1)	2.21**	3.76**	3.13**
No (77.9)	2.43**	3.97**	3.73**

Note: ** p≤0.001; * p≤0.01

seem polarised between the directors and senior managers who are the most satisfied and the clerical and service workers.

The distribution of the results across various levels of formal education raises some questions that can only be touched on here but warrant greater attention at later stages of analysis. A limited number of respondents with a low schooling level is considered and it is therefore not possible to propose any in-depth hypotheses. However, it can be questioned whether the relatively small margin of differentiation for the control over work between the respondents with higher levels of schooling and those with less schooling could be related to the fact that the latter group, who are generally older, hold intermediate supervisory positions in the companies where the study was conducted. Indeed, it can be observed that not only are the control levels higher among the workers who supervise other workers, but they get higher with age and therefore with increasing experience and progression in the career. Otherwise, it can be seen that, with the exception of the respondents with the lower level of secondary education, the successively higher qualification levels are associated to growing levels of autonomy and creativity. It can therefore be said that access to higher levels of control over tasks performed is achieved in many different ways albeit associated to the workers' formal qualification.

Nevertheless, we stress the relatively low average for job satisfaction obtained among people with the first stage of tertiary education. One of the possible explanations for this stands out as being worthy of analysis in future research: this could be a case of a mismatch between the formal education levels and the job characteristics, the work done and the material and symbolic compensation associated (Green, 2006). These situations can give rise to failed expectations and to skills and potential being blocked by objective constraints, in which many workers with relatively high levels of education tend to evaluate their working situation more negatively when compared with previous expectations, social comparison processes and perceptions of unused skills. It could explain why the respondents with a Bachelor degree or *licenciatura* (five-year degree) have the lowest levels of job satisfaction.

As the levels of control over work increase with the levels of professional qualification (highest among directors and senior managers), with age and also with the number of weekly working hours (highest among those who work over 40 hours), this conjugation of factors may, not unexpectedly, be reflected in the household income levels: autonomy and creativity are associated with the highest amount of monthly income.[3]

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3   We note that this last variable only reflects the individual salary level of the respondents very indirectly as it refers to levels of household total net income.

It also comes as no surprise that the workers with permanent contracts say they enjoy greater autonomy and creativity than those in more precarious contractual situations: the latter are generally younger (average 31 years old compared with 38 years for the former) and do less qualified work in the various companies, notably in clerical work (and in particular women).

Turning now to the other variables related to the people's objective insertion in the labour contexts, it can be said that some flexible working practices are found to be associated to higher levels of control. More specifically, working from home and flexible starting and finishing times for example are more common among the professions characterised as having more autonomy and creativity. Indeed, it is important here to stress that the use of these flexible working practices is very unequally distributed among the respondents: whereas about half of the directors and senior managers say they benefited from flexible timetables over the last year, 75% of clerical workers have not; while 24% of the former and 14% of professionals say they have worked from home, almost none of the interesting to note that the highest figures for inter-relational workplace support are found to be associated both to the use of flexible working practices considered here and to less frequent overtime. This only helps underline the importance of the relational aspects of work to a circumscribed dimension in determining the way people evaluate their jobs: in this case, the hypothesis can be proposed that good social integration in the work context is an important factor for a sustainable and positive use of flexible working practices, achieved notably by means of the various kinds of support given by colleagues and superiors. Along this line, it is also noted that the stronger subjective perceptions of belonging to a "team" are clearly associated with higher levels of control, inter-relational support and satisfaction.

Meanwhile, on looking at the way in which the inter-relational dimension of the quality of work used here varies in line with the various factors set out in table 3.1, it can be said that the general image is not as clear-cut as the one drawn by the control dimension. It is very likely that the explanation for this lies in the fact that there are other more contextual and individual factors that change people's perception of the support that is given to them by colleagues and superiors when doing their work. But, while it is the way some work insertion factors affect people's quality of work that above all is under analysis, later in this chapter we will see how this inter-relational support dimension is important because it works as a mediator between the working conditions and job satisfaction on one hand, and these conditions and the declared levels of well-being on the other.

If we are to get a better understanding of these factors that condition the "quality" of the various jobs, it is also necessary to observe the articulations that are formed between more evaluative and subjective factors i.e. the perceptions of the working conditions (Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007) and the various dimensions of quality used here.

From the outset, it is important to see how higher levels of control over work are found to be associated to the perception that the job is "too demanding". This is a known effect (Gallie, 1996; Green, 2006) and is tied to the specific characteristics of professions characterised as having autonomy and creativity. The workers with more schooling and organisational resources, who have more scope to control and define the tasks and timetables, are also the ones who generally have most responsibility and work the most hours during a week. The stress levels related to the job are also greater among directors and other workers with supervisory responsibilities. On the other hand, "working as a member of a team" and being well integrated in relational terms are factors that seem to contribute to minimising the potentially negative effects of more demanding professions: it can be said that the respondents who felt they could be sure of the support of colleagues and superiors are also the ones who can deal most easily with specific demands on time and effort; moreover, counting on more inter-relational support seems to be associated to the lowest stated levels of professional stress.

This multidimensional articulation of factors (note how the declared levels of professional stress for example are still not significantly associated to control over work) mean that the complex notion of quality of work, or any of its various dimensions, cannot be confronted in a linear fashion. Therefore, when taken as a whole these different articulations and effects that have been highlighted are relevant insofar as they have a great impact not only on other dimensions of work, but also on other domains like how work and family are conciliated, the quality of family life and also levels of well-being that people can enjoy.

Other factors included in table 3.1 also warrant emphasis. Though this is a preliminary analysis, it is useful to start constructing an approach which will allow the tracks identified here to be placed on sounder analytical foundations in later stages. Hence, the issue of precariousness and insecurity at work has been the focus of growing attention among a wide and diversified set of scientific, media and political agents following a series of structural changes that have been changing the face of the world of work in Europe in recent decades. Our aim here is simply to start constructing a perspective that addresses the consequences of (in)security on the quality of work as perceived by the workers themselves. On the basis of the items under analysis, it can be said that the subjective feelings of insecurity are associated to lower levels of autonomy and creativity, as well as the working environment where there is less inter-relational support. It is therefore not surprising, and as we have already seen, that people who have a permanent contractual tie with the companies where they work say they have relatively high levels of control and support. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the feelings of (in)security and the way they condition the evaluations people make of their work and their feelings of well-being undoubtedly depend on complex articulations between objective aspects of

insertion at work, concrete daily experiences and less tangible individual perceptions.[4] As quality of work is a broad notion that cannot be reduced to evaluations that individuals make about their jobs at a specific moment in time, these reflective considerations should not be forgotten if we wish to obtain a fuller picture of the articulation between objective and subjective patterns that contribute in the field of work, as in others, to shaping the opportunities to obtain well-being and quality of life.

We can now turn from this overview and focus more directly on patterns of satisfaction as a key dimension of the quality of work.

The findings given here are in line with some of the conclusions presented in the literature on the influence of some demographic variables such as sex, age and level of schooling (Clark, Oswald and Warr, 1996; Clark, 2005; Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007). Though there appears to be no direct or simple relation between gender and job satisfaction,[5] age has a "U" shaped association with satisfaction levels in which two peaks are observed: in workers under the age of 25 and over the age of 55, while the lowest levels are found in the intermediate 35 to 44 year age group. This interesting finding probably indicates the influence of other factors that are involved in the world of work and that help shape expectations and subjective evaluations. Notably, the specific configuration of the work-family articulation profiles are in question here as the lowest job satisfaction figures appear precisely in the age groups with the greatest daily need to conciliate professional and family responsibilities and tasks. As we shall see later, the way this balance is achieved (or not) has a strong impact on people's well-being.

It is curious to note that some variables referring to the working sphere like the number of working hours[6] and the kind of contract do not have a direct effect on workers' satisfaction, although frequently working longer hours than stipulated in the contract is associated to lower levels of satisfaction. The negative or positive effects of these variables certainly depend on a

4   See for example how the kind of contract is not enough to directly distinguish the respondent with regard job satisfaction, while another variable like "afraid to lose job" is associated to lower levels of satisfaction.

5   Women might be expected to have lower satisfaction levels due both to the structural effects of vertical and horizontal segregation that contribute to concentrating women in less qualified professions of the labour market, and also to the extra workloads resulting from the persistent inequality in the division of household chores between men and women that make a balanced conciliation of work and family more complicated. The problem is considerably complex however insofar as it is intersected by the conjugated influence of class, expectations and distinct social values, gender roles and the socio-psychological process of adaptation and social comparison. In more general terms, the importance of gender in determining people's quality of life is transversal but mediated and can be captured by its articulation with other dimensions like profession, the profiles of the work-family relationship and the forms of unpaid work in the family sphere for example.

Table 3.2   Quality of work and subjective well-being (averages)

Variables (%)	Job satisfaction	Subjectivs well-being
Control over work		
High (13.1)	4.10	5.08
Medium (68.0)	3.63	4.44
Low (18.9)	3.17	3.99
Workplace support		
High (55.2)	3.88	4.66
Medium (37.2)	3.36	4.27
Low (7.6)	2.74	3.65
Job satisfaction		
High (61.6)	–	4.80
Medium (28.7)	–	4.04
Low (9.7)	–	3.30

Note: p≤0.001 (all cells).

wider range of factors within and beyond the working world that raise or limit a person's ability to deal with the more intensive levels of work or with more precarious contractual situations for example. The possibility of integrating successfully in the labour relations network may act as a compensatory factor for more demanding or insecure insertion conditions, as we have seen in relation to another issue.

Lastly, when other more "subjective" variables are examined, it can be seen that workers/respondents had a greater feeling of satisfaction when the work involved the "right amount" of demands: excessive demands or a rather unchallenging job can contribute to people making a less positive evaluation of what they do. It also comes as no surprise that professional stress has clearly negative effect on the evaluations made by the respondents.

So far, our analysis has centred on how factors in the work milieu are associated to different levels and dimensions of quality of life at work. It is found that both working conditions and other objective insertion variables that are subjectively evaluated have a sociologically significant articulation with different opportunities to control and conduct tasks and enjoy inter-relational support. Although this kind of analysis cannot provide a more in-depth understanding of the causal direction established between the different variables (Diener and Suh, 1997; Veenhoven, 1996), the profiles and

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6   However, attention could be drawn to the fact that those who work less than 30 hours a week are the least satisfied. This could undoubtedly be linked to the overall characteristics of the labour market in Portugal, where there are relatively few and badly paid opportunities for part-time work. The hypothesis could therefore be proposed that some of these respondents, who are mainly women, would choose to work full time if given the opportunity.

articulations that have been highlighted are sufficiently clear and homogeneous to call attention to the factors analysed when taken as a whole.

The quality of work is very important not only in relation to people's satisfaction in this central area of their lives but also to shaping the levels of well-being. On one hand, various studies have demonstrated the links between the quality of work and levels of worker productivity and engagement, experiences and levels of professional stress and conflict between work and family (Danna and Griffin, 1999; Edwards, Scully and Brtek, 2000; Efraty and Sirgy, 1990; Green, 2006; Sirgy *et al.,* 2001; Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007). But empirical evidence has also been found related to the articulations between the quality of work and more general feelings of satisfaction and quality of life (Diener, 1994; Diener and Suh, 1997; Sirgy *et al.,* 2006; Veenhoven, 1996). Notably, the notion of satisfaction appears as an important mediator among more specific aspects related to work and the broad evaluations of subjective well-being (Wallace, Pichler and Hayes, 2007).

In light of these considerations, the relations established between the quality of work and subjective well-being can now be examined and analysed on the basis of the workers responses (table 3.2).

Some clearly visible effects should be noted on observing this table: not only do the two main quality indicators, control and support, have an impact on job satisfaction levels but also on the evaluations of well-being. Nearly a one-point difference separates the satisfaction averages of those who enjoy a high level of control over their work (4.10), and those who say they have a low level of control (3.17). As already mentioned, the social and relational work contexts also take on special relevance in determining the quality of working life: working in a place with an atmosphere of great mutual support between colleagues and superiors seems to be associated to higher levels of satisfaction (3.88); on the other hand, people who say they have little support in their place of work are more dissatisfied (2.74).

On observing levels of subjective well-being, it is found they vary in accordance with whether the respondents have a higher or lower quality of work through the three dimensions presented here. Accordingly, workers with low levels of job satisfaction have the lowest average figures (3.30), while those in more autonomous and creative jobs also state they have the best levels of well-being (5.08). The differentiated levels of integration in inter-relational support networks also have a considerable effect on the subjective evaluations people made about their quality of life, as can be seen. Obviously the way people's quality of work, in its complexity, helps boost capacities or limit opportunities to obtain well-being is much more important than the isolated effect of each of these dimensions. It would be useful here in later stages of research to measure not only the relative importance of each of these dimensions but also to develop more precise indicators of the quality of work and apply more sophisticated methods of extensive analysis. This is the only way in which greater

insight can be gleaned into the factors that determine the quality of work, whether or not they belong to the work sphere, and also into the way these and other key spheres in the structuring of daily life articulate in the configuration of opportunities and constraints that people come up against and which should be taken into account in the analysis of their quality of life.

Factors and levels of well-being in the balance between work and family life

Just like the work domain addressed in the previous point, family life plays a central role in determining a person's well-being. More specifically, the way everyday relations are established between paid work and unpaid work is crucial not only to quality of life generally, but also to satisfaction with the job itself and job performance (Guerreiro, 2004; Guerreiro and Carvalho, 2007; Lewis and Cooper, 2005; Lewis and Rapoport, 2005; Rapoport *et al.,* 2002).

The starting point of much research on work/family relations is that of the theory of gender roles by the emphasis given to the limited amount of physical, psychological and time resources people have that are confronted by the need to exert their energy and these resources in everyday life in the various spheres of activity. Hence, interference, conflict and stress processes may emerge from unsuitable patterns of work/family conciliation that end up having a negative influence on feelings and evaluations of well-being (Noor, 2003; Nordenmark, 2002; Scharlach, 2001).

Arising from this perspective, much of the analytical attention of the various studies has focused on the negative effects that the interference and conflict processes between work and family can originate, although the specific angle of the approaches may vary considerably (Crompton, 2006; Crompton and Lyonette, 2007; Lewis and Cooper, 1999). Gender, for example, generally appears as a predominant factor in the analyses conducted on the conflicts between family and working life: gender roles are symbolic and culturally loaded, which helps shape expectations and ways of behaviour that are profoundly articulated both with the kinds of family relations and the various ways men and women participate in the labour market (Dulk and Peper, 2007). Until very recently, circulating on a daily basis between the family sphere and the work domain meant, and still means to some extent, fundamentally different experiences for men and women insofar as women took, and still take, the main responsibility for doing household chores and looking after the children (Torres, 2004; Wall and Guerreiro, 2005). With the progressive entry of women into the labour market that has been taking place in recent decades, along with the decline in the more traditional models of sharing professional and family responsibilities (Amâncio, 2007), the problems arising from the imbalances found in the work/family relationship have also started to assume greater importance and visibility. Notably why most women who have a

job still have to put up with a "double work shift" nowadays: at work and at home (Crompton, 2006; Hochschild, 1989 and 1997). Hence, special attention has been devoted to analysing the conciliation patterns in families where the couple both have a paid job that must be articulated with family chores and responsibilities; focus has been given in particular to the various effects and dynamics of interference and conflict between the two spheres that have been caused by inappropriate (and unequally distributed in line with social differentiation of gender, social class, etc.) patterns of carrying out multiple "social roles", sometimes in a contrasting fashion. More recently, the relations between these negative effects and quality of work, the family relations and quality of life have been the object of increasing and detailed study (Guerreiro, 2004; Guerreiro and Carvalho, 2007; Lewis and Dyer, 2002; Lewis and Cooper, 2005).

The various studies have contributed to demonstrating that both family factors and work related variables are significantly associated to different negative interference profiles of work in the family, and the family in work, and with the satisfaction people report on the division of time and resources between these two domains (Guerreiro and Carvalho, 2007; Kovacheva, Lewis and Demivera, 2005; Lewis and Cooper, 1999, 2005; Peper, Doorne-Huiskes and Dulk, 2005). Working conditions and objective means of insertion in the job, for example, are found to be associated to different levels of stress and interference between family and working spheres together with other variables such as the level of inter-relational support in the work contexts that will be examined more closely in the following points.

However, before advancing to the analysis *per se* of some data selected for this point, one dimension of this question that has been gaining increasing relevance and which will be the target of specific attention in later stages of the analysis must be emphasised. In fact, if we wish to be true to the complexity of work/family relations, they can and should be addressed from standpoints that complement approaches underlining the conflictual aspects that can arise from this relationship. More recently, attention has started to be given to the positive effects that playing multiple roles in various spheres of activity originates, be it in terms of the accumulation of material and cultural resources or the development of more extensive socialising and support networks. Specifically with regard work/family relations, focus has been placed on the possible individual benefits resulting from a harmonious combination of chores and professional, family and domestic responsibilities. This perspective is frequently pursued in the framework of spillover theories, underlining the social and psychological fluxes and transfers of a positive nature that are established between these two central domains of life (Barnett and Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus and Powell, 2005; Nordenmark, 2002). It should also be noted that these mechanisms are in no

way one-directional; in fact, family life can interfere positively or negatively in the work domain, just as professional life is likely to influence the way family lifestyles are structured in various ways.

Given the specific scope of this exploratory study defined above, we chose to focus our attention in the following analysis on the articulations that can be observed between work and the negative effects of the interference between this sphere and the family. We will examine how the various key factors of the work context and insertion are associated or not to different kinds of evaluation and levels of satisfaction with the way in which the respondents divide their time and resources between the private/family domain and the work domain in their daily lives. A more in-depth analysis must clearly take into account the crossed and simultaneous interactions between multiple variables and particularly those related to family structures and dynamics; nevertheless, our exploratory analysis contributes not only to testing some composite measures, but also to opening analytical paths that are required if these stages of progressive analytical development are to be reached.

Indicators

Three indicators were used to address the workers/respondents' profiles of satisfaction with work/family relations: negative work-to-home interference, negative home-to-work interference (Geurts *et al.*, 2005), and satisfaction with the division of time and resources between work and family. Just as in the previous section on the quality of work, some important variables in relation to working conditions and forms of work insertion are also presented here; the inter-relations considered most relevant from the sociological standpoint were chosen for comment.

The *negative work-to-home interference* (W-H) was measured using a three-item index (Cronbach's α =0.738): a) How often does it happen that you do not have the energy to engage in leisure activities with your spouse/family/friends because of your job?; b) How often does it happen that you have to work so hard that you do not have time for any of your hobbies?; c) How often does it happen that your work obligations make it difficult for you to feel relaxed at home? The highest figures correspond to the greatest levels of interference between work and family (it is a four-point scale: from "never" to "always").

The *negative home-to-work interference* (H-W) was also measured with a three-item index (Cronbach's α =0.827): a) How often does it happen that you do not fully enjoy your work because you worry about your home situation?; b) How often does it happen that you have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic matters?; c) How often does it happen that you do not feel like working because of problems with your spouse/family/friends? Obviously, the highest figures correspond to the greatest levels of interference between family and work.

To gauge *respondents' satisfaction with the relationship between work and family,* a three-item index was used (Cronbach's α =0.911) with a five-point scale (from "very dissatisfied" to "very satisfied"): a) The way you divide your time between work and personal life; b) Your ability to meet the needs of your job with those of your personal or family life; c) The opportunity you have to perform your job well and yet be able to perform home-related duties adequately. The highest averages reflect the most positive evaluations (Valcour, 2007).

Between work and family, what well-being?

On observing the data regarding the respondents' evaluation of work/family relations in table 3.3, emphasis can be given firstly to the overall importance placed on the profiles of professional insertion.

The interference dynamics between the work and home domains, be it in one direction or the other, are associated to various objective and also more subjective factors that contribute to framing the opportunities the workers have to articulate the sometimes contrasting chores and varied and demanding responsibilities in their everyday lives in a more or less harmonious fashion. It is clear that the negative interference process of work to home or of home to work are partially autonomous which is also revealed by their differential association to the work sphere. In light of the focus adopted here, our attention is concentrated essentially on the former.

As might be expected, the number of hours people spend at work is vital at this simple level of analysis to determining the respondents' declared levels of interference of work in family life. It must be stressed that 67% work over 40 hours a week and that 12% even work over 50 hours; this use of time undoubtedly helps explain why the latter have the highest average of W-H interference. Significantly, they are also the least satisfied with the way they divide their time and resources between the two domains. The associations between the frequent use of overtime and higher levels of W-H interference on one hand and less positive appraisals of the W-H relations on the help strengthen these effects.

The data presented here also suggest that the professions that are perceived to be too demanding either in terms of content and more substantive tasks or in relation to working hours and deadlines are associated to more negative evaluations of interference in both the directions and the generally less positive appraisals about the division of individual time and resources. We must recall what was said above about the workers with the greatest organisational resources such as directors and senior managers or workers with supervisory responsibilities who are found to have non-linear positions with regard the quality of work and, as we can see, also in relation to the quality of family life: it is they that believe they have the greatest levels of interference of work to home, and are also the least

Table 3.3   Work patterns and work-life balance (averages)

Variables (%)	Interference W-H	Interference H-W	Work-life balance satisfaction
Sex			
Female (53.9)	2.04	1.52*	3.15
Male (46.1)	2.01	1.45*	3.19
Age			
24 or less (3.4)	1.86	1.36	3.51**
25 to 34 (44.0)	2.01	1.46	3.16**
35 to 44 (35.6)	2.04	1.51	3.12**
45 to 54 (13.0)	2.10	1.55	3.11**
55 to 64 (4.0)	1.97	1.47	3.55**
Education (ISCED)			
Primary (2.2)	1.78	1.29	3.79
Lower level secondary (6.9)	1.92	1.44	3.45**
Upper secondary (30.4)	2.00	1.51	3.18**
1 st stage of tertiary (54.3)	2.06	1.49	3.10**
2 nd stage of tertiary (5.8)	2.09	1.50	3.16**
Occupation (ISCO)			
Managers (6.9)	2.21**	1.49	2.92**
Professionals (28.4)	2.08**	1.48	3.16**
Technicians and associate professionals (33.9)	2.04**	1.47	3.08**
Clerks (25.5)	1.94**	1.54	3.26**
Service workers and shop and market sales workers (4.0)	1.79**	1.40	3.55**
Supervisory responsabilities			
Yes (32.3)	2.16**	1.48	3.04**
No (67.7)	1.96**	1.49	3.23**
Monthly income (in €)			
Mores than 5000 (7.7)	2.17	1.52	3.13
3000-5000 (17.3)	2.06	1.46	3.04
2000-3000 (27.6)	2.01	1.51	3.13
1000-2000 (36.8)	2.01	1.48	3.24
Menos de 1000 (10.6)	1.96	1.48	3.24
Working hours			
Less than 30 (3.1)	1.79**	1.49	3.29**
30 to 40 (29.5)	1.82**	1.49	3.44**
41 to 50 (55.0)	2.06**	1.48	3.10**
More than 50 (12.4)	2.43**	1.55	2.75**
Overtime on short notice			
Never (18.5)	1.84**	1.43	3.45**
Sometimes (42.7)	1.90**	1.48	3.30**
Often/always (38.8)	2.25**	1.53	2.89**

Variables (%)	Interference W-H	Interference H-W	Work-life balance satisfaction
Job requires too much input from worker			
Never (8.3)	1.61**	1.35*	3.58**
Sometimes (49.8)	1.89**	1.47*	3.36**
Often/always (41.9)	2.26**	1.53*	2.86**
Worker has enough time to complete tasks			
Never (4.4)	2.44**	1.67*	2.62**
Sometimes (42.2)	2.18**	1.52*	2.94**
Often/always (53.4)	1.87**	1.46*	3.40**
Does your job often make conflicting demands on you?			
Never (12.7)	1.64**	1.40**	3.70**
Sometimes (57.8)	1.96**	1.47**	3.25**
Often/always (29.5)	2.31**	1.56**	2.77**
Afraid lose job			
Agree (31.8)	2.13**	1.54**	3.08*
Neither agree nor disagree (25.6)	2.05**	1.53**	3.12*
Disagree (42.6)	1.93**	1.43**	3.25*
Control over work			
High (13.1)	1.95	1.41	3.45**
Medium (68.0)	2.05	1.50	3.14**
Low (18.9)	1.99	1.51	3.07**
Workplace support			
High (55.2)	1.94**	1.44**	3.33**
Medium (37.2)	2.09**	1.54**	3.00**
Low (7.6)	2.28**	1.58**	2.77**
Work-related stress (last month)			
Never (8.8)	1.46**	1.30**	3.75**
Sometimes (48.9)	1.85**	1.45**	3.39**
Often/always (42.3)	2.35**	1.58**	2.79**
Family related stress (last month)			
Never (22.5)	1.83**	1.21**	3.37**
Sometimes (55.6)	1.99**	1.47**	3.20**
Often/always (22.0)	2.31**	1.83**	2.87**

Note: $p \leq 0,001$ (all cells).

happy when evaluating the way they go between the two domains in their daily lives.

Though not directly associated to the two interference indicators, the level of control over work can be taken into account when considering workers' satisfaction with the daily bridges between work and family: greater autonomy to define work time and circumstances may contribute to harmonising and moderating the allocation of effort and resources; this clearly does not prevent certain problems and tensions originating in one domain "spilling-over" to the other. In other words, we can venture to say at a more theoretical level, that while the satisfaction index refers to a more general and all-encompassing cognitive evaluation made by the respondents about how they move between work and family, the interference indicators refer to more concrete events that can be more easily localised in daily life; this helps explain the articulation patterns of these factors with the level of control over work.

On the other hand, the social context of work is consistently found to be associated through the three measurements presented in table 3.3: more harmonious work/family relations are more easily obtained in working contexts characterised by higher levels of inter-relational support; that is, the data suggests that the ways in which people join social networks made up of colleagues and superiors, that constitute the relational organisation of workplaces, assume great importance in the shaping of work/family relations. This notion of inter-relational support warrants a more in-depth analysis insofar as it is used here simply for characterisation and general exploratory purposes: notably, a more detailed analysis should be conducted of the way in which more informal or discretionary aspects of relations and camaraderie are interweaved in this support with more organisational or impersonal components of the workers' context. Indeed, the importance of this analytical dimension was already very apparent in the analysis on the quality of work.

The specificity of the interference variables, strongly associated to two determinant and articulated spheres structuring people's lives like work and the family, will help shed light on the general non-existence of significant associations between them and some socio-demographic categories presented in table 3.3. In fact, the effects of these factors are to some extent mediated and deflected by diverse combinations of aspects that structure professional and family insertions. We have been placing emphasis on the fact that profiles of the W-H and H-W interference evaluations and of the work/family relations evaluations are generally entangled in work and also family configurations that are transversal to these more far-reaching social categories. Nevertheless, it must also be noted that the interference of family life in work is greater among women.

A more detailed analysis of the patterns of H-W interference is beyond the scope of this paper given that our chosen focus of study were the work factors affecting people's insertion, leaving the equally important family variables in all their complexity for a later date. The latter variable will tend to be primarily

associated to factors pertaining to family structures and dynamics. However, it should be noted that problems originating in this domain could "spillover" to the other, aggravated by time and commitment pressures and particularly demanding work. Yet again, more stable insertions in inter-relational work networks seem to be linked to lower levels of declared interference of family life at work which again raises the importance of the social contexts in the workplace in determining people's quality of life in its multiple dimensions.

On the basis of all that has been said herein, it can be stated that some important patterns of professional insertion are significantly associated to different levels of subjective perception of negative interferences between professional and home life and different evaluations of satisfaction with work/family relations. However, the way these representation of the various forms of articulating chores and responsibilities and using time and resources affect people's quality of life is of greatest interest in this context. After all, between work and family, what well-being?

Data set out in table 3.4 serves to begin identifying some provisional responses to this key question.

First and foremost, it can be said that the most common processes of negative interference between domains originate in the work sphere, though the proportion of respondents who say they have high levels of interference is low in both cases. There are also modest overall differences between men and women on this matter though women are more affected at work by family related matters. It seems therefore that most of the workers/respondents can limit the "over-spill" of the impacts that individual demands and investments in each domain may convey.[7]

The question of work/family relations is obviously not restricted to the perception of direct negative interferences, which are more or less tangible and defined in time, between the demands of the two spheres. Hence, it can be seen that the panorama of responses on the general satisfaction with the way in which people circulate between work and family life is extremely fragmented with a significant proportion saying that they are unhappy (about 34%). More reflective and far-reaching evaluations, like those asked for in this case, not only refer to the present situation but also imply more prospective and comparative components: "I am not in a bad position but it could be better", or "if I could, I would like to spend more time with my family", for example.

Table 3.4 contributes to a last hypothesis to be developed on the relations between work, family and well-being.

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7   It is noted again that an analysis such as this cannot take the complex effects of gender into account that work through mediations of professional status, class, age, etc.; it is likely that a more in-depth analysis would unveil articulation that a general overview of the topic necessarily cannot contemplate.

Table 3.4   Work-life balance and subjective well-being (averages)

Variables (%)	Job satisfaction		Subjective well-being	
	M	H	M	H
Interference W-H				
Low (36.7)	3.81	3.78	4.81	4.74
Medium (53.6)	3.52	3.57	4.32	4.35
High (9.7)	3.20	3.07	3.82	3.62
Interference H-W				
Low (70.7)	3.64	3.67	4.61	4.56
Medium (27.7)	3.52	3.46	4.13	4.11
High (1.6)	2.94	2.40	3.43	3.04
Work-life balance satisfaction				
High (34.6)	3.92	3.96	4.88	5.00
Medium (31.7)	3.54	3.58	4.57	4.53
High (33.7)	3.33	3.26	3.91	3.76

Nota: p ≤0,001 (all cells).

It must be understood that the indicators of interference between do-mains and satisfaction presented here are clearly and significantly associated to different declarations of well-being. But the bridges formed between work and personal and family life also influence the way people ultimately per-ceive their own work: when the domains shock with each other more force-fully, and particularly when there are aspects of family life that interfere neg-atively with professional life, it becomes difficult for women, and also men, to appreciate their work. It can be said that the workers who feel most satisfied with the way they conciliate the chores and needs of family and working life in their day to day are also very probably the ones with the most appreciable quality of life.

Concluding notes

This chapter has sought to make an exploratory analysis of the levels and pro-files of well-being and quality of life of workers in the service sector, using a questionnaire enquiry conducted in the scope of the Quality of Life in a Changing Europe project. A first analysis of the Portuguese data is presented here in which some of the indicators about the quality of work, satisfaction with work-family articulation and subjective well-being are examined. The fol-lowing questions were proposed as orientation for the study: in what way are perceptions and evaluations of satisfaction and well-being associated to the levels of work quality? How do the key factors in relation to work articulate with the subjective evaluations of the quality of life? How do these representa-tions and appreciations change in response to standardised combinations

between family and work? What relationships can be identified between quality of life and the work-family balance on the one hand, and satisfaction with work and well-being on the other?

Following this brief summary of the main theoretical contributions that shed light on the question under analysis, the text is structured in two stages. Firstly, a set of variables related to working conditions and forms of professional insertion was used in an attempt to ascertain the associations between these factors, levels of satisfaction with work and levels of well-being. Then, we examined the way in which these work variables were related with the evaluation made of the balance between work and family life, and the implications thereof for job satisfaction and the feeling of well-being expressed by the respondents.

Quality of work was measured using three indicators: control over work, inter-relational support and satisfaction, which were applied to identify some profiles of professional insertion. Higher levels of quality of work were found among the following workers: the more highly qualified, older, male, with supervisory functions, earning higher incomes, with permanent contracts, working more hours a week, who can work flexible timetables, who say their job is sufficiently demanding, who have time to do their work and do team work. Greater quality of work is also associated to those who are not afraid of losing their job and have not recently looked for a new job.

The exception to this general trend in the reading of the quality of work indicators is found among those with the first stage of tertiary education who register lower levels of job satisfaction; this may be because there is a mismatch between their qualifications, work done, material or symbolic compensation and contractual bond. As the notion of satisfaction appears in the literature consulted as an important mediator between specific work-related factors and evaluations of well-being broadly speaking, the study subsequently focused on the relation between the quality of work dimensions and the evaluations of satisfaction and well-being. In fact, people who have greater control over their work and are integrated in situations where there is more support among colleagues and superiors express higher levels of job satisfaction and more subjective well-being.

A second stage of the analysis focused on the articulation between work and the negative effects of interference between the work and family spheres using composite indicators of the negative interference of work-to-home, the negative interference of home-to-work and satisfaction with the relations between work and family. Working hours, which are over 40 hours a week for 67% of the respondents, are a key interference factor in family life. An association is therefore found between a greater number of working hours and less satisfaction with the way work and family life are articulated; this profile corresponds predominantly to the respondents in more qualified professions, in

more demanding jobs with hierarchical responsibilities who make more negative appraisals of the reciprocal interference between work and family. While recognising on one hand that extra working hours prevents them from being available to take responsibilities in the private domain, this may be exposed to tensions that impact the professional sphere and thus leads to appraisals of dissatisfaction about the relations between one sphere and the other.

It is to be noted that the interferences are even greater for those who expressed they had recently suffered from work or family related stress, and by those who say they have less support from colleagues and superiors. On the other hand, the relation between the factors of control over work and satisfaction with how work and family are conciliated, indicative of the possibility to manage their work time and practices, is important to reduce the negative effects and harmonise the action in the two domains of a person's life.

Finally, the analysis resulted in the identification of greater levels of work's medium or high negative interference in the home (63%) than the inverse (29%) and low satisfaction with work/family relations in 34% of the cases. The differences detected between men and women in the results are negligible although women are found to be more affected professionally by family factors. Moreover, job satisfaction and subjective well-being are greater among those who say they have a more positive experience of relations and influences between the work and family domains. However, the appraisals of job satisfaction and subjective well-being indices in these situations are generally lower among men; it would appear that women are culturally more accustomed to systematically dealing with these negative effects. Levels of well-being among men are only higher when they are satisfied with work/family relations. As men have been confronted more recently with identity attributions that associate them to new social commitments in the scope of their private lives, these seem to lower their levels of satisfaction and well-being considerably in relation to the resulting interferences and tensions. Nevertheless, it is noted that these suggested interpretations require more in-depth study in future analyses that incorporate other variables e.g. professional and family status, the phase of life and social class, that will allow greater light to be shed on the complex gender effects herein.

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