

The relation of work-family conflict and work-family
facilitation with marital satisfaction, through negative
and positive behaviors

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Summary

Much research has been done on the negative effects of the work role on the family role. This is termed as work-family conflict. However, a few investigations also show positive effects of the work role on the family role, described as work-family facilitation. The present study aims to relate dual-earners' work-family conflict and work-family facilitation experiences to marital satisfaction. It is expected that the positive and negative effects of work will be related to marital satisfaction through the mediating role of negative behaviors (anger and withdrawal) and positive behaviors (positivity and assurances). Perceptions of the partner's behaviors were also expected to be related to marital satisfaction. The results confirmed these expectations. This indicates evidence for a more nuanced relation of work-family conflict and marital satisfaction and new insights in the positive relation of work and the family life.

Introduction

The topic of work-family balance has interested researchers for years now. Brockwood (2007) states that the work and family domains influence each other in positive and negative ways. Her overview focuses on the relation between the work-family interface and *marital satisfaction*, which is the evaluation of how happy an individual is with his or her marriage (or relationship). An interest in this relation is comprehensible, as many people are involved in relationships, and many of the people involved in relationships have jobs (CBS, 2008). In 1999 the amount of dual-earner families in The Netherlands already increased with 100.000 and again in 2004 the CBS showed that the amount of dual-earners was increasing. In 2005 more than seven million families were investigated and almost all of these were dual-earner families¹. With so many people having relationships and the increasing number of working people every year it is important to investigate the influence of work on family life.

Research shows that work can negatively affect family life by high job demands (Bakker & Geurts, 2004) and by incompatible job and family demands (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000). Because of this incompatibility, people experience stress and strain, which can lead to relationship tension and less relationship satisfaction in both partners (Matthews, Del Priore, Acitelli, & Barnes-Farrell, 2006). Marital satisfaction can have serious effects on the degree of depression (Riso, Blandino, Hendricks, Grant, & Duin, 2002) and can predict violence used by intimate partners (Stith, Green, Smith & Ward, 2008). Moreover, a Chinese study indicated that higher marital satisfaction was related to less health problems and higher life satisfaction (Shek, 1999). Marital satisfaction is directly related to the children's psychological distress and lowered marital satisfaction can also result in lowered parental involvement which will heighten the children's psychological distress (Fisman & Meyers,

¹ Per family 1.7 person had an income.

2000). In this study, because of the widespread effects of marital satisfaction in people's lives, we are interested in the impact of work on family life and in particular marital satisfaction. We expect that work will have a negative and positive relation with marital satisfaction.

Much research has focused on the negative side of the work-family interface. In combining work and family roles individuals can experience *work-family conflict*. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) 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' (p. 77). The role pressures of the work or family role are thereby experienced as mutually incompatible which leads to an experience of work-family conflict. In this way participation in one role is made more difficult by the participation in the other role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The occurrence of work-family conflict is explained by the *scarcity theory* (Marks, 1977). This theory posits that humans have a fixed amount of energy and time that has to be distributed over the various roles someone fulfills. It is assumed that every role takes up time and energy, so that the participation in one role will have a negative effect on the participation in the other role. According to Marks (1977), it is inevitable that this will lead to the experience of role conflicts like work-family conflict. The definition of work-family conflict indicates that conflict is bidirectional in nature: work can conflict with the family life and vice versa. In this study we will focus on the work-to-family direction since we are interested in the effects of work on the partner relationship.

Brockwood (2007) states that previous research has shown that work can have a negative impact on marital satisfaction. In the work domain, arguments and stress may arise and this will lower job satisfaction. Lowered job satisfaction can in turn negatively affect marital satisfaction. She also reports studies showing that negative mood elicited by the work

domain affects marital satisfaction (Heller & Watson, 2005; Schulz, Cowan, Cowan & Brennan, 2004). A stressful workday elicits negative arousal that results in partners being more withdrawn and angry, which leaves them less satisfied with the marriage. In their review of the work and family literature, Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, and Crouter (2000) show that job stressors have a significant impact on the family-life. Job stressors can result in exhaustion, feeling overextended and exhausted by the demands of the work. These feelings lead to the experience of work-family conflict (Bakker & Geurts, 2004) and in turn to less sensitive and responsive interactions with family members like children (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000). In this way, job stress has an indirect impact on behavior like social withdrawal through the experience of work-family conflict. The overall well-being at home and at work and even the physical well-being is influenced by these factors (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000; Repetti, 1993). As shown above, this may affect many families with working partners. A meta-analysis by Allen et al. (2000) also shows the importance of investigating the effects of work on family life. This meta-analysis shows that work-family conflict can have serious consequences. They examined the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction across fifteen studies and found a weighted mean correlation of -.23 between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction.

Recent studies show that work can also *facilitate* family life. The experience of *work-family facilitation* occurs when participation in one role enhances or makes it easier to fulfill the requirements of another role (Van Steenbergen, Ellemers & Mooijaart, 2007). The gains provided by the participation in one domain enhance the functioning in the other domain (Wayne, Grzywacz, Carlson, & Kacmar, 2007). Marks (1977) proposed a theoretical explanation for work-family facilitation, with his *role expansion theory*. According to this theory, energy can be produced, instead of drained, out of activities in certain domains. The

performance of the work or family role can hereby create energy, and can make participation in the other role easier.

Work-family facilitation can give people pleasure and satisfaction, and increase their well-being (Burriss, 1991; Hill, 2005; Kinnunen, Feldt, Geurts, & Pulkkinen, 2006). However, few studies have addressed work-family facilitation and the results remain inconsistent (Brockwood, 2007). The negative relationship between marital tension and work-family fit has been investigated; however the results were not convincing (Pittman, 1994). Other research focusing on the relationship between work-family balance and marital satisfaction, including negative and positive aspects of combining work and family life, found a positive relation between work-family balance and marital satisfaction (Barnett, Del Campo, Del Campo & Steiner, 2003). Burriss (1991) explained that the combination of work and family life demands people to function in multiple roles. He also acknowledged that most research focuses on role strain, conflict, and overload. However, multiple roles can also complement each other and thus affect the well-being of people in positive ways. Wayne et al. (2007) presented a model in which it was expected that work-family facilitation would have a positive effect on aspects of family functioning like marital satisfaction through positive marital behaviors. However, up to today the relationship has not been investigated.

The present study will test a model that shows how experienced work-family conflict as well as experienced work-family facilitation will affect marital satisfaction. We predict that both partners' experienced work-family conflict and facilitation affect marital satisfaction indirectly through their effect on positive and negative relationship behaviors. By examining the effects of both conflict and facilitation on marital satisfaction and addressing mediators of these relationships, the model will be more complete than previous studies have presented. In this way we posit a *dual-process model* of work-family interference. Marital

satisfaction is hereby affected in a negative manner by work-family conflict and in a positive manner by work-family facilitation. In their study, Bakker and Geurts (2004) present such a model which is *the dual-process model of work-home interference*. They argue that work can have a positive effect on the family life by leaving people more satisfied and healthier when working and they showed that indeed the domain of home can be positively and negatively affected by the work-domain. Their results indicated that a model containing a negative and a positive pathway is better at predicting the effects of work on family life, than a model which only contains a negative pathway or a positive pathway. However, the model that will be tested in this investigation will have some differences in comparison with the model of Bakker and Geurts (2004). We will test the positive and negative effects of work-home interference on the marriage, where Bakker and Geurts tested the positive and negative effects of job characteristics on positive and negative work-home interference. Their investigation focused more on the work characteristics and work-family conflict. We will focus on the relation with the family life. It is expected that marital satisfaction will be negatively affected by work-family conflict and positively affected by work-family facilitation, through the mediating variables of negative marital behaviors (anger and withdrawal) and positive marital behaviors (positivity and assurances) respectively.

Theoretical Background

Work-family conflict, anger, withdrawal and marital satisfaction

According to Carlson, Brooklyn Derr and Wadsworth (2003) individuals can experience different types of work-family conflict. The experience of strain-based conflicts occurs when the strain produced by one role makes it difficult to fulfill the demands of the other role.

Time-based conflicts emerge when time allocated to one role makes it difficult to participate in the other role. Behavioral conflicts exist when behavior performed in one role difficult the participation of the other role. Psychological conflicts arise when psychological preoccupation with one role interferes with the ability to fulfill the other role. Thus work-family conflict of any type is experienced by individuals when the work-role makes it difficult to fulfill the family-role. This can be because of increased strain and experienced shortage of time, certain behaviors elicited by the work-role, or psychological preoccupation with the work-role. For instance, when a father or mother cannot be present at a family activity because of a meeting at work, this person will experience a time-based work-family conflict. An example of a behavior-based work-family conflict is when a person at work is expected to behave like a manager, but members of the family expect the person to behave warm and emotional.

As described earlier, work-family conflict can have multiple negative consequences, such as lowered marital satisfaction (Brockwood, 2007). Bodenmann, Ledermann and Bradbury (2007) also showed the effects of stress experienced in the work-setting. External stress, like stress at work, created more stress, like hassles and higher tension, within the relationship. This was in turn associated with lowered relationship functioning and marital satisfaction. Allen et al. (2000) reviewed studies that related work-family conflict to lowered well-being as well as marital satisfaction. Some studies found results for women and not for men or vice versa (Coverman, 1989; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Matthews, Conger & Wickrama, 1996). Other investigations found significant effects of work-family conflict on marital satisfaction for certain occupations, but not for other occupations (Netemeyer, 1996). Therefore, there are still inconsistent outcomes in the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction.

Other research leaves a possible explanation for these inconsistent results. The experience of stress, caused outside the relationship dyad, can affect relationship functioning. Bakker, Demerouti and Dollard (2008) showed that job demands positively influenced work-family conflict which in turn resulted in social undermining. These behaviors were explained as hostile marital interactions which were the expression of negative affect or evaluations, and criticism. Thus, experiencing work-family conflict can elicit disruptive behaviors in the relationship. When an individual experiences a conflict between fulfilling the work and the family role it is likely that he or she will be depleted by that. In their investigation, Story and Repetti (2006) showed that job stressors affected the marital behaviors of the partners. Husbands and wives showed more *anger* and *withdrawal* when experiencing job stress. Other investigations also show that a stressful workday can result in the expression of more negative marital behaviors (Hughes & Galinsky, 1994). For instance, individuals can be more withdrawn (Repetti, 1989; Repetti & Wood, 1997) or individuals can express more anger (Schulz et al., 2004). These disruptive behaviors can influence the marriage by lowering the experienced marital quality and stability (Matthews et al., 1996) or marital satisfaction (Schulz et al., 2004). Thus, in the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction, it is possible that negative marital behaviors, elicited by work-family conflict, are related to the lowered marital satisfaction. This may explain the inconsistent results of investigations concerning only the relationship of work-family conflict and marital satisfaction. Hughes, Galinsky and Morris (1992) showed that job characteristics like time schedules and work overload, elicit the experience of work-home interference. They also found a relationship between work-home interference and marital quality. More negative job characteristics resulted in more negative work-home interference, which in turn lowered the marital quality of the individuals. Furthermore, expressing negative behavior may have an influence on the

spouse. Bakker et al. (2008) showed that the social undermining of one partner resulted in the experience of more demands at home by the other partner. Seeing and experiencing the negative behavior of a partner may lower the marital satisfaction of the other partner. Acitelli and Antonucci (1994) showed that the perception of the behavior of the partner was the strongest predictor of one's own marital satisfaction.

In the present study, we therefore expect that work-family conflict will affect marital satisfaction through disruptive marital behaviors as anger and withdrawal. Work-family conflict will be positively related to anger and withdrawal, which in turn will be related to lower own marital satisfaction (*Hypothesis 1*). We also posit that the expression of anger and withdrawal by one partner will affect the marital satisfaction of the spouse. Marital anger and withdrawal reported by one partner will be positively related to marital anger and withdrawal as perceived by the other partner, which in turn will lead to lowered marital satisfaction of this partner (*Hypothesis 2*). Figure 1 shows the theoretical model.

Work-family facilitation, positive behavior and marital satisfaction

Parallel to the four types of work-family conflict, Van Steenbergen et al. (2007) distinguished between four types of work-family facilitation: energy-based, time-based, behavioral and psychological facilitation. Energy-based facilitation occurs when energy acquired in the work domain facilitates, makes it easier to function in, the family domain. The experience of time-based facilitation emerges when time investment in the work role produces better time management in the family role. Behavioral work-family facilitation occurs when learned behavior in the work-role is useful in the family role and makes participation in this role easier. New perspectives learned in the work role can help the family role through psychological facilitation. An individual is then able to put matters in better perspective in

the family role, by the learned perspectives in the work role. For example, an individual may feel more energized after a working day and can hereby participate more fully in family activities at home, which will thus be experienced as an energy-based facilitation. Or, psychological-based facilitation can occur when an individual learns new perspectives by participating in the work-role and can use these perspectives at home. As such, we argue that the experience of work-family facilitation should result in better relationship functioning, by providing more energy and skills, the availability of more time and psychological benefits.

An important aspect of positive relationship functioning is the use of positive maintenance strategies, which are activities performed by the partners to repair and sustain their relationship (Canary, Stafford & Semic, 2002). *Positivity* is used when an individual acts polite, cheerful and courteous and avoids being critical. An individual can also use the positive maintenance strategy of *assurances*, which entails the expression of love, commitment and implying that the relationship has a future (Canary et al., 2002). Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999) showed that the performance of these behaviors heightens one's marital satisfaction: when husbands and wives showed more maintenance strategies like positivity and assurances they were more satisfied with their marriage. Furthermore, other research indicates that the perception of the partner's use of relational maintenance strategies has a strong influence on one's own marital satisfaction (Bell, Daly & Gonzalez, 1987; Dainton, 2000). Perceiving the partner behaving with positivity and assurances can thus heighten the marital satisfaction of the spouse. Ballard-Reisch, Weigel and Zaguidouline (1999) show that expressing and demonstrating positive behaviors and good feelings to each other can heighten the marital satisfaction of the person that perceives these positive behaviors.

In the present research, we argue that the experience of any type of facilitation in the work domain, such as more energy, better time management, new skills and behavior or new

psychological perspectives, should result in positive behavior in the relationship. The quality of the marriage should in turn be influenced by these newly performed positive behaviors like positivity and assurances (Canary et al., 2002). Thus, we expect that work-family facilitation will affect marital satisfaction through positivity and assurances. We further hypothesize that the performance of positive behavior affects marital satisfaction, when an individual perceives his or her partner behaving positive. In sum, experienced work-family facilitation is positively related to positivity and assurances which will in turn be related to higher own marital satisfaction (*Hypothesis 3*). We expect positive behavior of one partner to have an effect on the marital satisfaction of the spouse. Positivity and assurances reported by one partner will be positively related to positivity and assurances as perceived by the other partner, which in turn will lead to higher marital satisfaction of this partner (*Hypothesis 4*).

Although the effects of gender are often investigated, results seem to be inconsistent (Allen, 2000; Brockwood, 2007). Many studies report no gender differences and others do find results. For example, the experience of job stress was associated with the expression of anger for women but not for men (Schulz et al., 2004). Withdrawal was found to have a stronger relationship with job stress for men but not for women (Schulz et al., 2004). Various explanations exist, such as the different division of tasks at the work and family domain for men and women. However, this explanation cannot account for results showing no gender effects. Other studies do show a gender effect, with the link between the perceptions of social support and marital satisfaction being stronger for wives than for husbands (Acitelli & Antonucci, 1994) and the link between the perception of the use of maintenance strategies and marital satisfaction also being stronger for women (Bell et al., 1987). Therefore, we will explore whether the experience of work-family conflict and

facilitation has the same effect on marital behavior for men and women.

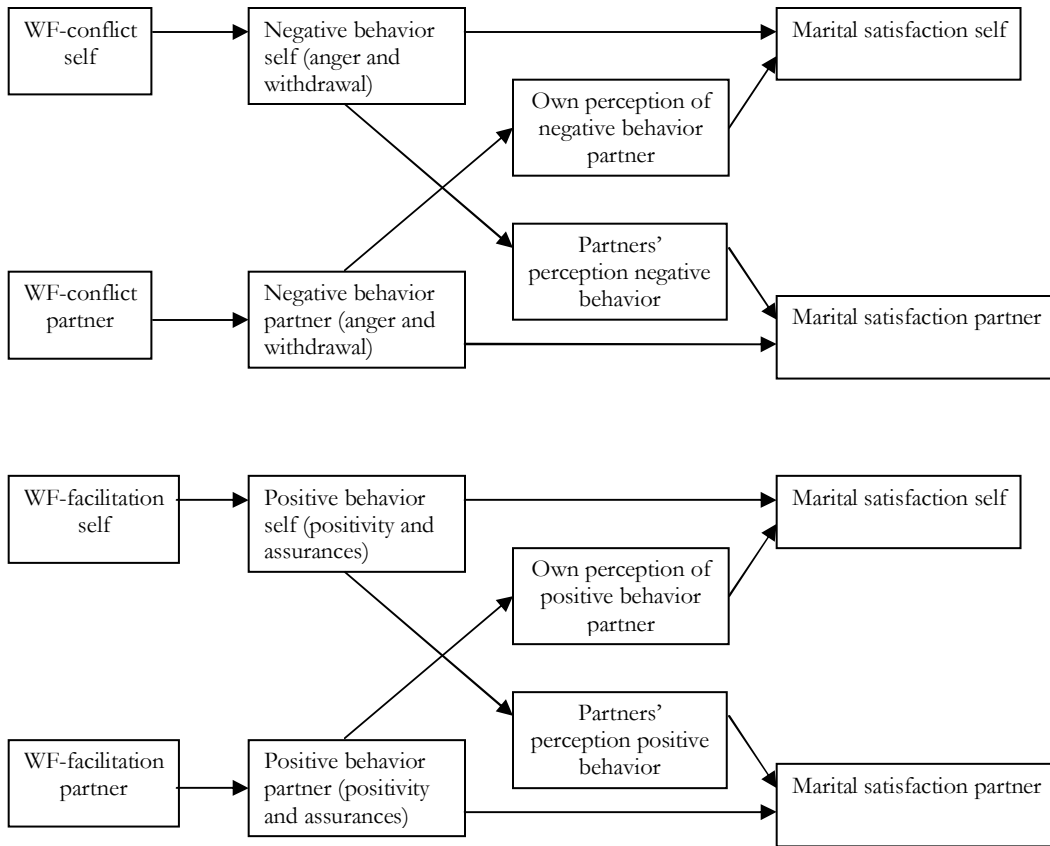


Figure 1. Theoretical model, with WF meaning work-family.

Method

A questionnaire study was conducted among Dutch dual-earners with children living at home. We measured experienced work-family conflict and work-family facilitation, negative and positive marital behaviors, and marital satisfaction. Perceptions of the behaviors of the partners were also measured.

Sample and procedure

This investigation was based on a convenient sample. The couples were approached on the internet by e-mail and asked to participate in an investigation on the balance between work and family life. Most couples were in some respect known by the investigators. Other couples were reached through the participations of other couples, and the investigators were given permission to reach these acquainted couples. To be eligible for the study, both partners had to work more than twelve hours per week and had to have at least one child living at home. The couples that agreed to participate were sent two questionnaires accompanied by a letter with an introduction of the study and some instructions. Respondents were instructed to reflect on their work and family-life experiences of the past two weeks. They were also instructed to complete and return the questionnaires separately and every couple was given a number to assure anonymity. After returning both questionnaires, each partner received a magazine of their choice.

The sample for the analyses of this study included 215 Dutch couples. The mean age for men was 42 years ($SD = 7.14$) and for women 40 years ($SD = 6.99$). All participants worked and men worked on average 37 hours per week ($SD = 5.38$) and women 28 hours ($SD = 7.02$). On average, the participants were 21 % lower educated, 37 % moderately educated and 41 % higher educated. All participants had one or more children living at

home. The mean number of children living at home was 2 ($SD = .76$), and 30 % was between 0 and 3 years, 41 % between 4 and 12 years and 31 % was above 13 years.. The mean length of the relationship of the couples was 16.5 years ($SD = 7.47$).

Measures

Work-family conflict. This construct was developed by Carlson, Kacmar and Williams (2000) and translated into Dutch. Twelve items were used to measure this construct on a 7-point scale (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). The participants had to answer according to their experiences of the last two weeks at home and at work. Four different types of work-family conflict were measured: time-based, behavioral, psychological and strain-based conflict. Every type of work-family conflict was measured with three items. For example: ‘My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like’ (time-based conflict). ‘Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home’ (behavioral conflict). ‘When I am at home, I often think about work-related problems’ (psychological conflict). ‘I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family’ (strain-based conflict). The work-family conflict variable was the mean of all the types of conflict (Cronbach’s alpha .82). A higher score indicated more experienced work-family conflict.

Work-family facilitation. The scales for measuring work-family facilitation were developed by Van Steenbergen, Ellemers and Mooijaart (2007). This construct was based on four types of work-family facilitation, each containing three items: time-based, behavioral, psychological, and energy-based facilitation. For example: ‘Because I work, I enjoy my time at home more’ (time-based facilitation) (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). ‘The skill I use at work help me to better handle matters at home’ (behavioral facilitation). ‘Because of

my work, I am more able to put home-related matters into perspective' (psychological facilitation). 'When I get home from work I often feel emotionally recharged, enabling me to make a better contribution at home' (energy-based facilitation). The participants had to answer the questions according to their experiences at home and at work of the past two weeks. The mean of these scales constituted the variable of work-family facilitation (Cronbach's alpha .86). A higher score indicated more experienced work-family facilitation.

Negative behaviors.

Anger. In this study the type of anger was based on Story and Repetti (2006). Anger was measured with ten items ($\alpha = .89$), for example: 'I criticize my partner' (1 = never, 7 = very often). The participants had to report their experiences of anger of the past two weeks. A higher score indicated more reported anger.

Withdrawal. Also based on Story and Repetti (2006), withdrawal was measured with seven items ($\alpha = .76$), for example: 'I want to be alone' (1 = never, 7 = very often). The participants had to report their experiences of withdrawal of the past two weeks. A higher score indicated more reported withdrawal.

Perceptions of negative behaviors.

Anger. The perceptions of anger performed by the partners ($\alpha = .92$) was measured with ten items and based on Story and Repetti (2006). The same items were used, but were stated as: 'My partner criticizes me' (1 = never, 7 = very often). The participants had to fill in their answer according to their experiences of the past two weeks. A higher score indicated more perceptions of anger performed by their partner.

Withdrawal. The perceptions of withdrawal performed by the partners ($\alpha = .84$) was measured with seven items based on Story and Repetti (2006). The same items were used,

but were stated as: 'My partner wants to be alone' (1 = never, 7 = very often). The participants had to fill in their answer according to their experiences of the past two weeks. A higher score indicated more perceptions of withdrawal performed by their partner.

Positive behaviors.

Assurances. Assurances was based on and developed by Canary and Stafford (1992). Assurances was measured with four items ($\alpha = .87$), for example: 'I imply that our relationship has future' (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). The participants had to report their experiences of withdrawal of the past two weeks. A higher score on this construct indicated more reported behaviours of assurance.

Positivity. This other type of positive behavior was also developed by Canary and Stafford (1992). Positivity was measured with ten items ($\alpha = .83$), for example 'I try to be romantic, funny and interesting for him/her' (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). The participants had to report their experiences of withdrawal of the past two weeks. A higher score on this construct indicated more reported positivity.

Perceptions of positive behaviors.

Assurances. The perceptions of assurances performed by the partners were also measured with four items ($\alpha = .89$) (Canary & Stafford, 1992). The same items were used, however were stated as: 'My partner implies that our relationship has future'. The participants had to fill in their answer according to their experiences of the past two weeks. A higher score indicated more perceptions of assurances performed by their partner.

Positivity. The perceptions of positivity performed by the partners ($\alpha = .88$) was measured with ten items based on Story and Repetti (2006). The same items were used, however were stated as: 'My partner tries to be romantic, funny and interesting for me' (1 = totally disagree,

7 = totally agree). The participants had to fill in their answer according to their experiences of the past two weeks. A higher score on this construct indicated more perceptions of positivity performed by their partner.

Marital satisfaction. This scale consisted of six items developed by Norton (1983). For example: 'My relationship with my partner makes me happy' (1 = totally disagree, 7 = totally agree). The scale of marital satisfaction had a Cronbach's alpha of .90. The participants had to rate their experienced marital satisfaction according to their experiences of the past two weeks. A higher score on this construct indicated a higher satisfaction with the marriage or relationship.

Results

Work-family conflict, negative behaviors and marital satisfaction

For testing hypotheses 1 and 3 we used the data per participant, which means that the results can be indicated for both men and women. Means, standard deviations and correlations of the variables in hypotheses 1 and 3 are reported in table 1. All variables are correlated in the direction as expected.

In our model it is assumed that work-family conflict and work-family facilitation will be related to the own marital satisfaction by influencing negative and positive behaviors. According to the steps of mediation of Baron and Kenny (1986) the negative behaviors, anger and withdrawal, and the positive behaviors, positivity and assurances, will function as mediating variables. To test whether these variables function as mediators, they must meet some conditions. First, the independent variable should be related to the mediator variable and to the dependent variable. Second, the mediator should be related to the dependent variable. Finally, when the first and second paths are controlled, the relation between the independent and dependent variable should no longer be significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986). These paths can be tested with stepwise linear regression, and the dependent variable should be regressed on the independent and dependent variables in the third path.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations and correlations of the variables tested in hypothesis 1 and 3.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. WF-conflict	3.31	1.03						
2. Anger	3.08	.93	.20**					
3. Withdrawal	3.14	.98	.38**	.40**				
4. WF-facilitation	4.28	.90	-.19**	.07	-.05			
5. Assurances	5.84	.76	-.11*	-.29**	-.33**	.19**		
6. Positivity	4.97	.96	-.15**	-.49**	-.33**	.17**	.62**	
7. Marital satisfaction	5.71	.83	-.16**	-.30**	-.34**	.16**	.62**	.48**

Note. ** $p < 0.01$ * $p < 0.05$. WF means work-family.

We predicted that work-family conflict would have a negative relationship with marital satisfaction through negative behaviors like anger and withdrawal (*hypothesis 1*). First, we tested the mediating effect of anger in the relationship between work-family conflict (independent variable) and marital satisfaction (dependent variable). In performing the first step, the results indicated a positive relationship ($B = .20$) between work-family conflict and anger, $F(1, 428) = 17.48, p < .001$. As hypothesized, the results indicated a negative relationship ($B = -.18$) between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction, $F(1, 428) = 11.27, p < .001$. The negative relationship between anger and marital satisfaction ($B = -.32$) was significant, $F(1, 428) = 42.49, p < .001$, and adding work-family conflict to this model reduced the coefficient of work-family conflict ($B = -.12$), $F(2, 427) = 23.95, p < .001$. This coefficient remained significant ($p < .03$), which indicates a partial mediation of the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction by anger. This model had an R^2 of .10. Figure 2 depicts the tested variables for hypotheses 1 and 3, including coefficients. To analyze a mediating pathway, we also conduct the Sobel test for mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This test can establish whether the mediator carries the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable, by analyzing if the reduction of the coefficient of the independent variable is significant. The results did indicate a mediating effect of anger ($t = -3.42, p < .001$).

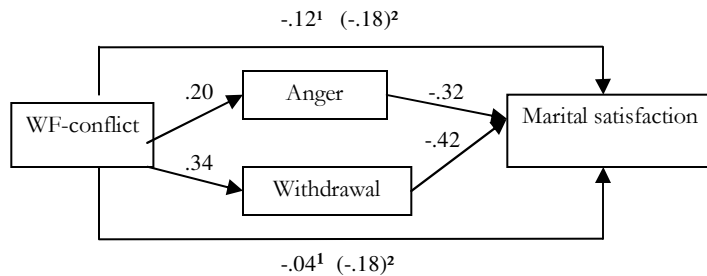


Figure 2. Mediating pathways for hypothesis 1 containing unstandardized coefficients.
¹ Reduced coefficient of independent variable when entered into the mediating model.
² Coefficient of independent variable before entered into the mediating model.

Secondly, we performed an analysis with work-family conflict as the independent variable, withdrawal as the mediator and marital satisfaction as the dependent variable. There was a significant positive relationship between work-family conflict and withdrawal ($B = .34$), $F(1, 428) = 73.67$, $p < .001$, and a significant negative relationship between withdrawal and marital satisfaction ($B = -.42$), $F(1, 428) = 54.19$, $p < .001$. The coefficient of work-family conflict in predicting marital satisfaction ($B = -.18$) was reduced when withdrawal was added to the model ($B = -.04$, *ns*). This model had an R^2 of .11 and was significant, $F(2, 427) = 27.35$, $p < .001$. This indicates a complete mediation of the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction by withdrawal.

Thus, in support of hypothesis 1 the results indicate that work-family conflict is associated with marital satisfaction through anger and withdrawal.

Work-family facilitation, positive behaviors and marital satisfaction

We also predicted that work-family facilitation would have a positive relation with marital satisfaction through positivity and assurances (*hypothesis 3*) (see figure 3). The independent variable work-family facilitation was positively related to the dependent variable marital satisfaction ($B = .17$), $F(1, 428) = 11.42$, $p < .001$, and to the mediation variable positivity ($B = .13$), $F(1, 428) = 13.3$, $p < .001$. The positive relationship ($B = .65$) between positivity and marital satisfaction was also significant, $F(1, 428) = 128.5$, $p < .001$, and adding work-family facilitation to this model reduced the coefficient of work-family facilitation ($B = .08$, *ns*). This indicates a complete mediation of the relationship between work-family facilitation and marital satisfaction by positivity, $F(2, 427) = 66.37$, $p < .001$, and the model had an R^2 of .24.

We then tested the mediation model with work-family facilitation as the independent variable, marital satisfaction as the dependent variable and assurances as the mediator. Work-

family facilitation was positively related ($B = .17$) to assurances, $F(1, 428) = 15.86, p < .001$, and assurances was positively related to marital satisfaction ($B = .72$), $F(1, 428) = 272.68, p < .001$. The coefficient of work-family facilitation in predicting marital satisfaction was reduced ($B = .05, ns$), when added to the model of work-family facilitation and marital satisfaction mediated by assurances, $F(2, 427) = 137.14, p < .001$. This indicates a complete mediation of the relationship between work-family facilitation and marital satisfaction by assurances, and this model had an R^2 of .39.

In sum, hypothesis 3 was confirmed. Work-family facilitation is associated with marital satisfaction, through the mediating variables positivity and assurances.

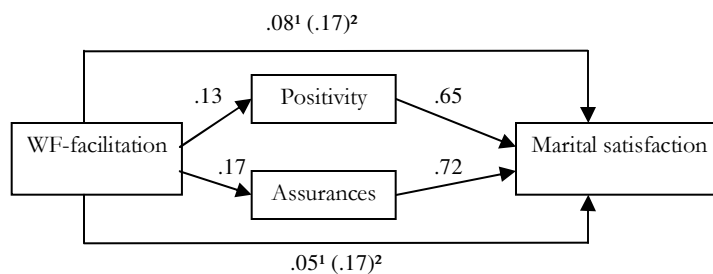


Figure 3. Mediating pathways for hypothesis 3 containing unstandardized coefficients.
¹ Reduced coefficient of independent variable when entered into the mediating model.
² Coefficient of independent variable before entered into the mediating model.

The perceptions of negative behaviors

In testing hypothesis 2 we used the couple data instead of the participant data, which means that all variables contained a value for the husbands and a value for the wives. We used these data, because we related the data for one partner to the data of the other partner. This also meant that the amount of participants per variable was divided in half (215 men or 215 women). Appendix 1 shows the means, standard deviations and correlations of all the variables included in hypothesis 2.

To test hypothesis 2, again we used the analyses of mediation according to the steps of Baron and Kenny (1986). However, hypothesis 2 contained two mediating variables in every pathway. For example, the experienced conflict of the wife was expected to be related to the marital satisfaction of the husband, through the mediating behaviors of the reported wife's anger and withdrawal and through the husband's perceptions of the wife's anger and withdrawal. To test these mediations, we first looked at the relation of the variables shown in Figures 4 and 5. As can be seen in Table 2 the variables were significantly correlated, so we could test for mediation. Below, the results of the analyses are reported per negative behavior (anger and withdrawal), to remain clear on the results and the specific variables.

Table 2. Correlations of the variables in hypothesis 2, with W meaning wife, H meaning husband, and M.S. meaning marital satisfaction.

	Perception H anger W	Perception H withdrawal W	M.S. H	Perception W anger H	Perception W withdrawal H	M.S. W
Anger W	.43**		-.28**			
Withdrawal W		.38**	-.21**			
Anger H				.44**		-.26**
Withdrawal H					.50**	-.21**

Note. ** $p < .01$. The variables containing perceptions are to be interpreted as 'Perception H anger W' = husband's perception of the wife's anger

Partner's anger, own perception of the partner's anger and own marital satisfaction

First, we tested the mediating relationship of the husband's anger with the wife's marital satisfaction through the wife's perception of the husband's anger. The independent variable, the anger of the husband, was positively related ($B = .51$) to the mediating variable, the wife's perception of the anger of the husband, $F(1, 213) = 49.79, p < .001$. The anger of the husband was negatively related ($B = -.28$) to the dependent variable, the marital satisfaction of the wife, $F(1, 213) = 16.01, p < .001$. The wife's perception of the husbands anger was negatively related ($B = -.35$) to the wife's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 35.44, p < .001$, and the coefficient of the husbands anger was reduced ($B = -.13, ns$) when this variable was added to this model. This indicated a significant mediation of the relationship between the

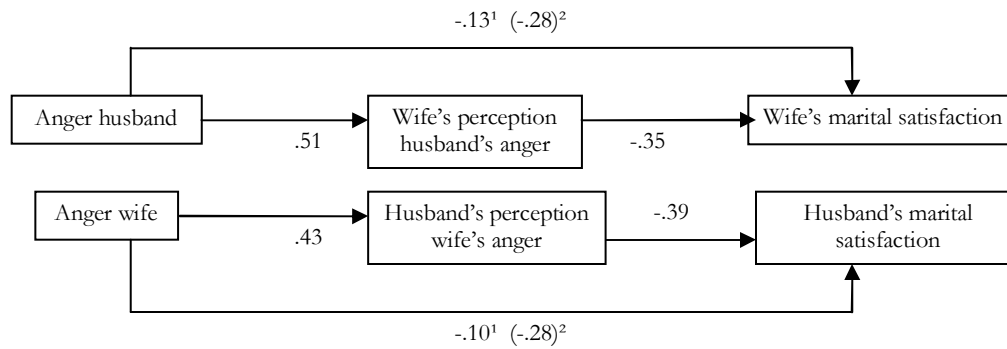


Figure 4. Mediating pathways for hypothesis 2 containing unstandardized coefficients.
¹ Reduced coefficient of independent variable when entered into the mediating model.
² Coefficient of independent variable before entered into the mediating model.

husband's anger and the wife's marital satisfaction through the wife's perception of the husbands anger, $F(2, 212) = 19.44, p < .001, R^2 = .16$.

Second, we tested the mediation of the wife's anger with the husband's marital satisfaction by the husband's perception of the wife's anger. The wife's anger was positively ($B = .43$) related to the husband's perception, $F(1, 213) = 47.46, p < .001$, and negatively related ($B = -.28$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 17.46, p < .001$. The husband's perception of the wife's anger was negatively related ($B = -.39$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 53.85, p < .001$, and the coefficient of the wife's anger was reduced ($B = -.10, ns$) when added to this model. Again, this indicated a significant mediation of the relationship between the wife's anger and the husband's marital satisfaction, through the husband's perception of the wife's anger, $F(2, 212) = 28.23, p < .001, R^2 = .21$.

Partner's withdrawal, own perception of the partner's withdrawal and own marital satisfaction

We tested the mediating relationship of the husband's withdrawal with the wife's marital satisfaction by the wife's perception of the husband's withdrawal. The husband's withdrawal, was positively related ($B = .63$) the wife's perception of the husband's withdrawal, $F(1, 213) = 70.90, p < .001$. The withdrawal of the husband was negatively related ($B = -.24$) to the

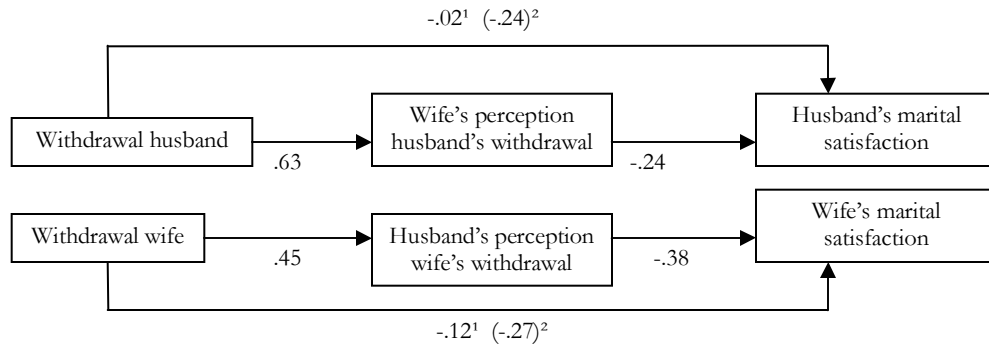


Figure 5. Mediating pathways for hypothesis 2 containing unstandardized coefficients.

¹ Reduced coefficient of independent variable when entered into the mediating model.

² Coefficient of independent variable before entered into the mediating model.

marital satisfaction of the wife, $F(1, 213) = 10.24, p < .01$. The wife's perception of the husband's withdrawal was negatively related ($B = -.24$) to the wife's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 39.94, p < .001$, and the coefficient of the husband's withdrawal was reduced ($B = -.02, ns$) when this variable was added to this model. This indicated a significant mediation of the relationship between the husbands withdrawal and the wife's marital satisfaction through the wife's perception of the husbands withdrawal, $F(2, 212) = 19.93, p < .001, R^2 = .16$.

Then, we tested the mediation of the wife's withdrawal with the husband's marital satisfaction through the husband's perception of the wife's withdrawal. The wife's withdrawal was positively ($B = .45$) related to the husband's perception, $F(1, 213) = 36.51, p < .001$, and negatively related ($B = -.27$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 10.04, p < .001$. The husband's perception was negatively related ($B = -.38$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 29.09, p < .001$, and the coefficient of the independent variable was reduced ($B = -.12, ns$) when added to this model. Again, this indicated a significant mediation of the relationship between the wife's withdrawal and the husband's marital satisfaction, through the husband's perception of the wife's withdrawal, $F(2, 212) = 15.50, p < .001, R^2 = .13$.

Finally, in answering hypothesis 2, we tested the relationship of the partner’s work-family conflict with the own perception of the partner’s behavior, through the partner’s behavior. However, when we looked at the correlations between these variables in Table 3, we did not expect significant mediations since the own perceptions of the partner’s anger and withdrawal were not significantly correlated with the partner’s experienced work-family conflict. There was one exception; the husband’s perception was in fact significantly related to the wife’s experienced work-family conflict.

Table 3. Correlations of the variables in hypothesis 2, with W meaning wife and H meaning husband.

	Anger W	Perception H anger W	Withdrawal W	Perception H withdrawal W	Anger H	Perception W anger H	Withdrawal H	Perception W withdrawal H
WF-conflict W	.21**	.07	.29**	.15*				
WF-conflict H					.22**	.05	.39**	.10

Note. ** $p < .01$. The variables containing perceptions are to be interpreted as ‘Perception H anger W’ = husband’s perceptions of the wife’s anger.

In sum, we can conclude that hypothesis 2 is partly confirmed. The own marital satisfaction is indeed negatively related to the negative behaviors of the partner, through the own perceptions of these negative behaviors. However, we cannot conclude that the partner’s experienced work-family conflict is related to these mediating relationships.

The perceptions of positive behaviors

Hypothesis 4 was also tested with the couple data, to pair the data of the husband with the data of the wife and vice versa². In analyzing the data, again we used the steps of Baron and Kenny (1986) for mediation. As hypothesized we expected the own marital satisfaction to be

² Appendix 1 shows the means, standard deviations and correlations of all the variables included in hypothesis 4.

positively related to the work-family facilitation of the partner, through the positivity and assurances of the partner and the own perceptions of the partner's positivity and assurances. Figures 6 and 7 show the pathways we first tested in these analyses. Furthermore, as can be seen in Table 4, we expected the mediations to be significant, because of the significant correlations between the tested variables. Again, the results are explained per positive behavior (positivity and assurances), to be clear about the specific analyzed variables, mediations and their results.

Table 4. Correlations of the variables in hypothesis 4, with W meaning wife, H meaning husband, and M.S. meaning marital satisfaction.

	Perception H positivity W	Perception H assurances W	M.S. H	Perception W positivity H	Perception W assurances H	M.S. W
Positivity W	.40**		.34**			
Assurances W		.51**	.42**			
Positivity H				.41**		.34**
Assurances H					.49**	.47**

Note. ** $p < .01$. The variables containing perceptions are to be interpreted as 'Perception H positivity W' = husband's perceptions of the wife's positivity.

Partner's positivity, own perception of the partner's positivity and own marital satisfaction

First, we tested the mediating relationship of the husband's positivity and the wife's marital satisfaction, being the independent and dependent variable, through the wife's perception of the husband's positivity, being the mediator. The husband's positivity was significantly positively related ($B = .48$) to the wife's perception of the husband's positivity, $F(1, 213) = 42.06, p < .001$. The husband's positivity was also positively related ($B = .42$) to the wife's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 27.42, p < .001$. Then, the wife's perception of the husband's positivity was also positively related ($B = .62$) to the wife's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 117.02, p < .001$. The coefficient of the husband's positivity was reduced ($B = .14, ns$), when added to the model, $F(2, 212) = 61.09, p < .001, R^2 = .37$. We can conclude that we found a mediating relationship of the husband's positivity and the wife's marital satisfaction by the wife's perception of the husband's positivity.

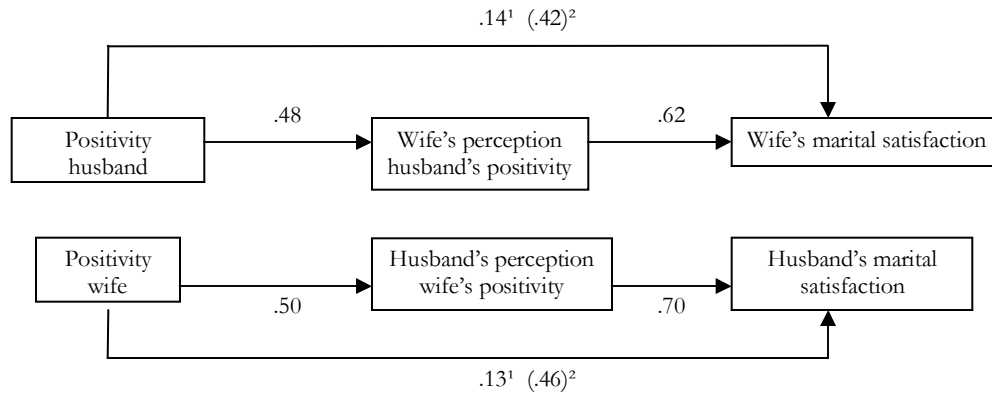


Figure 6. Mediating pathways for hypothesis 4 containing unstandardized coefficients.
¹ Reduced coefficient of independent variable when entered into the mediating model.
² Coefficient of independent variable before entered into the mediating model.

Then, we tested the mediating relationship of the wife's positivity and the husband's marital satisfaction, through the husband's perception of the wife's positivity. The wife's positivity was also positively related ($B = .46$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 28.28, p < .001$. The husband's perception of the wife's positivity was positively related ($B = .70$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 152.26, p < .001$, and adding the wife's positivity to this model, reduced the coefficient ($B = .13, ns$). This indicated a significant mediation of the relationship between the wife's positivity and the husband's marital satisfaction through the husband's perception of the wife's positivity, $F(2, 212) = 78.38, p < .001, R^2 = .43$.

Partner's assurances, own perception of the partner's assurances and own marital satisfaction

We tested the mediating relationship of the husband's assurances and the wife's marital satisfaction, by the wife's perception of the husband's assurances. The husband's assurances and the wife's perception of the husbands assurances were positively related ($B = .51$), $F(1, 213) = 67.23, p < .001$. The husband's assurances were also positively related ($B = .47$) to the wife's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 58.78, p < .001$. The wife's perception of the husband's assurances were positively ($B = .64$) related to the wife's marital satisfaction,

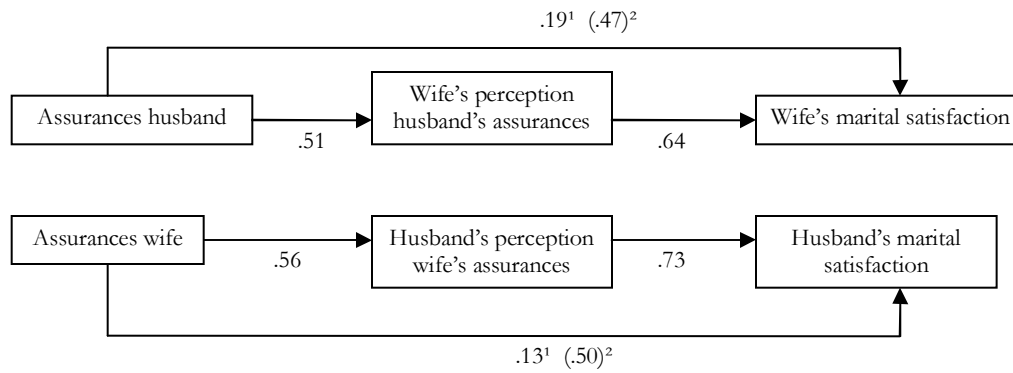


Figure 7. Mediating pathways for hypothesis 4 containing unstandardized coefficients.

¹ Reduced coefficient of independent variable when entered into the mediating model.

² Coefficient of independent variable before entered into the mediating model.

$F(1, 213) = 162.07, p < .001$, and the coefficient of the husband's assurances was reduced ($B = .19$) when added to this model, $R^2 = .46$. However, this coefficient remained significant ($p < .01$), which indicates a partial mediation of the husband's assurances and the wife's marital satisfaction, by the wife's perception of the husband's assurances. Again, we performed the Sobel test to establish whether the reduction of the coefficient of the independent variable was significant. The results indeed indicated a significant reduction ($t = 6.26, p < .001$), indicating a significant mediation of the husband's assurances with the wife's marital satisfaction, by the wife's perception of the husband's assurances.

Finally, we tested the mediating relationship of the wife's assurances and the husband's marital satisfaction, by the husband's perception of the wife's assurances. The wife's assurances, was positively related ($B = .56$) to the husband's perception of the wife's assurances, $F(1, 213) = 72.64, p < .001$. The wife's assurances were also positively related ($B = .50$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 46.44, p < .001$. The husband's perception was positively related ($B = .73$) to the husband's marital satisfaction, $F(1, 213) = 183.12, p < .001$. The coefficient of the independent variable was reduced ($B = .13, ns$), when added to this model, which indicates a complete mediating relationship of the wife's

Table 5. Correlations of the variables in hypothesis 4, with W meaning wife, H meaning husband, and WF meaning work-family.

	Positivit y W	Perception H positivity W	Assurance s W	Perception H assurances W	Positivit y H	Perception W positivity H	Assurance s H	Perception W assurances H
WF- facilitation W	.14*	.03	.04	.08				
WF- facilitation H					.27**	.12	.30**	.07

Note. ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$. The variables containing perceptions are to be interpreted as 'Perception H positivity W' = husband's perceptions of the wife's positivity.

assurances and the husband's marital satisfaction through the husband's perception of the wife's assurances, $F(2, 212) = 94.20, p < .001, R^2 = .47$. Furthermore, in answering hypothesis 4, we looked at the relationship of the partner's work-family facilitation on the own marital satisfaction through the partner's positivity and assurances and the own perceptions of these behaviors. However, the correlations displayed in Table 5 show that the partner's work-family facilitation was not related to the own perception of the partner's positivity and assurances. This is one of the steps that have to be fulfilled, according to Baron and Kenny, thus we cannot conclude that such a mediating relationship exists.

In sum, hypothesis 4 is partly confirmed by the results. The own marital satisfaction is positively related with the partner's positive behaviors as positivity and assurances, through the own perception of these positive behaviors. However, we cannot conclude that the partner's experienced work-family facilitation is related to this mediation.

Gender differences

As described in the introduction we also analyzed the data to establish gender effects in the results for men and women. Using independent samples t-tests we compared the means for men and women of the different variables in the theoretical model. First, we compared the

mean scores on experienced work-family conflict and work-family facilitation for men and women. For work-family conflict men scored on average higher ($M = 3.41, SD = .91$) than women ($M = 3.21, SD = .95$), $t(428) = 2.30, p < .05$. The mean scores for work-family facilitation showed a higher score for women ($M = 4.57, SD = .97$) than for men ($M = 4.0, SD = .91$), $t(428) = -6.28, p < .001$.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship of experienced work-family conflict and work-family facilitation with marital satisfaction. It was expected that work-family conflict would be negatively related to marital satisfaction through negative behaviors (anger and withdrawal), and that work-family facilitation would be positively related to marital satisfaction through positive behaviors (assurances and positivity). We also expected that the perception of the negative and positive behaviors performed by the partner would be related to the own marital satisfaction.

The results supported the expectations, as work-family conflict was indeed positively related to anger and withdrawal. Anger and withdrawal were in turn negatively related to marital satisfaction. The results indicated a complete mediation for withdrawal and anger. Prior studies also showed that work-family conflict, because of stress at work, can result in more negative behaviors like anger and withdrawal (Bakker et al., 2008; Hughes & Galinsky, 1994; Repetti, 1989; Repetti & Wood, 1997; Story & Repetti, 2006), and that this can in turn result in lowered marital satisfaction (Matthews et al., 1996; Schulz et al. 2004). Overall, our results replicated these findings. However, the mediating relationship of these variables has not been investigated before. Thus, we can conclude that when a man or woman experiences work-family conflict, this will be related to more performed anger and withdrawal, and the performance of these negative behaviors will in turn be related to lowered marital satisfaction. This relation gives a more nuanced explanation for the negative effects of work on the marital satisfaction.

Work-family facilitation was expected to relate to marital satisfaction through assurances and positivity. These expectations were fully supported by the results. Work-family conflict was positively related to assurances and positivity and these behaviors were in

turn positively related to marital satisfaction, indicating a complete mediation for both pathways. As explained earlier, previous studies showed that positive maintenance strategies can affect marital satisfaction in a positive way (Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999). The results of this study indicate that these positive behaviors can be related to the experience of work-family facilitation. This study is the first to investigate this relationship. The support for our expectations show that produced energy and learned skills at work can be transferred to the marriage or relationship, and that this is related to more performed positive behaviors. Also, the previous finding that positive behaviors relate to higher marital satisfaction is replicated by this study. The mediating relationship of these variables has not yet been investigated before, and our results supported this relationship. This means that work can have a positive relation with the marriage or the relationship.

Finally, in testing hypotheses 1 and 3, the results showed that the positive pathway (*hypothesis 3*) appeared to be stronger related to marital satisfaction than the negative pathway (*hypothesis 1*). Looking at the amount of explained variance by the pathways, the positive pathway also explained more of the variance in marital satisfaction than the negative pathway in marital satisfaction. This indicates that the value of marital satisfaction may be more related to positive experiences than to negative experiences. This is interesting, since most research finds a stronger relation of work-family conflict and negative behaviors with marital satisfaction.

We also expected that marital satisfaction would be related to the perceptions of the negative and positive behaviors performed by the partners, in relation with their experienced work-family conflict and work-family facilitation (*hypothesis 2 and 4*). These expectations were not fully supported. The results indicated that the marital satisfaction was indeed related to the own perceptions of the partner's behavior. Also, these perceptions were related to the

partner's reported behaviors. Previous studies showed that the perception of the spouses behaviors is a strong predictor of the own marital satisfaction (Acitelli & Antonucci, 1994; Bell et al., 1987; Dainton, 2000). In this way, we replicated previous findings.

However, we then expected the partner's experienced work-family conflict and facilitation to be related to this mediating relationship. Our results did not support this expectation, so hypotheses 2 and 4 are not fully confirmed. Yet, we replicated the previous finding that the own perceptions of the partner's behaviors indeed are related to the own marital satisfaction. This may indicate that the partner's reported work-family conflict was not strong enough to be found in relation with the own perception of this and the own marital satisfaction. This can be because of common method, indicating that the reports of work-family balance and marital behaviors are strongly related. However, this leads to no or a less strong relation with the partner's reports of the perception of these behaviors.

Also, this investigation used couple data, which means that the data of the husband are related to the data of wife, and vice versa. In this way, it can be that the own perception of anger of the spouse leads to more own experienced anger, or that more experienced positivity by the self is related to the perception of more positive behaviors with the spouse. Indeed, the correlations of the own reported anger and withdrawal, and positivity and assurances, show a significant relation to the own perception of the partner's performed negative and positive behaviors (see appendix 1). We did not investigate these effects and further research should lead to more clarity about this.

Finally, we also explored whether gender effects could be interpreted from the results. We found that on average, men reported more experienced work-family conflict than women. This indicates that the work interfered with family more for men than for women.

Furthermore, women experienced more work-family facilitation than men. This indicates that the facilitation of work-to-family was higher for women than for men.

Limitations

A limitation of this study lies in the correlational design of the study. This means that we cannot conclude causal relationship between the variables. We can only posit that the variables are related, and if this relation is negative or positive. More research including analyses that can show the predicting value of the variables will give more clarity.

In line with this is another limitation, concerning the bidirectional nature of the work-family balance topic. The variables of work-family conflict and facilitation can occur by experiencing conflict and facilitation at home, but also at work. This means that there can be an experience of work-to-family conflict and facilitation, and family-to-work conflict and facilitation. Research shows evidence for both pathways, but is not clear on where one experience stops and where another experience begins. Thus, it can be that the found results can be interpreted in the other direction. For example, the experience and performance of more angry behaviors can result in taking this angry mood onto the work floor, instead of the assumed relation of work-to-family conflict and angry behaviors in this study. Again, because of correlation analyses we cannot conclude whether work experiences predict the family experiences or vice versa. More research is needed to provide more clarity on the relations and effects in the work-family balance.

A final limitation is in line with the unfound expectations of this study. We found no relation of the partner's work-family conflict and work-family facilitation on the own marital satisfaction. However, the definitions of marital satisfaction, the negative behaviors (anger and withdrawal), and the positive behaviors (positivity and assurances) are very broad.

Because of the broad definitions, it is possible that other variables are related to the amount of marital satisfaction. Other life experiences, than the experiences at work, can be related to the satisfaction with the marriage.

Nevertheless, this study has provided some new insights in the topic of work-family balance. Previous findings were replicated, but the results provided evidence for a more nuanced model of the relationships of work-family conflict and work-family facilitation with marital satisfaction. Furthermore, the data contained experiences of men and women and these participants were involved in a relationship or marriage with each other. Because of this, we could also relate the perceptions of the partner's behaviors with the marital satisfaction of the self. Moreover, these perceptions were related with the actual reported behaviors of these partners. Therefore this study provides guidelines for further research, by showing that work can also facilitate the family-life.

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Appendix 1

Means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*) and correlations of the couple data of the negative pathway (hypothesis 2). W meaning women and M meaning men.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Wf-conflict W	3.21	.95	1	.21**	.07	.29**	.15*	-.13	.007	.001	.13	.12	.21**	-.12
2. Anger W	3.30	.98	.21**	1	.43**	.44**	.27**	-.28**	.12	.23**	.43**	.20**	.35**	-.34**
3. Perc Anger M	3.05	1.16	.07	.43**	1	.23**	.54**	-.45**	.20**	.51**	.20**	.45**	.30**	-.39**
4. Withdrawal W	3.06	.78	.29**	.44**	.23**	1	.38**	-.21**	.10	.27**	.38**	.22**	.39**	-.31**
5. Perc Withdrawal M	2.75	.92	.15*	.27**	.54**	.38**	1	-.35**	.26**	.33**	.16*	.43**	.27**	-.23**
6. Marital satisfaction M	5.68	1.00	-.13	-.28**	-.45**	-.21**	-.35**	1	-.10	-.29**	-.26**	-.35**	-.32**	.68**
7. Wf-conflict M	3.63	.72	.01	.12	.20**	.10	.26**	-.10	1	.22**	.05	.39**	.10	-.07
8. Anger M	2.85	.89	.001	.23**	.51**	.27**	.33**	-.29**	.22**	1	.44**	.44**	.27**	-.26**
9. Perc Anger W	2.70	1.05	.13	.43**	.20**	.38**	.16*	-.26**	.05	.44**	1	.23**	.44**	-.38**
10. Withdrawal M	3.22	.87	.12	.20**	.45**	.22**	.43**	-.35**	.39**	.44**	.23**	1	.50**	-.21**
11. Perc Withdrawal W	3.30	1.09	.21**	.35**	.30**	.39**	.27**	-.32**	.10	.27**	.44**	.50**	1	-.40**
12. Marital satisfaction W	4.87	.96	-.12	-.34**	-.39**	-.31**	-.23**	.68**	-.07	-.26**	-.38**	-.21**	-.40**	1

Note. ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$. The variables containing perceptions are to be interpreted as 'Perc Anger M' = man's perceptions of the woman's anger (or husband's perceptions of the wife's anger).

Means (*M*), standard deviations (*SD*) and correlations of the couple data of the positive pathway (hypothesis 4). W meaning women and M meaning men.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Wf-facilitation W	4.57	.97	1	.04	.08	.14*	.03	.14*	.10	.10	.05	.07	.04	.08
2. Assurances W	5.91	.84	.04	1	.51**	.60**	.36**	.42**	.05	.44**	.73**	.29**	.59**	.61**
3. PercAssurances M	5.92	.93	.08	.51**	1	.39**	.69**	.68**	.15*	.64**	.52**	.48**	.35**	.48**
4. Positivity W	4.92	.74	.14*	.60**	.39**	1	.39**	.34**	.08	.35**	.42**	.27**	.47**	.45**
5. PercPositivity M	4.98	.92	.03	.36**	.69**	.39**	1	.65**	.19**	.49**	.32**	.53**	.29**	.41**
6. Marital satisfaction M	5.68	1.00	.14*	.42**	.68**	.34**	.65**	1	.27**	.63**	.47**	.52**	.35**	.68**
7. Wf-facilitation M	3.40	.91	.10	.05	.15*	.08	.19**	.27**	1	.30**	.07	.27**	.12	.14*
8. AssurancesM	5.77	.94	.10	.44**	.64**	.35**	.49**	.63**	.30**	1	.49**	.66**	.38**	.47**
9. PercAssurances W	6.04	.99	.05	.73**	.52**	.42**	.32**	.47**	.07	.49**	1	.35**	.70**	.66**
10. Positivity M	5.02	.78	.07	.29**	.48**	.27**	.53**	.52**	.27**	.66**	.35**	1	.41**	.34**
11. PercPositivity W	4.99	.93	.04	.59**	.35**	.47**	.29**	.35**	.12	.38**	.70**	.41**	1	.60**
12. Marital satisfaction W	4.87	.96	.08	.61**	.48**	.45**	.41**	.68**	.14*	.47**	.66**	.34**	.60**	1

Note. ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$. The variables containing perceptions are to be interpreted as 'Perc Assurances M' = man's perceptions of the woman's assurances (or husband's perceptions of the wife's assurances)