What If People's Private Life Constrained Their Career Decisions? Examining the Relationship Between Home-to-Career Interference and Career Satisfaction

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Abstract

Purpose - Previous research suggests that employees often make family-related career decisions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). We extend this idea and explore the concept of “home-to-career interference”, defined as the extent to which people perceive that their private life has constrained their career decisions to date. We expect that home-to-career interference has a negative impact on employees’ later career satisfaction via career goal self-efficacy and perceived organizational career support.

Design/methodology/approach - We collected quantitative data at three points in time, each six months apart in a Belgian telecommunications organization. Using the full information maximum likelihood path analysis approach, we performed analyses on a sample of dual-earner employees.

Findings - Our results showed that employees’ home-to-career interference related negatively to their career goal self-efficacy and perceived organizational career support, which were, in turn, positively related to their career satisfaction.

Originality/value - This study contributes to the work-family literature by introducing the concept of home-to-career interference, by clarifying the mechanisms through which home-to-career interference relates to career satisfaction and by testing these relationships using a three-wave longitudinal design.

Keywords Home-to-career interference, Career goal self-efficacy, Perceived organizational career support, Career Satisfaction

Paper type Research paper

What If People's Private Life Constrained Their Career Decisions? Examining the Relationship Between Home-to-Career Interference and Career Satisfaction

In the past few years, there is an increasing awareness that career experiences and home experiences are inextricably intertwined (e.g., Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014; Poelmans, 2005), especially for dual-earner employees (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). Due to trends like the growing female labor market participation, the rise in dual-earner households, and the increased importance of work-home balance as a life value and societal norm (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014), the number of men and women who combine work with other roles and responsibilities has increased significantly. One important way for them to facilitate their multiple role management is to take into account home issues when making career decisions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012; Masterson & Hoobler, 2015). In 2012, Greenhaus and Powell introduced the term “family-related work decision” to refer to career decisions which are strongly guided by family reasons, such as deciding to work part-time for the care of children or declining a promotion because it may complicate work-family management (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). Two years later, Greenhaus and Kossek (2014) argued for the use of a slightly broader work–home perspective on careers, which recognizes the interdependencies between individuals’ careers and their broader home context, including both people’s family and their other non-work roles and settings, such as their friendships, community and leisure roles (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014).

Though work-home interdependencies are well established in the literature, little is known about how such interdependencies affect the way employees appraise and experience their career (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). Greenhaus and colleagues (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014; Greenhaus & Powell, 2012) therefore called for more research on the link between such interdependencies and career outcomes. In this paper, we aim to address this call and focus on a specific type of home-career interdependency, i.e., the experience that one’s private life has constrained one’s career decisions to date. We introduce the concept of home-to-career

interference to refer to this type of home-career interdependency and define it as the extent to which people perceive that their private life has constrained their career decisions to date. Similar to home-to-work or family-to-work interference (i.e., the extent to which home/family responsibilities constrain the successful completion of work responsibilities; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), home-to-career interference focuses on the subjective experience of *negative* interdependencies between home and work. Yet, home-to-career interference differs from home-to-work interference in that it concerns the interference from home factors on *career* decisions. The focus of home-to-career interference may include, but is thus not limited to, the current job situation. In addition, the subject of interference differs: home-to-work interference refers to people's experience that they are not the employee they would preferably be due to time- or strain-related home constraints, whereas home-to-career interference refers to people's experience that they do not have the career they would preferably have due to home-related compromises they have made.

The goal of this paper is to explore home-to-career interference in particular in relation to dual-earner employees' subsequent career satisfaction. The focus on career satisfaction was chosen in line with the idea that home-to-career interference plays a role in the career self-management process, that is, the decision-making processes intended to help individuals achieve desired career outcomes (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010). Given that career satisfaction, or one's idiosyncratic evaluation of his/her career and progress in meeting career goals (Spurk, Abele, & Volmer, 2011), has been cited as a key desired outcome, this seems to be a relevant variable (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). Furthermore, we aim to better understand mechanisms that link home-to-career interference and career satisfaction, namely career goal self-efficacy and perceived organizational career support. Figure 1 shows our research model. We test our hypotheses with path analysis based on a three-wave longitudinal dataset from

participants that are members of a dual-earner couple and employed in a Belgian telecommunications organization.

Figure 1. Proposed research model.

Note: Pluses and minuses represent the directions of the hypothesized relationships.

This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, we complement research on the work-home interface by introducing the concept of home-to-career interference. The predominant focus in research in this domain has been on an interference between the *current* home situation and the *current* work situation; yet, common sense and previous research indicates that interference may also occur related to *past* decisions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012; Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014), an interference which has been largely ignored in the work-family interface literature to date. By introducing the concept of home-to-career interference, we address this gap. Second, we investigate the mechanisms through which home-to-career interference may relate to negative career consequences. Although taking into account home factors when making career decisions is a common practice (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014; Greenhaus & Powell, 2012), little is known about its consequences and even less about the processes it induces that lead to these outcomes. Insights into these mechanisms could help people to better understand what may ensue if they do choose to make these types of decisions. Third, we use a three-wave longitudinal design to test the temporal direction of the

hypothesized relationships with more accuracy and reduce the risk for common method variance and spurious correlations (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Theoretical background

Home-to-career interference

We introduce the concept of home-to-career interference to capture the experience of people who made one or more home-related career decisions in the past and currently appraise these decisions in a negative way, more specifically, believe that these decisions have *previously* constrained their career. An important part of this definition is appraisal, meaning we are focusing on an individual's subjective experience of negative home-career interdependencies. We follow Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) ideas with regard to objective experiences and subjective appraisals, whereby the subjective appraisal is what impacts a person's subsequent attitudes and behaviors. Thus, two people may experience the same objective situation but view it very differently in terms of the negative impact on one's career. We are interested in each person's subjective perception rather than in the objective experience.

We chose to specifically investigate *negatively* appraised home-career interdependencies. This decision was based on the fact that there are several indications in the literature that employees often appraise these interdependencies in a negative way, as constraining their career. In a qualitative study by Becker and Moen (1999), over one-third of interviewed dual-earner employees who made home-related career decisions, such as turning down jobs with more travel or turning down promotions which required relocation, testified that these decisions also represented downwardly adjusting long-term expectations for career advancement. In addition, several quantitative studies have shown that career interruptions in the form of leave or reduced work hours lowers employees' wage growth (e.g. Baum, 2002; Bertrand, Goldin, & Katz, 2010; Glass, 2004; Judiesch & Lyness, 1999; Theunissen, Verbruggen, Forrier, & Sels, 2011) or harms their promotion chances and performance ratings

(Judiesch & Lyness, 1999). We also note that negative appraisals are potentially the most detrimental to employees and organizations, and thus understanding their precise negative impacts and mechanisms is a first step in understanding how to reduce them. We do acknowledge that home factors (e.g., a supporting spouse) could also promote or facilitate career opportunities, but we have chosen only to focus on the negative interdependencies within the context of this study.

The role of career goal self-efficacy

We propose that home-to-career interference is negatively associated with people's later career satisfaction via lowered career goal self-efficacy, defined as employees' confidence in their internal resources to achieve their career goals and deal with thwarting environmental demands (Verbruggen & Sels, 2008). We base our arguments on social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) and the social cognitive model of work well-being (Lent & Brown's, 2006; 2008), which argue for the critical role of self-efficacy in understanding people's behaviors, persistence, goal attainment and satisfaction (Bandura, 1986; Lent & Brown, 2008).

We expect that people who experience more home-to-career interference have lower career goal self-efficacy. Social-cognitive theory identifies many different sources of self-efficacy formation. We believe the following are relevant in this context: the experience of past successes and failures, the assessment of personal resources, the perception of environmental barriers and the experience of negative arousal (Bandura, 1986; Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Employees who report high home-to-career interference feel that they do not have the career they would preferably have due to home-related compromises they have made in the past. As such, they are likely to have less past success experiences in achieving their personal career goals and because of that, they may lack important past mastery experience which is believed key in forming high self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1986; Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Research has indeed shown that in the face of negative feedback (i.e., personal career goals are not being

reached), subsequent self-efficacy decreases and this is regardless of whether the attributions for the cause of the failure were external or internal (Tolli & Schmidt, 2008). Second, as employees with high home-to-career interference are likely to have less past mastery experiences, they may also have developed – or feel they developed – less relevant skills, strategies and connections for striving towards and realizing their personal goals. Since one's assessment of personal resources is another important informational cue for evaluating one's self-efficacy (Gist & Mitchell, 1992), this too could explain a negative link between home-to-career interference and career goal self-efficacy. Third, employees with more home-to-career interference feel that home factors have constrained and thus acted as barriers to their career goal achievement in the past. Previous research has shown that people who experienced more career barriers in the past also foresee more career barriers in the future (Chronister & McWhirter, 2006). This may explain why past career barriers have been linked to self-efficacy assessments (Wright, Perrone-McGover, Boo, & White, 2014). So, even though home-to-career interference refers to the experience of past barriers, it could be expected that this experience may also affect people's confidence of realizing their career goals in the future, and thus their career goal self-efficacy. Finally, having repeatedly compromised one's career goals because of home factors, as in the case of high home-to-career interference, may lead individuals to approach the career goal attainment process with more anxiety, concern and less confidence (Brown, Reedy, Fountain, Johnson & Dichiser, 2000). As such, home-to-career interference may also undermine career goal self-efficacy due to the negative arousal associated with this form of interference. For these different reasons, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1. Home-to-career interference negatively relates to career goal self-efficacy.

Furthermore, career goal self-efficacy is likely to relate to employees' career satisfaction. Lent and Brown's (2006; 2008) social-cognitive model of work well-being

identifies self-efficacy as a central driver of work and career satisfaction both directly and indirectly via goal progress. People with high career goal self-efficacy may feel more satisfied with their career simply because they feel more in control of their career and feel more empowered to realize their desired career goals. Feeling in control of one's career may be a particularly important source of career satisfaction in today's society where individuals are increasingly held responsible for their own career success and failure (van Vianen, Pater & Preenen, 2009). People who have low career goal self-efficacy, on the other hand, may feel like they are not able to meet the increased expectation of career self-directedness in today's career landscape, and may therefore feel less satisfied with their career. Research has indeed shown positive links between feeling in control of one's career and career satisfaction (Raabe, Frese & Beehr, 2007; Seibert et al., 2001; Verbruggen & Sels, 2008). Moreover, career goal self-efficacy may also enhance career satisfaction through facilitating career goal progress and attainment. A consistent finding in the motivation literature is that self-efficacy is an important component of persistence and goal attainment, with people scoring low on self-efficacy making less progress on and attaining less personal goals in a specific domain than their highly efficacious counterparts (Bandura, 1986; 1997; Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Given that career satisfaction is driven in part by meeting desired outcomes and goals (O'Reilly & Caldwell, 1981), we expect that those with lower self-efficacy are less likely to reach desired outcomes and thus report lower satisfaction with their career to date (Verbruggen & Sels, 2010). Indeed, previous studies have linked general self-efficacy and career-specific self-efficacy to career satisfaction (Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015; Valcour & Ladge, 2008; Verbruggen & Sels, 2010). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2. Career goal self-efficacy positively relates to career satisfaction.

The role of perceived organizational career support

The second mechanism by which we propose that home-to-career interference relates to employees' later career satisfaction is through lowered perceived organizational career support. Organizational career support can be defined as formal career management practices offered by the organization, such as development plans and training opportunities, which are intended to help employees advance their career in the organization (Sturges, Guest, Conway, & Davey, 2002). Following the broad support literature, we distinguish between received support and perceptions of support (cf, Uchino, 2009) and argue that both processes may be related to home-to-career interference.

First, employees who experience more home-to-career interference may be less likely to *receive* organizational career support. The literature on workforce differentiation suggests that organizations often base their allocation decisions of specific and limited resources – such as career development support – on the likely return of these investments (Gelens, Dries, Hofmans & Pepermans, 2013; Lepak & Snell, 1999). Consequently, organizations are likely to give more career support to those employees for whom these investments are expected to pay off more, such as employees who are – or appear to be – more ambitious and committed to their career. Employees whose career decisions have been constrained by home factors, however, risk to be seen by their organization as less competent and less committed. Indeed, it is often believed that when employees make home-related career decisions, this signals a shift in their priorities from achieving career goals towards a more fulfilling private life (Allen & Russell, 1999; Almer, Cohen, & Single, 2004; Leslie et al., 2012). Since many organizations preferably give career opportunities to employees who are primarily focused on work (Johnson, Lowe, & Reckers, 2008; Spence, 2002; Valcour & Ladge, 2008), employees with more home-to-career interference may be considered as less suitable to receive career support from their organization.

Second, people who experience more home-to-career interference may also *perceive* less organizational career support. This is because people tend to interpret new situations in line with their appraisals of past situations in the same domain, in that way confirming and even strengthening their initial appraisal (i.e., confirmation bias; Nickerson, 1998). Therefore, when employees experience home-to-career interference, and consequently feel that their career decisions have been constrained in some way by their private life, they may have a tendency to also interpret their organizational career support in a negative way, in that way (unconsciously) confirming their initial negative appraisal. For these reasons, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3. Home-to-career interference negatively relates to perceived organizational career support.

Furthermore, also drawing from organizational support and social exchange theories, (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), we posit that organizational career support fosters positive work-related attitudes, feelings of career goal attainment, and higher expectancies for future career goal attainment and career development. As such, these attitudes should foster feelings of career satisfaction. Indeed, previous studies have shown that perceived organizational career support positively relates to employees' career satisfaction (e.g., De Vos, Dewettinck, & Buyens, 2009; Guan, Zhou, Ye, Jiang, & Zhou, 2015; Ng et al., 2005). Additionally, the sponsored-mobility model of career success argues that those who receive organizational career support are more likely to attain career success than those who do not. Ng and colleagues (2005) found meta-analytic support for this idea with both objective and subjective career success, of which the latter was operationalized as career satisfaction. Thus, based on these ideas, we predict:

Hypothesis 4. Organizational career support positively relates to career satisfaction.

Direct and indirect relationships with career satisfaction

Combining the linkages stated above, we argue that people who experience home-to-career interference are subsequently likely to perceiving fewer internal (i.e., career goal self-efficacy) and external (i.e., organizational career support) resources (Fugate, Kinicki, & Prussia, 2008; Kliever, Sandler, & Wolchik, 1994; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In turn, having fewer of these resources should influence career satisfaction attitudes. Moreover, in addition to the indirect links from home-to-career interference on career satisfaction through both career goal self-efficacy and perceived organizational career support, we expect that there is a direct relationship between home-to-career interference and career satisfaction. When an employee deviates from initial career plans due to home factors and perceives this as constraining, it is by definition a situation where career goals have been thwarted, which is a negative career experience. Given the link between meeting career goals and affective reactions, such as career satisfaction, implicated in social cognitive career theory (Lent et al., 1994), those who experience more interference are likely to exhibit lower career satisfaction (Schneer & Reitman, 1993).

Hypothesis 5. Career goal self-efficacy and perceived organizational career support partially mediate the relationship between home-to-career interference and career satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6. Home-to-career interference negatively relates to career satisfaction.

Method

Procedure and Sample

We collected three-wave longitudinal data with employees working in a Belgian telecommunications organization. Questionnaires were administered online at three points in time, each six months apart. The first assessment took place between June and July 2013. A total of 324 employees completed the first questionnaire. The second wave followed six months later between February and March 2014 and resulted in 215 completed questionnaires. Finally,

the third wave was assessed six months later between October and November 2014, resulting in 178 completed surveys.

We further limited the sample to employees with a working partner since home-related career decisions are especially prevalent in these family structures (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). The sample size for our study thereby amounts to 250 employees in wave 1, 170 employees in wave 2 and 142 employees in wave 3. Most of the respondents were male (57%). The mean age of the respondents was 40 years old and most of the respondents had at least one child (81%).

Measures

Unless mentioned otherwise, response options were set on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Items which were negatively formulated were reverse scored.

Home-to-career interference. To measure home-to-career interference, we developed a new scale following guidelines for empirical scale development procedures (e.g. Hinkin, Tracy, & Enz, 1997; Netemeyer et al., 2003). First, a list of five items was generated based on a review of the literature on home-related influences on people's career decisions (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2012; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). The face and content validity of these five items were then assessed by ten academic work-life experts. All items were judged appropriate.

An additional face validity test was done by ten non-academics who also confirmed the appropriateness of the items. However, a few items were slightly reformulated to improve comprehensibility based on the feedback of both groups. An initial validation of these five items was conducted using a first dataset of 110 dual-earner couples (total N = 220). Exploratory factor analysis showed that the five items loaded on one factor based on the scree plot method and all factor loadings were above .60. The corrected item-to-total correlations were all above .40, indicating that the items correlated well with the overall scale (Everitt,

2002; Field, 2005). In addition, the five item-scale had acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach alpha = .77).

The convergent and discriminant validity as well as the reliability of the scale were further evaluated using a second dataset with 143 working parents from dual-earner families (72 mothers; 71 fathers).

First, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis, in which we included the five-items of our family/home-to-career interference scale together with the three-item scale of time-based family-to-work interference and the three-item scale of strain-based family-to-work interference of Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000). We included the latter two scales in the CFA since this allowed us to assess whether our measure of home-to-*career* interference was different and distinct from the related but theoretically different construct of family-to-*work* interference. To be consistent with our measure of home-to-career interference, we replaced the word “family” by “private life” in the family-to-work interference items to reflect a measure of home-to-work interference. The expected three-factor structure yielded a good fit to the data ($X^2[41]=79.77$, $p < .01$; RMSR = .05; RMSEA = .08; CFI = .96; TLI = .94 – Bentler, 1990; Browne & Cudeck, 1993). In addition, this three-factor model showed a significantly better fit with the data than the one-factor model ($\Delta X^2[14]=335.61$; $p<.001$), supporting the idea that home-to-*career* interference is different and distinct from the construct of home-to-*work* interference. In addition, all items of the home-to-career interference scale exhibited acceptable factor loadings (i.e., greater than .40; Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998; Hatcher, 1994), which supports the unidimensionality of the scale.

Next, we calculated the average variance extracted (i.e., AVE, or the average amount of variance in the items which is explained by the factor) for our home-to-career interference scale. We found an AVE higher than .50, which indicates that the variance in the items is explained more by the construct home-to-career interference than by error. This supports the

convergent validity of our scale (Brocato et al., 2012). Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the original 3-factor CFA with two additional 3-factor CFA-models, in which we first set the correlation of home-to-career interference with time-based home-to-work interference equal to one and then the correlation of home-to-career interference with strain-based family-to-work interference equal to one (Brocato et al., 2012; Jöreskog, 1971). A chi-square difference test showed that the fit of the original 3-factor model was significantly better ($p < .001$) than the fit of the two other models, suggesting that home-to-career interference is significantly different and distinct from both time-based and strain-based home-to-work interference (Jöreskog, 1971). Finally, a reliability analysis of the five-item home-to-career interference in this sample showed a good internal consistency (i.e., Cronbach alpha = .81).

The home-to-career interference scale included in this study consisted of the following five items, which respondents had to evaluate on a five-point Likert scale ranging from one (totally disagree) to five (totally agree): “My private life has limited my career opportunities,” “My private life has pushed my career in a certain direction,” “My private life has determined the place I work,” “My private life has forced me to work fewer or more hours than I would have chosen myself,” and “My private life has forced me to schedule my work hours in another way than I would have chosen myself”¹. The items reflected the three broad types of career decisions identified by Powell and Greenhaus (2010), i.e., role entry, role exit and role participation decisions, which are likely to be influenced by home factors (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). While items 1 to 3 could reflect either of the three types of career decisions and are formulated in a more general way, items 4 and 5 refer to specific participation decisions (respectively to people’s choice about working hours and choice about schedule flexibility). We chose to ask about those two specific decisions separately because we identified these in

¹ Before respondents evaluated the five items, we gave them the following instruction which aimed at making the respondents aware of the focus on career (rather than work): “A person’s private life could have a negative influence on his or her career. To which extent has your private life constrained your career up to now? Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

the existing literature as the decisions which are most often influenced by factors at home (e.g., Haddock, Zimmerman, Lyness, & Ziemba, 2006). We found the scale to have a good internal consistency in this sample (Cronbach alpha = .77).

Career goal self-efficacy. In line with recommendations by Stanton, Sinar, Balzer, and Smith (2002), career goal self-efficacy at times 1 and 2 was measured using a shortened version of the six-item scale developed by Verbruggen and Sels (2010) based on the four items which had the highest factor loadings. A sample item is “I am confident that I can take the steps to realize my career goals” ($\alpha = 0.78$ and $\alpha = 0.84$ at times 1 and 2, respectively).

Perceived organizational career support. We assessed perceived organizational career support at time 1 and 2 using the six-item subscale of Sturges and colleagues (2002). It includes the range of formal career management practices which may be used by typical organizations, including career development plans and training (Sturges et al., 2002). In contrast to the original scale, we formulated the items in present tense instead of past tense. An example item for the scale is “I get training to help develop my career” ($\alpha = 0.80$ and $\alpha = 0.81$ at times 1 and 2, respectively).

Career satisfaction. We used the scale of Martins, Eddleston and Veiga (2002) to assess employees’ career satisfaction at time 1 and 3 with three items. An example item is “I am satisfied with my current career status” ($\alpha = 0.76$ and $\alpha = 0.85$ at times 1 and 3, respectively).

Control variables. We controlled for respondents’ gender (men = 1; women = 0) and age (measured in years) which have been shown to influence career outcomes (Ng et al., 2005). In addition, we control for employees’ career outcomes at time 1 to avoid that analyses on employees’ later career outcomes reflected differences in their initial career outcomes.

Analyses

Hypotheses were tested using path analysis with Mplus version 5.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2011). Compared to other statistical techniques, path analysis indicates how a model as a whole

fits the data through testing the different relationships simultaneously. Thereby, it allows us to assess the interrelationship of the different variables included in our research model. We used the full information maximum likelihood approach to handle missing data. This approach uses the maximum likelihood criterion to fit the model to the raw data rather than a covariance matrix, and therefore accounts for all the available data in the sample in the presence of missing data (Enders & Bandalos, 2001). In order to evaluate the fit of the model, we looked at the commonly applied fit indices of χ^2 goodness of fit, CFI, TLI and RMSEA. Previous research suggests that satisfactory fit is indicated when the χ^2 goodness of fit to degrees of freedom ratio is no greater than 2, when the CFI and TLI values are $>.90$ and the RMSEA value is no higher than or in the vicinity of .08 (Bentler, 1990; Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hu & Bentler, 1998). Although more recent citations suggest more stringent cutoffs (e.g., Hu & Bentler, 1999), there is a continuous debate on the specific cutoff values when fitting structural equation models (e.g., see Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004). In fact, it is quite common to apply lower critical values such as CFI and TLI values above .90 and this especially for measurement models in the scale development phase (Worthington & Whittaker, 2009). Because of this ongoing debate and common practice, we judged it to be appropriate to also use these less stringent cutoffs.

Results

Descriptives

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations and correlations among variables included in the study.

Insert Table 1 about here

Measurement model

First, we tested the measurement model with four latent variables: (1) home-to-career interference, (2) career goal self-efficacy, (3) perceived organizational career support, and (4) career satisfaction. The CFA yielded an acceptable fit according to most fit indices (CFI = .93;

TLI = .95; RMSEA = .097) and supported separate factors for our different measures. In addition, the factor loadings were sufficiently high (i.e., > .40; Hair et al., 1998) and significant (i.e., all p values < .001). The fit of this model was also significantly better than the fit of a one-factor model (CFI = .61; TLI = .68; RMSEA = .24). Second, we extended the measurement model with our measured indicators of the career outcomes at time 1 to test for longitudinal measurement invariance. The model in which the loadings of the same items were constrained to be equal was compared with a model in which the loadings were freely estimated. The comparison of these two models using a chi square difference test yielded a statistically significant difference ($\Delta\chi^2 = 48.2$, $\Delta df = 13$, $p < .01$). In this case it is allowed to proceed with testing partial invariance which means that the variable is invariant over time for some but not all items (Cheung & Rensvold, 1999; Schmitt & Kuljanin, 2008). Since partial invariance has been shown to make little difference in the estimations of structural model parameters (Schmitt & Kuljanin, 2008), it is an acceptable alternative when complete invariance cannot be reached. Specifically, we relaxed the equivalence constraint for four failing items (i.e., letting them free to vary over time) and again compared this model including constrained items with the model in which all items are freely estimated. Since the chi-square difference test was not significant ($\Delta\chi^2 = 8.6$, $\Delta df = 9$, ns), the loadings of our outcome variables are partially invariant over time which allows us to control for them at time 1.

Structural model

Next, we tested the structural model using path analysis. In line with previous studies (e.g., Ragins & Cotton, 1999), we only included those control variables in the analyses and reported results that had significant relations with the three career outcomes at time 2. This meant controlling for the three career outcomes at time 1, but not controlling for gender or age, as they were not significantly related to either career goal self-efficacy, perceived organizational career support or career satisfaction at time 2. Following recommendations of

Kelloway (1996), we compared the hypothesized model (model 1) against a theoretically plausible alternative model (model 2). Model 1 is the model including a direct effect from home-to-career interference to career satisfaction while model 2 is the model without this direct effect. The estimated results from model 1 shows that there is no significant relation from home-to-career interference to career satisfaction and that we can reject hypothesis 6 (see results in Appendix). We compared the fit of these nested models by evaluating chi square difference tests. Our results show that model 1 (including the direct effect) does not have a significantly better model fit than model 2 (without the direct effect) ($\chi^2 (1) = 0.321, ns$). Following the guidelines for scientific parsimony, we chose the least complex model to evaluate our hypotheses and consequently looked at the estimated coefficients of model 2 which are summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Standardized estimations from research model.

Note. Results for model 2, i.e., the theoretically plausible alternative model to the hypothesized model without the direct effect from home-to-career interference to career satisfaction; (*) $p < .10$; $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

The fit indices show that the hypothesized model provided a satisfactory fit to the data ($\chi^2(5) = 2.27, p < .01$; CFI=1.00; RMSEA=.00). In line with Hypothesis 1, home-to-career interference was negatively associated with career goal self-efficacy ($B = -.14, p < .05$). In line with Hypothesis 3, employees' home-to-career interference was negatively related to organizational career support ($B = -.20, p < .01$). Both career goal self-efficacy ($B = .13, p < .10$) and perceived organizational career support ($B = .21, p < .01$) were positively related to career satisfaction.

.10) and organizational career support ($B = .21, p < .01$) were positively related to career satisfaction. Therefore, Hypotheses 2 and 4 were supported.

We performed additional tests to verify the indirect paths from home-to-career interference to career satisfaction using the most powerful method of obtaining confidence limits for specific indirect effects - bootstrapping (Williams & MacKinnon, 2008). Since this involves repeatedly drawing random samples with replacement from the original sample and estimating the indirect effect in each resampled dataset, bootstrapping is particularly appropriate for our rather small dataset (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004). In line with recommendations by MacKinnon and colleagues (2004) we specified 5000 resamples to derive the 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effects. As the indirect effect is significant when these confidence intervals around the unstandardized indirect effect do not include zero, our results show that the significant paths which we found earlier represented indirect relationships at a 1% significance level. We found significant indirect effects for home-to-career interference on career satisfaction via career goal self-efficacy ($B = -0.018$ (-0.056, -0.001)) and via organizational career support ($B = -0.042$ (-0.100, -0.010)). As we explained earlier, no significant direct effect was found between home-to-career interference and career satisfaction (see also model in appendix); we hence have to reject hypothesis 6. So, in contrast to the partially mediated relations which we hypothesized (hypothesis 5), we thus find support for fully mediated relations.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to clarify the processes by which the experience of home-to-career interference relates to employees' career satisfaction. In doing so, we answered Greenhaus and Kossek's (2014) call for more research on career consequences of career-home interdependencies. Previous research suggests that there are career penalties associated to certain family-related career decisions, but the processes which may lead to such career

outcomes remain overlooked. The present study addresses this issue and posits that experiencing home-to-career interference negatively relates to career satisfaction both through career goal self-efficacy and organizational career support.

First, our results showed that employees' home-to-career interference was associated negatively with career goal self-efficacy and that this, in turn, was positively related to employees' career satisfaction. Employees whose career decisions have been limited by their private life may feel that they have failed in meeting their initial career goals, which may induce them to feel less confident about successfully undertaking their career goals in the future (Bandura, 1986, 1997). In addition, we found that employees' home-to-career interference not only relates to lower career satisfaction through a negative relation with career goal self-efficacy, but also through a negative association with perceived organizational career support. It could be that these employees actually receive less organizational career support, for instance, because they are seen as less committed to their career by their organization (Johnson et al., 2008; Leslie et al., 2012; Valcour & Ladge, 2008), or that they perceive less support (regardless of what they are actually receiving) due to people's innate human tendency to interpret new situations in a certain domain in line with existing appraisals of that domain (Nickerson, 1998), which is, in the case of home-to-career interference, a negative appraisal.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

First of all, this study makes an important contribution to the work-home research on interference between life domains by introducing the concept of home-to-career interference. The majority of studies in the work-home literature focus on interferences between the *current* home and the *current* work situation. However, there may also be interference between the work and the home domain related to *past decisions*. We have introduced the concept of home-to-career interference to examine how home factors have interfered with career decisions up to date. Our findings indicate that home-to-career interference exists and may induce lower career

satisfaction. These observations may stimulate more research on interference related to past decisions. For instance, in line with the different forms of home-work interactions, future studies may want to investigate the existence and consequences of other types of home-career interdependencies, such as “home-to-career enrichment” (i.e., the extent to which home factors have facilitated career choices), “career-to-home interference” (i.e., the extent to which career factors have constrained home decisions up to date) and “career-to-home enrichment” (i.e., the extent to which career factors have facilitated home choices).

Another theoretical implication of the study is that we improved our understanding of how home-to-career interdependencies are related to people’s subsequent career satisfaction. Although there is large conviction that people frequently take into account home factors when making career decisions (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012), the understanding on the career consequences of such decisions remains incomplete. We extend existing studies on this topic (e.g., Allen & Russel, 1999; Leslie et al., 2012) in two ways. First, we investigate the mechanisms through which home-to-career interference may relate to career satisfaction. Thereby, we shed more light on why such interdependencies may continue to affect people’s career satisfaction over time. Second, we examine the impact of a range of home-career interdependencies rather than focusing on a specific career decision (e.g., the decision to work part-time). This allows us to capture the strength of the career consequences to a larger extent as these may increase with the amount of home-related career decisions.

Our findings also have practical implications. Employees and organizations should be aware of the potential negative impact of home-to-career interference on career satisfaction. For employees, career satisfaction is a source of personal recognition and achievement (Sturges, 1999) and for organizations, employees’ career satisfaction can add to organizational success (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999). Therefore, understanding factors that relate to career satisfaction that are also potentially amenable to change is important. The

results from our study may inform employees and organizations about how they might avoid career drawbacks from home-related career decisions. Employees may benefit from appraising these decisions in a different way to prevent that possible negative thought processes are triggered. Organizations can help employees in shaping the perspective they take on their past career decisions which were constrained by home factors. Offering instrumental support such as positive information about home-related career decisions may prove to be effective (Steenbergen, Ellemers, Haslam, & Urlings, 2008). That is, when organizations recognize the benefits from home-related career decisions and communicate this to their employees, this would make it less likely that employees remain in negative thought processes and consequently lose confidence in themselves and in their organization. In addition, organizations could work more directly towards preventing the possible impact on employees' perceived organizational career support by working towards a transparent policy of equal career opportunities.

Broadly speaking, the construct of home-to-career interference and its link to negative career attitudes speaks to the need for organizations to take into account the growing reality of the interconnectedness of employees' careers and private life. Our results call for them to evaluate whether their offered jobs and career paths are compatible with the typical dual-earner employee. Structural change within organizations where alternative career paths are considered equally viable for long term success is necessary (Moen & Roehling, 2005). For example, the acceptance and normalization of meaningful M-shaped careers characterized by a rapid progress at first, taking a step back when home responsibilities peak and a continued career development once home responsibilities decrease would be beneficial (Allen, 2005). Perhaps such changes in the typical conceptualization of career paths would allow for less home-to-career interference perceptions in the first place.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

A strength of our study is the use of a three-wave longitudinal design, which reduced the risk of common method variance and provides a stronger case for the proposed directionality of the relationships compared to a cross-sectional design (Podsakoff et al., 2003). However, we are limited in that we can still not firmly draw causal conclusions. Future research would benefit from designs over a longer period of time with multiple measurements so that more precise estimates of changes in home-to-career interference in relation to changes in career satisfaction could be tested. Such analyses could also allow to investigate the type of interference and whether different types have differential impacts on career satisfaction. For example, decisions that are made with regard to children's well-being (i.e., moving to a different city and changing jobs due to quality of school systems) may have less of a negative impact than those that are made because a spouse's career receives priority (i.e., relocation). Such a design could also allow for tests of non-linear effects, as there may be a habituation process, whereby one's home-to-career interference affects his/her satisfaction early in the career but over time it is not as impactful.

Additionally, the measures which were used in our study were obtained through self-reports by the respondents which may be prone to inflation. While certain variables such as home-to-career interference and career goal self-efficacy are of a personal nature and thus best measured by the person, other variables such as organizational career support could be obtained from organizational records. Relatedly, the scale for home-to-career interference was study-developed and should be seen as a first attempt to capture the negative appraisal of home-related career decisions. Future researchers may want to test the measure on additional samples to ensure that the validity generalizes. It would also be interesting to better understand what factors people consider in gauging their responses to these items. For example, it may be that a very recent somewhat constraining decision has a larger impact on current cognitive thoughts about interference than a very constraining decision from many years ago.

Finally, in our study, we focused on the extent to which home considerations have *constrained* employees' career decisions. However, as we mentioned above, home factors may also enrich certain career decisions and experiences. Think for instance of a person who changed jobs because it allows a better work-home balance, only to discover a new line of work which he or she very much enjoys – a discovery this person would not have made without making this home-related career decision. We encourage future studies to investigate both the positive and negative ways in which employees may experience home-related career decisions and thereby further improve our understanding on the outcomes of these decisions.

Conclusion

Although career decisions are often affected by home factors, it remains unclear how such home-career interdependencies impact employees' career satisfaction. This study introduced the concept of "home-to-career interference" to investigate this relation for negatively appraised home-related career decisions and found a negative association with employees' career satisfaction. Our results show that employees who experience home-to-career interference may lose confidence in their own ability to undertake future career goals and may perceive less career support from their organization which in turn can lower their career satisfaction. This study underlines that it is important to take into account employees' experience of home-to-career interference as it may relate to negative career consequences.

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Appendix

Figure 3. Standardized estimations from hypothesized model.

Note. Results for model 1, i.e., the hypothesized model including the direct effect from home-to-career interference to career satisfaction; grey arrows are used for insignificant estimations; (*) $p < .10$; $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.