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Title: The effect of family-friendly policies on job satisfaction

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Abstract

Purpose – We study the extent to which family-friendly policies influence job satisfaction (overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction). Moreover, we analyze the differences between age groups, gender, having children and the number of children in the perception of family-friendly policies and in all the types of job satisfaction.

Design/methodology/approach – 1647 employees from 42 organizations located in Spain participated in this study. The participants completed a questionnaire which measures the perception of family-friendly policies and the three levels of job satisfaction (overall, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction).

Findings – Regression analysis revealed that family-friendly policies have a positive impact on all the types of job satisfaction. Significant age differences have been found in the levels of the perception of family-friendly policies, overall and extrinsic job satisfaction. Gender differences have been found only in the perception of family-friendly policies. Differences between having children or not have been found in the levels of overall job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction.

Research implications – Family-friendly policies have an impact on job satisfaction and there are differences on the perception of family-friendly policies and job satisfaction depending on age, gender or having children or not.

Originality/value – This research contributes to a deeper understanding of to what extent family-friendly policies predict job satisfaction as well as how this relationship changes depending on phases of the lifespan, gender and having children.

Keywords: family-friendly policies, job satisfaction, work-life balance, demographic characteristics

Introduction

Work-life balance

One of the most widely used definitions of work-life balance is given by Frone (2003), “a lack of conflict or interference between work and family roles” (p.145).

Frone suggests that work-life balance is composed by two dimensions: work-family facilitation and work-family conflict. On the one hand, work-family facilitation is defined by Frone (2003) as “the extent to which participation at work (or home) is made easier by virtue of the experiences, skills, and opportunities gained or developed at home (or work)” (p.145). On the other hand, work-family conflict is understood by Greenhaus & Beutell (1985, p.77) as “a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect”.

According to Greenhaus & Beutell (1985) there are two directions of the conflict and three types of resources that produce it. The interference between the family role and the work role is bi-directional. This means that the family demands can cause negative consequences at work – family interfering with work (FIW) – and /or that work demands can produce negative consequences at family – work interfering with family (WIF). In addition, the three types of resources that produce conflict are: time-based conflict, strain-based conflict and behavior-based conflict. Time-based conflict occurs when the time spent in one role makes it difficult to carry out activities in the other role. Strain-based conflict refers to the strain produced by stressors in one role make it difficult to fulfil requirements in the other role. Behavior-based conflict consists of incompatible behavioral patterns between the two domains.

Work life balance has been found to affect several individual outcomes such as health, which have been influenced by work-life balance. Thus, the levels of work-family conflict affect health (Beutell et al., 2014; Frone, 2003; Leineweber, Baltzer, Hanson & Westerlund, 2013). Moreover, work interfering with family was negatively related to job satisfaction (Beutell et al., 2014, Brough, O'Driscoll & Kalliath, 2005, Zhao & Matilla, 2013). In addition, high levels of work-life balance were positively linked with job and life satisfaction. More specifically, time and strain-based conflicts are negatively related to job satisfaction (Buonocore & Russo, 2013). Furthermore, strain-based conflict in both directions (work interferes with family and vice versa) are predictors of low levels of job related well-being. On the other hand, Cheung & Wong (2013) found a relationship between the levels of work-family conflict and affective commitment which was mediated by gender.

Gender is one of the most studied individual demographic variables in relationship with work-life balance and work-family conflict. When we analyze the presence of women in the labor market there is an unequal gender representation. Statistics provided by Eurostat 2013 about employment rate show that 77.7% of males were employed whereas the percentage for women is 71.0%. However, when it comes to part-time employment in 2013, only 7.7% of men are part timers compared to 25.2% of women. This unequal gender presence in the labor market can interfere in the study of the relationship between gender and work-life balance and work-family conflict. In recent studies, results showed that females reported higher levels of work-family conflict in both directions (work to family and family to work) (Beutell & Schneer 2014; Lawrence, Halbesleben & Paustian-Underdahl, 2013; Leineweber et al., 2013). On the other hand, Allen & Finkelstein (2014) found that men reported more work-family conflict than women when the youngest child was teen, however, generally women

reported more family-work conflict than men. In contrast, other studies did not find gender differences in work-family conflict (Cheung et al, 2013).

Age of employees is an important individual characteristic which is related to the perception of work-life balance. The employment survey in 2013 done by the Spanish National Statistical Institute (INE) showed that 27.85% of the workforce in Spain were less than 35 years old, 45.8% were between 35 and 50 years old, and 25.5% were older than 50 years old. This distribution of the workforce revealed that nearly half the employees in Spain are between 35 and 50 years old. Moreover, the mean age for mothers to have her first child has increased approximately a year since 2003 (m=29.64 years old) until 2013 (m=31 years old). Furthermore, the increase in life expectancy (from 73 years old for male and 80 for female in 1991 up to 80 for male and 85 for female in 2014) has produced an increase in family demands in order to providing assistance not only for children but also for parents. Huffman, Culberston, Henning & Goh (2013) published a paper with data from 1997 and 2002, in which they study the perception of work-family conflict across the lifespan. In that study they found that there were significant differences between ages and the perception of work-family conflict. They evidenced that younger and older workers felt lower levels of work-family conflict in both directions than workers in the middle age.

In addition, having children or not is a demographic variable which had been studied as a mediator or antecedent of the perception of work-family conflict. Huffman et al. (2013) used the age of the youngest child as an indicator of childcare demands and proposed a mediating role of this variable in the existing relationship between the age of employees and the interference of work in family. Moreover, Byron (2005) revealed in a meta-analysis of the antecedents of work-life balance that the number of children were related with higher levels of family-interference with work than work-interference with

family. Allen et al. (2014) found that the levels of work interfering with family was greater when the youngest child was between 3 and 12 but family interfering with work was greater when the children were younger.

Work family conflict has stimulated different family friendly policies offered by organizations in order to facilitate their employees' work-life balance. Chinchilla, Poelmans & Leon (2003) examined which are the most popular family friendly policies in Spain. The measures most frequently used by employees were: flexibility in days off (88%), maternity leave (69%), part time working (60%) and flexible work schedules (59%). Moreover, the IESE Family-Responsible Employer Index (IFREI), which analyses the level of implementation of family-friendly policies in companies and its effects, surveyed 5.000 employees from 23 different countries in 2010 and 2011. Their results showed that flexible schedules were the most popular measure for both males (60%) and females (59%). Parker & Allen (2001) studied the perception of family-friendly policies by males and females. These authors found that females viewed work-family policies more favorably than males.

Applying family-friendly policies have some positive effects for organizations. Goover & Crooker (1995) found that family-responsible benefits were positively related to affective commitment and turnover intentions. Kopelman, Protas, Thompson & White (2006) found a positive relationship between the number of family-friendly policies offered by the organization and affective commitment. In addition, work-family practices were negatively related to absenteeism (Giardini & Kabst, 2006).

Job satisfaction

Hoppock in 1935 published the first systematic study about job satisfaction. This author examined which factors of the job position such as fatigue, the relationship with colleagues, work conditions, supervision or career development affect job satisfaction. From 1935 job satisfaction have become one of the most studied constructs in Work and Organizational Psychology until today. Due to the high number of research about job satisfaction multiple definitions of the construct exist.

Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman (1959) defined the Dual Theory in which job satisfaction has two aspects: intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic factors are related with career development, recognition, being creative at job and responsibilities. The extrinsic factors are related with the job context, for instance, salary or work conditions. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a “positive emotional state or pleasurable as a result resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences”. Moreover, this author defined nine dimensions of job satisfaction which are classified as events or conditions which are sources of job satisfaction (job position, salary, career development, recognition, benefits and work conditions) or agents of job satisfaction (supervision, colleagues and organization and business management). Lawler (1973) suggested that “job satisfaction has been determined by the discrepancy between what the employee think that he/she should receive and what he/she obtains in fact”. Bravo, Peiró & Rodríguez (1996, p. 347) defined job satisfaction as “an attitude or a group of attitudes developed by the person towards his or her job. These attitudes can be referred to the job in general or any of its specific aspects”.

It has been proved that there are two main factors of job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

developed by Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist (1967) propose two scales of job satisfaction. Moreover, this theory had been tested again in 2000 by Hirschfeld who validated the existence of two components of job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Moreover, Warr, Cook & Wall (1979) designed a questionnaire to analyze job satisfaction and they distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction too. Furthermore, in that questionnaire they included an item of overall job satisfaction which is appropriate to measure that construct as suggested by Andrew & Robinson (1991).

There are several studies which analyze the relationship between job satisfaction with some demographic variables such as age, tenure, marital status or gender. Griffin & Bateman (1986) argued that there was a weak relationship between gender and job satisfaction, these authors suggested that this relationship occurs due to tenure differences or opportunities for career development. Therefore, Mason (1995) suggested three prospects to explain gender differences on job satisfaction: socialization, situation and social role prospect. The socialization prospect suggested the idea that women feel satisfied in job positions where they can interact and give support to others, and men feel job satisfied when they can have the control of the situations and feel self-affirmed. The situational prospect argued that gender differences in job satisfaction were due to job gender segregation. The social role prospect was related to the social role of women and men in society. Recent research about gender differences have found that women report higher levels of job satisfaction than men (Macintosh & Krush, 2014; Singhapakdi et al., 2014).

Recently, the age of employees has been studied in several papers due to the interest to know how job satisfaction changes across the lifespan. Rhodes (1983) found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and the age of workers. According to

Rhodes (1983), recent papers revealed that older employees reported higher levels of job satisfaction than younger employees (Krumm, Grube & Hertel, 2012; Smith, 2007; Smyer & Pitt-Catsouphes, 2007). We also identified some studies which study the relationship between having children and job satisfaction. Having children was not directly related with job satisfaction, but it mediated the relationship between job and family satisfaction (Sanchez & Quiroga, 1995). Moreover, Kankaanranta et al. (2007) revealed that demographic factors, including the number of children influence the levels of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction had been related with several outcomes such as absenteeism, turnover intentions or job performance. Absenteeism was negatively related with job satisfaction (Muchinsky, 1977). Ybema, Smulders & Bongers (2010) in a longitudinal study across 34 companies found that low levels of job satisfaction are related with higher levels of absenteeism and vice versa. In addition, Nyberg (2010) suggested that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between performance and turnover intentions. Finally, job satisfaction had a significant and positive effect on job performance and vice versa (Hsieh, 2016).

Job satisfaction has also been studied as a consequence of human resources practices. Family-friendly policies have the aim to decrease work-family conflict and increase the feeling of work-life balance. Frye & Breugh (2004) found that family-friendly policies predict the levels of work-family conflict and that was related to job satisfaction. In addition, the availability of family work arrangements like flextime or compressed workweek resulted in greater work to family enrichment, which is positively associated with job satisfaction (McNall, Masuda & Nicklin, 2010). Moreover, work-family support has positive links to job satisfaction (Brough, O'Driscoll & Kalliath, 2005; Mauno, Kinnunen & Feld, 2012). Especially, there is

empirical evidence about the positive relationship between scheduling and timing family-friendly policies and job satisfaction (Ko, Hur & Smith-Walter, 2013; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Scandura et al. (1997) found that females who perceived their organization offered flextime reported higher levels of job satisfaction.

The empirical study

The aim of this study is to analyze the influence of family-friendly policies on job satisfaction. Additionally, we want to explore the differences in the perception of family friendly-policies and levels of job satisfaction depending on gender, age and having children. Thus, our research questions are the following:

Research question 1: To what extent do family-friendly policies predict job satisfaction (overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, extrinsic job satisfaction).

Research question 2: Are there significant differences between age groups, gender, having children and number of children, regarding the perceptions of family-friendly policies at the organizations and levels of job satisfaction (overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, extrinsic job satisfaction).

This study increases the knowledge about how the most applied family-friendly policies such as flextime affect job satisfaction (overall job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction). Due to the differentiation of these different factors of job satisfaction we will better distinguish to what extent family-friendly policies affect each specific type of job satisfaction. Moreover, we analyze the differences across the lifespan about how these family friendly policies are perceived and tentatively explore how the levels of job satisfaction evolve in each factor. Furthermore, we analyze the differences between gender in the perception of family-friendly policies and job

satisfaction, understanding that gender differences in the socialization process can provoke differences in those variables. Finally, by studying the differences in the perception of family-friendly policies and job satisfaction between employees having children and those not having them, we will increase the knowledge about which factors should be given more attention when applying family-friendly policies and to what extent the job domain is affected by changes in the family domain.

Method

Procedure

This research is part of an international project entitled “Job characteristics and human resource practices as antecedents of sustainable well-being at work at different career stages”. This part of the project is based on the data collected in Spain, where 42 companies voluntarily participated in the project. All the data were collected in 2013 and 2014.

First, a representative of the research team contacted the manager of the company by phone or in person in order to explain the general aims of the project and invite them to participate. In exchange, companies would receive a report with the main results at the end of the project. After participation was agreed, the research assistant asked for basic characteristics of the company as well as data identifying participating units and employees. The companies were offered three options to collect the data: on-line, off-line with tablet or in paper. 54.8% of the data were collected online, 41.3% of the data were collected off-line via tablets and 3.9% were collected off-line in paper. In all cases confidentiality was guaranteed. Participants were informed that the report

offered to the company would include only information at the team level. There was no compensation for participation.

Participants

The sample consisted of 1647 employees working for 42 organizations located in Spain. The demographic profile of females and males is shown in Table 1. 56.5% of the sample are between 35 and 50 years old, 46.8% have at least a Bachelor degree, 67.7% are married, 65.6% have children, 74% have at least 5 years tenure, 42.7% have a salary between 1.000 and 1.499 € per month, 85.9% are full time employees, and 66.2% have a permanent contract.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

		Gender		
		Female	Male	Total
Age	Less than 35	28,5%	25,3%	27,1%
	Between 35 and 50	58,0%	54,8%	56,5%
	More than 50	13,5%	19,9%	16,4%
Education	Without education	1,1%	1,4%	1,2%
	Primary School	8,9%	17,7%	12,9%
	Professional	15,4%	16,9%	16,1%
	High School	22,4%	19,5%	21,1%
	Bachelor or higher	50,1%	42,9%	46,8%
	Other	2,1%	1,6%	1,8%
Marital status	Single	20,8%	25,5%	23,0%
	Married	68,1%	67,3%	67,7%
	Widowed	1,2%	1,0%	1,1%
	Divorced	9,9%	6,2%	8,2%
Children	No	33,4%	35,9%	34,5%
	Yes	66,6%	64,1%	65,5%
Seniority at the organization	> 1 year	6,6%	11,2%	8,7%
	1-5 years	15,2%	19,8%	17,3%
	< 5 years	78,2%	69,0%	74,0%
Tenure	> 1 year	13,1%	18,5%	15,6%
	1-5 years	26,5%	27,4%	26,9%
	<5 years	60,4%	54,0%	57,4%

Salary	< 600€/month	2,4%	1,5%	2,0%
	600-999€/month	13,1%	6,1%	9,9%
	1000-1499€/month	43,5%	41,7%	42,7%
	1500-1999€/month	28,6%	28,9%	28,7%
	2000-3000€/month	12,0%	19,3%	15,3%
	> 3000€/month	0,4%	2,5%	1,3%
Employment status	Full time	81,2%	91,6%	85,9%
	Part time	18,8%	8,4%	14,1%
Type of contract	Permanent	66,4%	66%	66,2%
	Temporary	12,6%	14,6%	13,5%
	Freelance	1%	2,2%	1,6%
	Public officer	19,9%	17,1%	18,7%

Measures

The questionnaire included three sections: socio-demographic data, family friendly policies and job satisfaction.

Family friendly policies. The variable family friendly policies is framed from the perspective of human resources practices. We used three items created *ad hoc* to examine this construct. Participants had to answer “To what extent does your company offer you the following policies...” 1) “flexible work schedule” 2) “the option to work part time in case of I need it” 3) “the option to organize my work schedule to accomplish my family obligations”. Response options were in the format of a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (nothing) to 5 (many). Cronbach’s alpha was 0.791.

Job satisfaction. To assess job satisfaction we used the short version developed by Cooper, Rout & Faragher (1989) based on the first questionnaire from Warr, Cook & Wall (1979) which was translated to Spanish by Perez & Fidalgo (1995). The job satisfaction scale has 5 items measuring intrinsic job satisfaction, 4 measuring extrinsic

job satisfaction and 1 item measuring overall job satisfaction. The items used were “freedom to choose your own method of working”, “recognition you for your good work”, “amount of responsibility you are given”, “opportunity to use your ability” and “amount of variety in your job” to measure intrinsic job satisfaction, “physical conditions”, “your colleagues and fellow workers”, “the rate pay” and “your hours of work” to measure extrinsic job satisfaction and “taking everything into consideration, how to do you feel about your job as a whole” to measure overall satisfaction. Response options were in format of a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 7 (extremely satisfied). Cronbach’s alphas are 0.874 for intrinsic job satisfaction and 0.625 for extrinsic job satisfaction.

Results

To answer our first research question, Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations and Pearson’s *r* correlations coefficients of measures of the studied variables. As shown in Table 2, all variables are positively intercorrelated.

Table 2. Means, Standard deviations and Pearson’s Correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Family-friendly policies	3.1496	1.1599			
2. Overall job satisfaction	5.4543	1.1155	,297**		
3. Intrinsic job satisfaction	5.2078	1.0736	,334**	,655**	
4. Extrinsic job satisfaction	5.0781	1.0059	,466**	,523**	,593**

Note: * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$

To know to what extent family-friendly policies predict job satisfaction (overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, extrinsic job satisfaction), we conducted multiple regression analyses with demographic variables entered in the first step and the independent variable entered in the second step. Table 3 shows the results of this analysis.

Model 1 regressed overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction onto demographic characteristics. Demographic characteristic explained almost no variation in overall job satisfaction (Adj. $R^2=.012$), intrinsic job satisfaction (Adj. $R^2=.009$) or extrinsic job satisfaction (Adj. $R^2=.015$).

In Model 2 family-friendly policies were included as a predictor variable. This model explains a bigger proportion of the variance in overall job satisfaction (Adj. $R^2=.085$), in intrinsic job satisfaction (Adj. $R^2=.104$) and extrinsic job satisfaction (Adj. $R^2=.226$).

Table 3. Results of Multiple regression analyses on different types of Job Satisfaction

Independent variables	Overall job satisfaction			Intrinsic job satisfaction			Extrinsic job satisfaction		
	Coefficient	SE	Beta	Coefficient	SE	Beta	Coefficient	SE	Beta
Model 1									
Age	-0.010	0.054	-0.006	-0.041	0.052	-0.025	-0.029	0.049	-0.018
Gender	-0.114	0.059	-0.052	-0.075	0.057	-0.036	0.028	0.054	0.014
Children	-0.149	0.113	-0.065	0.040	0.109	0.018	-0.055	0.104	-0.026
Number of children	0.046	0.057	0.040	0.018	0.055	0.016	0.016	0.052	0.015
Educational level	0.034	0.025	0.036	0.091***	0.025	0.100	0.027	0.023	0.031
Tenure	-0.129**	0.042	-0.089	-0.032	0.041	-0.023	-0.161***	0.039	-0.120
Adjusted R ²			0.012			0.009			0.015
F			3.753***			3.216**			4.656***
Change in F			3.753***			3.216**			4.656***
Model 2									
Age	0.037	0.052	0.022	0.011	0.050	0.007	0.044	0.044	0.029
Gender	-0.081	0.057	-0.037	-0.039	0.054	-0.019	0.078	0.048	0.039
Children	-0.169	0.108	-0.074	0.017	0.104	0.008	0.078	0.048	0.039
Number of children	0.042	0.054	0.037	0.014	0.052	0.012	-0.087	0.092	-0.041
Educational level	0.031	0.024	0.033	0.088***	0.023	0.097	0.010	0.046	0.009
Tenure	-0.124**	0.040	-0.085	-0.027	0.039	-0.019	-0.154***	0.034	-0.115
Family-friendly policies	0.258***	0.024	0.274	0.284***	0.023	0.310	0.402***	0.021	0.461
Adjusted R ²			0.085			0.104			0.226
F			19.667***			24.301***			59.362***
Change in F			113.340***			148.763***			380.004***

Note: *p ≤ .05; **p ≤ .01; ***p ≤ .001

Our second research question was about potential differences in the perception of family-friendly policies, overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction between the three groups of ages, gender, having children or not and the number of children.

In order to test age differences differences, we used ANOVAs. Results in Table 4 show that there are significant differences in the perception of family-friendly policies so that they are higher for employees in the groups of age below 50 years ($F=3.690$, $p<.05$). Overall job satisfaction shows higher levels for employees below 35 years, followed by employees between 35 and 50 ($F=4.832$, $p<.01$). Differences were also found for extrinsic job satisfaction where employees below 35 years show higher levels of extrinsic job satisfaction than the other groups ($F=4.356$, $p<.05$).

Table 4. ANOVA: Age differences

		Mean	SD	F
	Age			
Family-friendly policies	Less than 35	3,277358	1,191298	3.690*
	Between 35 and 50	3,277358	1,144919	
	More than 50	3,048446	1,116853	
Overall job satisfaction	Less than 35	5,603055	1,063843	4.832**
	Between 35 and 50	5,405892	1,092164	
	More than 50	5,487497	1,118281	
Intrinsic job satisfaction	Less than 35	5,270573	1,011087	0.694
	Between 35 and 50	5,197476	1,080919	
	More than 50	5,219961	1,077547	
Extrinsic job satisfaction	Less than 35	5,206680	0,987744	4.356*
	Between 35 and 50	5,035321	1,015709	
	More than 50	5,065776	0,971938	

Note: N less than 35 years old = 432; N between 35 and 50 years old = 910; N more than 50 years old = 259

* $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$

Secondly, we run t tests for different samples (male and female). The results reported in Table 5 show significant gender differences in the perception of family-friendly policies and in the level of job satisfaction. Regarding the perception of family-friendly policies, results show that females ($\bar{x}=3.22$, $SD=1.167$) have higher punctuations than males ($\bar{x}=3.08$, $SD=1.141$), $t=2.392$ ($p<.05$).

Thirdly, we have tested the differences between having children or not in the perception of family-friendly policies offered by the organizations, overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. Table 6 shows the results for the t test for different samples (having children and not having children). We found significant differences between these two groups in the levels of overall job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction.

Regarding the level of overall job satisfaction, the results revealed that employees without children ($\bar{x}=5.572$, $SD=1.042$) have higher levels of overall job satisfaction than employees who have children ($\bar{x}=5.428$, $SD=1.130$), $t=2.466$ ($p<.05$). Moreover, employees without children ($\bar{x}=5.1748$, $SD=1.0345$) have higher levels of extrinsic job satisfaction than employees who have children ($\bar{x}=5.0532$, $SD=0.9801$), $t=2.29$ ($p<.05$).

Finally, we have analyzed if there are differences between employees with different number of children. To answer that question, we only used the data of the employees who have children. An ANOVA test was conducted to examine the differences between employees with different number of children (1, 2, 3 or more children). As the results show in Table 7, there are no significant differences in the studied variables and the number of children.

Table 5. T test: Gender

	Family-Friendly policies		Overall Job Satisfaction		Intrinsic Job Satisfaction		Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Mean	3.22	3.08	5.506	5.418	5.2624	5.1656	5.0783	5.1078
SD	1.167	1.141	1.0572	1.1630	1.0265	1.1000	0.9727	1.0245
t	2.392*		1.529		1.774		-0.577	

Note: N female=843; N male=701

Table 6. T test: Having children or not

	Family-Friendly policies		Overall Job Satisfaction		Intrinsic Job Satisfaction		Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Mean	3.18	3.18	5.572	5.428	5.2261	5.2307	5.1748	5.0532
SD	1.149	1.153	1.0428	1.1304	1.0030	1.0852	1.0345	0.9801
t	-0.005		2.466*		-0.083		2.290*	

Note: N yes= 1036; N no=538

Table 7. ANOVA for groups of employees with different number of children

		Mean	SD	F
Number of children				
Family-friendly policies	1	3.1929	1.2044	.426
	2	3.1860	1.1270	
	3 or more	3.0588	1.1288	
Overall job satisfaction	1	5.4457	1.1825	.089
	2	5.4183	1.1026	
	3 or more	5.4594	1.0734	
Intrinsic job satisfaction	1	5.2742	1.0847	.595
	2	5.2054	1.0760	
	3 or more	5.3055	1.1632	
Extrinsic job	1	5,107110	0,986450	.535
	2	5,039357	0,976690	
	3 or more	5,048611	0,941641	

Note: N 1 children = 352; N 2 children =579; N 3 or more children = 72

Discussion

As we have studied, family-friendly policies such as flextime at work are one of the most popular work-family arrangements and is offered by organizations to reduce the perception of work-family conflict, especially time-based conflict. In this context, the aim of our study was to explore whether and to which extent family-friendly policies predict different types of job satisfaction.

In line with previous research (Brough et al., 2005; Mauno et al., 2012), we found that the availability of family-friendly policies has a positive effect on job satisfaction. Demographic characteristics and flextime at work predict 8.5% of overall job satisfaction, 10.4% of intrinsic job satisfaction and 22.6% of extrinsic job satisfaction. As expected, family-friendly policies have more impact on the extrinsic dimension of job satisfaction because this type of policies can be considered a general work condition. However, promoting family-friendly policies has also a positive impact on intrinsic job satisfaction, related with the meaning of the work. Therefore, human resources practices addressed to increase work-life balance influence the meaning and the context of the job.

Regarding the age differences in the perception of family-friendly policies the results show that it is older employees who perceive these human resources practices to be present to the least extent, these results are consistent with those of Huffman et al. (2013) who found that younger and older employees feel less work-family conflict. Moreover, when studying age differences in job satisfaction we found that young employees report higher levels of overall job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. This is in contrast to previous evidence which found that older employees reported

higher levels of job satisfaction than younger employees (Krumm et al., 2012; Smith, 2007; Smyer et al., 2007).

Related to gender differences, results show that women reported higher levels of perception of family-friendly policies. Previous studies found that women reported higher levels of work-family conflict (Beutell et al., 2013; Lawrence, et al., 2013; Leineweber et al., 2013) because women have higher needs to balance work and family than men. Consequently, women perceived more family-friendly policies than men. Our results would provide further evidence to this proposal. However, our findings regarding the differences in job satisfaction are not in accordance with previous studies (Macintosh et al. 2014; Singhapakdi et al., 2014).

Having children or not and the number of children had been studied in relationship with the perception of work-life balance. We did not find significant differences in the levels of perception of family-friendly policies between employees who have or do not have children. This is contradiction with some studies (Huffman et al. 2013; Allent et al., 2014) which use the age of the youngest child at home as a measure of family demands, and which found that these demands were negatively related to work-life balance and positively related to work-family conflict. Additionally, employees who do not have children reported higher levels of overall job satisfaction and intrinsic job satisfaction. This last finding revealed that there is a connection between the family domain and the job domain which should be more studied as suggested Sanchez et al. (1995). Moreover, we did not find significant differences between the number of children and the perception of family-friendly contrary to Byron (2005). Furthermore, there are no significant differences in the different types of satisfaction between groups of employees with different numbers of children.

Summarizing, we conclude that family-friendly policies have a positive influence on job satisfaction and that these policies have a differential impact on different types of job satisfaction. Exploring demographic differences in the perception of family-friendly policies and job satisfaction we conclude that gender only interferes in the perception of family friendly-policies. On the one hand, age differences have been found in the perception of family-friendly policies and in the levels of overall and extrinsic job satisfaction. On the other hand, having children does not interfere in the perception of family-friendly policies, but there have been found differences in the levels of overall and extrinsic job satisfaction. Neither family-friendly policies nor all the factors of job satisfaction were influenced by the number of children. Finally, none of the demographic factors studied had an influence on the levels of intrinsic job satisfaction.

Applying family-friendly at the organization can be beneficial for the employees as well as for organizations. Thus, the availability of flextime arrangements allows employees to better balance their role as an employee and as a family member and that contributes to individual wellbeing. On the other hand, promoting family-friendly policies is not only an expense for companies, but also a tool to provide the organization with many beneficial outcomes. Nowadays, organizations which promote family-friendly policies are more attractive for candidates, as the organization has a better reputation and better employer branding (Blahopoulou, 2015, pp. 95-111). Moreover, as the results have shown, the implementation of family-friendly policies has a positive effect on job satisfaction which subsequently has been related with several outcomes such as lower levels of absenteeism (Muchinsky, 1977, Ybema et al., 2010) and positive effects on job performance (Hsieh, 2016). Therefore, job satisfied employees become a

competitive advantage and family-friendly policies have a high positive impact on job satisfaction.

Moreover, our analysis of the changes in the perception of family-friendly policies and job satisfaction across age, gender and having children offers us the possibility to explore the relationships among these variables. The results relative to family-friendly policies enable the company to better adapt them to every stage of the lifespan. Furthermore, the facts that women perceived more family-friendly policies than men and that in our sample there are 10% more part-timers among women than men suggests that it is necessary to promote family-friendly policies among men to give them the chance of having the responsibility of caring for the family. Regarding the lack of differences among employees who are parents compared to those who are not, and the lack of influence of the number of children in the perception of family-friendly policies it seems that family-friendly policies could be the same for all employees. In our sample no differentiation was found when the family demands increase. However, the levels of overall and extrinsic job satisfaction are lower for employees who do not have children. Hence, to achieve an equal work-life balance and higher levels of overall and extrinsic job satisfaction, family-friendly policies should be available.

Some limitations in this research should be noted in relation to future studies. First, traditional couples have reduced their presence in western societies towards new models such as the model of dual earners and dual career. Moreover, there are increased numbers of divorced and single mothers and fathers among employees. These new types of family should be included in any family-friendly policies studies. Second, the age of the youngest child has been used as a measure of childcare demands in many studies about work-life balance. Further research on this factor and how it could affect the relationship between job satisfaction and family-friendly policies would be of high

interest. In line with the analysis of family demands, we believe information regarding dependent people in the family (i.e., children or parents) would be a more accurate measure of family demands. Finally, the additional consideration of the extent to which the company and the direct supervisors support the use of existing family-friendly policies would better comprehend and offer richer insights on the application and promotion of family-friendly policies by organizations.

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