

## Salience and conflict of work and family roles among employed men and women

Irena Knežević<sup>1</sup>, Ljiljana Gregov<sup>2</sup>, and Ana Šimunić<sup>2</sup>

*Association of Hearing Impaired People<sup>1</sup>, Department of Psychology, University of Zadar<sup>2</sup>, Zadar, Croatia*

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The aim of this research was to determine the salience of work and family roles and to study the connection between role salience and the interference of different types of roles among working men and women. Self-assessment measurement scales were applied. The research involved 206 participants; 103 employed married couples from different regions of Croatia. The results show that roles closely connected to family are considered the most salient. However, men are mostly dedicated behaviourally to the role of a worker. Women dedicate more time and energy to the roles of a spouse, a parent, and a family member whereas men are more oriented towards the leisurite role. The highest level of conflict was perceived when it comes to work disturbing leisure. Gender differences appeared only for work-to-marriage conflict, with men reporting higher conflict than women. The research found proof of only some low correlations between the salience of different types of roles and work-family conflict.

**KEY WORDS:** *role salience; work-family conflicts; gender; spouse; parent; colleague; leisure*

People perform many different roles throughout their lives, such as the role of a child, a student, a leisurite (engaging in free-time or leisure activities), a citizen, an employee, a partner, a houseworker, a parent, a pensioner (1). Roles can be defined as the sum of behaviours, rights, and duties that an individual should present in a given social situation (2). Although there may be several roles at once, they are not all equally important; there are usually two or three prominent roles (salient), while others are peripheral. It has been shown that the importance of each life role depends on the perception of the possibilities of actualising salient values through these roles (3). Thus, the salience of a life role represents the motivational force for participating in the role. Salient roles form the core of a person; they are the basis of personal identity and are essential for life satisfaction (4).

Super (1) used a three-part model to explain role salience. According to the model, role salience reflects the knowledge, participation, and commitment we have for the role. Therefore, salience has three dimensions: cognitive, behavioural, and affective. It can be concluded that role salience is the highest when we have good knowledge of the role, when we participate in it, and when we feel that it is of personal importance to us.

When played simultaneously, roles interact and influence each other. Since work organisation and family are two central institutions in most men and women's lives (5-7), interactions of work and family life are commonly

examined. They can support or complement each other but may also be in conflict and become a source of stress. When meeting the requirements of family roles becomes difficult or impossible due to the requirements of work roles, and *vice versa*, we speak of work-family conflict (8). This type of conflict has a negative impact on the quality of both family and work life (9, 10).

### *Work-family conflict in men and women*

A well-known and generally accepted model of work-family conflict was proposed in 1992 by Frone et al. (11). They assumed that there are two distinct forms of conflict between work and family roles: work-to-family conflict, i.e., the disruptive effect of work on the family role and family-to-work conflict, i.e., the disruptive effects of family on the work role. They have been identified as reciprocal constructs, which have independent antecedents and outcomes (11-13). Research results consistently show that work-to-family conflict is more common than family-to-work conflict (14-16).

Most research on work-family conflict was conducted on groups of individuals, and only a smaller number on couples (6, 17). However, there are several reasons such research should be carried out on couples, and one of them is the assumption that work-family conflict will be higher in dual-earner couples, because of a larger number of interactions between the work and family domains. The experiences of one partner in his/her work and family domains will not only be influenced by their own work and family variables but also by the work and family variables of the other partner (18-21).

*Work-family conflict and role salience among men and women*

Work-family conflict is the highest when both work and family roles are highly salient to an individual (8, 22). Although some researchers believe that women, compared to men, still consider their career less important (7, 22), other findings suggest that women with a salient work role often return to work after giving birth and prefer to work rather than stay at home (23). The importance of career also strongly differs between women with traditional gender ideology, and feminists (24, 25). In men, such a link between the listed variables was not manifested (26).

A greater relative importance of a domain does not necessarily mean a greater investment in it. The results of some previous studies (27, 22) have shown that people use some family time in order to deal with their job more often than they use the time devoted to work to spend it with their family. A very likely explanation for this could be the fact that the existence of an individual and his/her family often depends on the work role, regardless of its salience. Therefore, the conclusion of many researchers that work affects family more than family affects work is not surprising, at least when it comes to the time invested in these two domains (11, 27). Rothbard and Edwards (27) found that women with a salient work role, invested more of their time in work than in their family life. Men with a salient work role invested as much time in their family life as men with a salient family role. It is possible that the work role provides men self-esteem and social status, which increases their energy to invest more time in other roles (28). The results obtained in another research (29) suggest that family role is vital for the mental and physical health of men, and is more important for their psychological state than the work role.

When reviewing domestic and foreign literature it can be noted that role salience is rarely examined in Croatia (30-32). Šverko (30) examined the salience of five roles: the role of a student, a worker, a citizen, a houseworker, and a leisurite. However, the existing studies have a common drawback, and that is that everything that was not part of the work domain was considered the family domain. For example, a hobby does not belong to the work domain,

yet it cannot be classified as the family domain. Moreover, it should be taken into account that not all aspects of the work domain have the same disruptive effects on all aspects of the family domain or *vice versa*. For this reason, we attempted to divide work-to-family and family-to-work conflict into several components to create a more detailed picture of the impact of the work domain on family, and *vice versa*. The objective of present study was to examine the salience of different roles within the work and family domains, and to examine the relationship between the salience of these roles and their mutual interferences among employed men and women.

First of all, gender differences in the salience (behavioural, affective, and cognitive) of the roles of a worker, a colleague, a spouse, a parent, a family member, and a leisurite were examined. Next, gender differences in the assessments of different types of role conflict (work-to-marriage, work-to-parent, work-to-housework, work-to-leisure, family-to-worker, family-to-colleague) were examined. Finally, the relationships between the salience of the roles of a worker, a colleague, a spouse, a parent, a family member, and a leisurite and the assessments of different types of work-family conflict (work-to-marriage, work-to-parent, work-to-housework, work-to-leisure, family-to-work, and family-to-colleague relations) separately for men and women were examined.

**METHODS**

*Participants*

The study was conducted on 103 couples from different regions in the Republic of Croatia. The average age of women was 39.05 (SD=9.41) and ranged from 22 to 62 years, while the average age of men was 41.6 (SD=10.05), ranging from 23 to 62 years. Table 1 presents a more detailed view of demographic characteristics (age and education level). In order to participate in the study, participants had to meet two criteria: both spouses had to be employed and they had to have at least one child.

**Table 1** The characteristics of the tested sample of employed couples

	Women	Men	Total	
Age	22-30	N=24 (23.3%)	N=14 (13.59%)	N=38 (18.45%)
	31-40	N=32 (31.07%)	N=36 (34.95%)	N=68 (33.01%)
	41-50	N=32 (31.07%)	N=27 (36.21%)	N=59 (28.64%)
	51-62	N=12 (11.65%)	N=24 (23.3%)	N=36 (17.47%)
	not stated	N=3 (2.91%)	N=2 (1.94%)	N=5 (2.43%)
Education level	Secondary	N=52 (50.49%)	N=68 (66.02%)	N=120 (58.25%)
	Higher	N=11 (10.68%)	N=10 (9.71%)	N=21 (10.19%)
	High	N=39 (37.86%)	N=23 (22.33%)	N=62 (30.1%)
	not stated	N=1 (0.97%)	N=2 (1.94%)	N=3 (1.46%)

### Data collection

The sample was collected mainly through personal contacts, with individuals or couples being asked to assist in the distribution of questionnaires to other spouses that they know. Data from some respondents was collected after visiting the organisations they work in. Prior to this, their supervisors were asked permission for the researcher's arrival at the workplace. This method of data collection results in a convenience sample, which is one of the limitations of this study, but due to the economic crisis, finding married couples who are both employed is a real challenge in Croatia. Unfortunately, there are much more examples of only one working spouse. Respondents filled out the questionnaires in their spare time and had at least one week to complete them. Questionnaires were distributed in envelopes to ensure anonymity and respondents were also asked to pick and write down a common code for easier determination of the pairing individuals.

### Measures

A set of socio-demographic type questions aimed at collecting data on the age and education level of the respondents.

Role Salience Inventory (SI) (33) originally measures one's participation in, commitment to, and expectation of the ability to fulfil a value in each of five life roles – the role of a student, a worker, a citizen, a houseworker, and a leisurite. It was developed within the *Work importance study* (WIS) project. The questionnaire consists of three subscales giving three measures of importance of each of the five roles. First, the behavioural (participation) component scale consists of 10 items and is a measure of the respondents' estimates on how much time and effort is put in action or in thinking about each role. On the affective (commitment) component scale, which also consists of 10 items, respondents estimate how important it is to them to be successful in a variety of roles. Third, the respondents estimate the expected possibilities of achieving different values in each of the five roles on the cognitive component scale (2). This scale originally has 14 items, but the number of items differs from one country to another, depending on the values perceived as significant in each culture (2). For example, the Croatian version of SI is originally composed of 10 items in the behavioural scale, 10 in the affective scale, and as many as 20 items in the cognitive scale (34). Each role is assessed on a four-level Likert scale, and the final result for each of the three scales is obtained by summing the respondents' estimates for each role separately. Alpha coefficients of the questionnaire have so far proved to be sufficiently high. For example, for each of the five roles in each of the three scales, alpha coefficients ranged from .82 to .95 (33, 34).

An adapted version of the Role Salience Inventory based on the Croatian validation by Šverko and colleagues (34)

was used in this study. The behavioural, affective, and cognitive components of salience of the following roles were measured: a colleague, a worker (employee), a spouse, a parent, a family member, and a leisurite. The behavioural component scale consisted of seven items as three items from the original version which could not be applied to all of the roles assessed were excluded from the scale. The affective component scale consisted of all the original 10 items. On these two scales, the behavioural and the affective component scales, respondents evaluated each role by choosing one out of four possible answers (1-not at all, never; 2-small, sometimes; 3-quite often; 4-very many, very often). The third, cognitive component scale, consisted of all the 20 items from the original Croatian version of the scale, but items 14 (*"to feel the lure of danger..."*) and 19 (*"to be with people of my origin..."*) were excluded since the correlations of these items with the overall score were lower than 0.30, resulting in 18 items for further analysis. Here, respondents evaluated each role by choosing one out of four possible answers (1-nothing or little; 2-partly; 3-rather; 4-very many).

The Work-family conflict scale (35) is used for measuring the degree of conflict between work and family life, i.e., the interaction of work and family life, taking into account the time, effort, and organisation of activities as the causes of conflict. The Croatian adaptation of this scale (36) consists of 12 items, or two sets of six items that differ only in the direction of conflict. The first concerns the effect of work on family life and the other the effect of family on work life. Respondents express their agreement/disagreement with a particular item on a seven-degree scale (1-strongly disagree; 7-strongly agree).

A modified version of this scale was used in this study. It did not measure the general work-to-family and family-to-work conflict, as in previous research. Instead, work-to-family conflict was divided into four types (work-to-marriage, work-to-parenting, work-to-houseworking, work-to-leisure) and family-to-work conflict into two types (family-to-worker and family-to-co-worker) giving a total of six subscales. Unlike the Croatian adaptation of the scale which has six items for each conflict, the scales used in this study have five items for each conflict. Specifically, one item (*"My family members do not respect nor accept the demands and obligations included in my job."*) could not be adjusted to be applicable to all types of conflict and was excluded from this study. Respondents expressed their agreement/disagreement with a particular item on a 4-degree scale (1-nothing or little; 2-partly, 3-rather; 4-very much).

Six exploratory factor analyses (principal components) with the Kaiser-Guttman criterion of factor extraction (latent root > 1) were conducted to check whether the items of each of the subscales indeed belonged to one factor.

*Ethical approval*

This research was approved by the Ethical Research Committee in the area of psychology at the University of Zadar. It had been planned and was carried out according to the ethical principles of the Croatian Psychological Society, which are in accordance with the ethical principles, concerning psychological research, of the American Psychological Association, the British Psychological Society, and also of the Declaration of Helsinki. The subjects gave their informed consent to participate in this research.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this study, the generally recognised conflicts such as work-to-family and family-to-work were examined with respect to several individual roles within a specific domain, as were also their relations to the salience of these different roles. Although the research was conducted on married couples, differences between men and women, rather than between couples, were examined. This type of sample was chosen to assure a greater control of the variables that could influence the results.

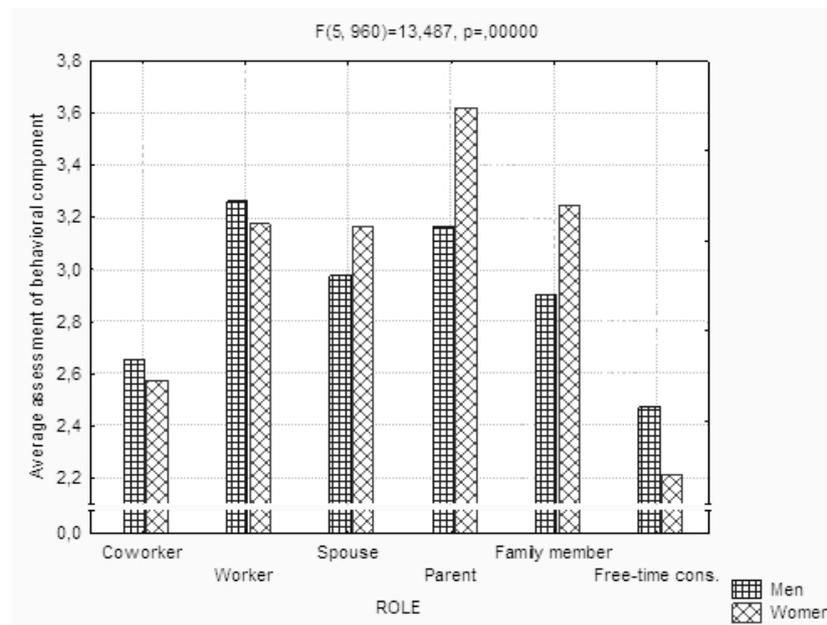
*Role salience among men and women*

According to Super (1), all three components of the salience of a role should be considered separately and we have held this view in this research. Figures 1, 2, and 3 represent the levels and differences in the reported behavioural, affective, and cognitive components of the salience of six different roles in men and women: the role of a co-worker, a worker, a spouse, a parent, a family

member, and a leisurite. According to the aim of this research, we first performed one-way analyses of variance to determine whether men and women differed in the severity of the three components for each role individually (Table 2)<sup>1</sup>. Given the fact that the men and women in this sample differ in their qualifications, the analyses of covariance with education as a covariate have also been performed along with the one-way analyses of variance (Table 2). We additionally examined the differences between the salience of different roles with the one-way analyses of variance and post-hoc Sheffe procedures (these results will be presented in the text).

The results showed that, expectedly, the roles closely related to family are more salient to the respondents than those related to work ( $F(5/960)=116.95; p=.000$ ). In fact, respondents provided the highest estimates on all three components of salience precisely for these roles. Therefore, most respondents invest and find that being successful in the roles they have in the family (particularly the role of a parent) is the most important, and believe that they, at least in comparison with the roles offered in this study, could provide the best opportunity for achieving salient values. Although Croatia underwent significant transformations in the political, economic, and cultural aspects in the last 20 years, resulting in the transformation of the system of individual values, family is still ranked first in this very much Christian country (37, 32, 7). However, there are differences between women and men in the expression of

<sup>1</sup>Although it is more usual to use t-tests in such case, analyses of variance were conducted to make a comparison with the results of analyses of covariance.



**Figure 1** The degree of the behavioural component of salience of different roles (co-worker; worker; spouse, parent, family member; and leisurite) in men and women

**Table 2** Testing differences (ANOVA and ANCOVA - covariate: education level) between women and men in the behavioural, affective, and cognitive component of each role's salience (co-worker, spouse, parent, family member, and leisurite)

	Women		Men		ANOVA			ANCOVA			
	Variables	M	SD	M	SD	df	F	p	df	F	p
Behavioural	Co-worker (N=97)	2.57	0.62	2.65	0.72	1/192	0.66	0.419	1/188	2.36	0.126
	Worker (N=103)	3.18	0.57	3.26	0.53	1/204	0.99	0.322	1/200	0.41	0.525
	Spouse (N=103)	3.19	0.54	2.98	0.58	<b>1/204</b>	<b>7.01</b>	<b>0.009</b>	1/200	3.36	0.068
	Parent (N=103)	3.63	0.36	3.17	0.60	<b>1/204</b>	<b>44.9</b>	<b>0.000</b>	1/200	0.44	0.506
	Family member (N=103)	3.26	0.54	2.93	0.57	<b>1/204</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>0.000</b>	1/200	0.54	0.463
	Leisurite (N=103)	2.19	0.72	2.51	0.67	<b>1/204</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>0.001</b>	1/200	0.19	0.663
Affective	Co-worker (N=97)	2.78	0.66	2.85	0.64	1/192	0.53	0.470	1/188	0.17	0.681
	Worker (N=103)	3.28	0.58	3.31	0.54	1/204	0.12	0.734	1/200	1.88	0.172
	Spouse (N=103)	3.57	0.45	3.49	0.47	1/204	1.28	0.259	<b>1/200</b>	<b>4.51</b>	<b>0.035</b>
	Parent (N=103)	3.83	0.25	3.64	0.41	<b>1/204</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>0.000</b>	1/200	1.39	0.239
	Family member (N=103)	3.51	0.49	3.39	0.50	1/204	3.33	0.069	1/200	0.65	0.421
	Leisurite (N=103)	2.87	0.67	2.99	0.65	1/204	1.57	0.211	1/200	0.00	0.986
Cognitive	Co-worker (N=97)	2.59	0.65	2.67	0.64	1/192	0.88	0.348	1/188	2.50	0.115
	Worker (N=103)	2.88	0.62	2.92	0.62	1/204	0.22	0.642	1/200	0.82	0.365
	Spouse (N=103)	3.26	0.51	3.21	0.55	1/204	0.59	0.442	1/200	0.91	0.342
	Parent (N=103)	3.44	0.41	3.32	0.50	<b>1/204</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>0.046</b>	1/200	0.99	0.320
	Family member (N=103)	3.19	0.52	3.15	0.51	1/204	0.40	0.526	1/200	0.28	0.601
	Leisurite (N=103)	2.43	0.59	2.54	0.58	1/204	1.76	0.187	<b>1/200</b>	<b>5.12</b>	<b>0.025</b>

individual role salience components closely related to family.

We can start with the role of a parent, since it proved to be the most salient. Jankovic et al. (37) have already demonstrated that the value "child" stands out among other values. There is no difference between men and women in believing in the possibility of realising values (cognitive component) in the parental role, but women are much more committed to this role (affective component), and invest much more time and energy into it (behavioural component) (Table 2). This can be explained by different socialisation

of men and women. Men are socialised to be wage earners, while women are socialised to be full of love and dedication, caring mothers and wives who take care of the quality of family member interactions. The Croatian society is still a quite traditional one, but it is suggested that, even in the most egalitarian relationships, women would, due to their socialisation and psychological orientation on the caretaking role, feel a special connection with the role of being a mother (38).

As for the role of a spouse and a family member, men and women do not differ neither in the assessments of their

commitment to these roles, nor in the belief that they will be able to achieve personal values through these. However, it can be noted that women, compared to men, invest more time and energy in participating in these roles (Table 2), which is again in line with the traditional socialisation of men and women. Both recognise the importance of family and are highly committed to it, but when it comes to taking care of other family members, women mainly do the job. The results of previous research indeed show that men are significantly less involved in housework and childcare, especially when it comes to housework (39, 15, 40). Most couples cooperate in social contacts with relatives and institutions, and in the improvement of financial issues. However, when it comes to the traditionally “female” tasks - cooking, washing dishes, and cleaning, there is a much lower extent of symmetrical division of labour. Men are more likely to perform traditional “male” tasks such as easy repairs of household appliances. Topolčić (40) explains that even when their levels of participation in housework increase, men usually remain only the helpers. They »help their wives" and their wives are concerned that they perform these tasks in a timely and satisfactory manner.

Within the roles closely related to the job, at least as far as the investment of time and energy is concerned, the role of a worker proved to be the most salient (Figure 3). Moreover, men and women invest an equal amount of time and energy into this role, are equally devoted to it, and equally believe in the possibility of achieving values in it (Table 2). This proves that women appreciate work as much as men. In particular, the existence of an individual and his family depends on the work role. Insufficient investment in this role can result in job loss, which may adversely affect the quality of life, not only of the individual but also of his family.

In comparing these highly salient four roles (the role of a worker, spouse, parent, and family member), women, compared to men, invest more time and energy in the roles

that are closely related to the family, while men, although they also invest much in these roles, invest most of their time and energy in the role of a worker (Table 2). This result can also be attributed to the aforementioned socialisation of women and men, which is more traditionally perceived in Croatia. Results of studies are consistent in indicating that women are more involved in family roles and have higher expectations of these roles than men (39, 38, 41, 42). Interestingly, women invest as much time in the role of a worker as they invest in the roles closely related to family (except for the role of a parent in which they invest by far the most time and energy). Employment is an additional source of self-esteem for working mothers (43) so such a result may not be surprising. Moreover, success at the workplace is often more visible than success in the household, so maybe we can expect that success on the job has a stronger effect on the self-esteem of working mothers, since they can prove their capabilities at work, while no one has the habit of complimenting them for, let's say, a well cleaned living room.

The roles of a co-worker and a leisurite showed to be less salient than the roles closely related to family and the role of a worker. Respondents are more affectively attached to the role of a free-time consumer, but they invest more time and energy in the role of a co-worker (since this is imposed to them by their working hours and the type of work they perform) and believe that this role provides greater opportunities for the realisation of appreciated values (Figures 1, 2, and 3). As for the differences between men and women (Table 2) the results show that they invest the same amount of time and energy into, are equally devoted, and equally believe in the possibility of realising values in the role of a co-worker. As for leisure, there are also no differences in the affective and cognitive components of role saliency, but men invest significantly more time and energy in this role than women. Men have more time for themselves and their desires and needs, which

**Table 3** Testing differences (ANOVA and ANCOVA - covariate: education level) between men and women in the amount of certain types of work-family conflict (work-to-marriage, work-to-parenting, work-to-housework, work-to-leisure, family-to-work, and family-to-relations with co-workers)

Variables	Women		Men		ANOVA			ANCOVA		
	M	SD	M	SD	df	F	p	df	F	p
Work-to-marriage (N=103)	2.12	0.76	2.35	0.81	1/204	4.31	0.039	1/200	0.69	0.404
Work-to-parenting (N=103)	2.21	0.77	2.39	0.76	1/204	2.89	0.091	1/200	0.12	0.734
Work-to-housework (N=103)	2.42	0.83	2.57	0.80	1/204	1.59	0.208	1/200	0.32	0.572
Work-to-leisure (N=103)	2.62	0.91	2.61	0.79	1/204	0.01	0.915	1/200	1.33	0.250
Family-to-work (N=103)	1.57	0.58	1.43	0.58	1/204	2.79	0.096			
Family-to-relations with co-workers (N=97)	1.48	0.55	1.38	0.52	1/192	1.59	0.208			

is not surprising given the fact that caring for the family is usually left to women. They fulfil the task required based on their gender role at work, take care of children at home, most likely while the wife is at work or performing other house tasks, and then they are free to do whatever they want. Women work, but the task they are required to perform based on their gender role is at home, making them less able to dedicate time to themselves and their other needs and desires.

#### *Work-family conflicts in men and women*

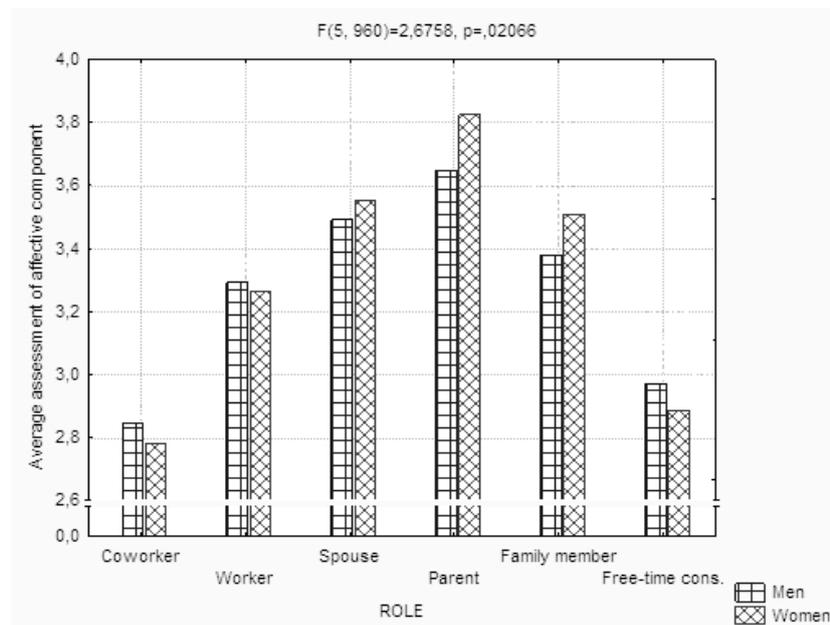
Figure 4 represents a display of the average assessments of the examined types of work-family conflict. Similar to the results of previous research (11, 12), it has been shown that work roles have a more harmful effect on family than family roles on the examined work roles (Figure 4). As for the differences between men and women in different types of work-to-family conflict, men reported a higher level of work-to-marriage conflict than women, while there were no differences obtained in other types of work-to-family conflict (Table 3; Figure 4). It is possible that men, when it comes to social support, are more dependent on their wives than their wives on them. Research has shown that wives are the main source of social support to men, while husbands are only one of such sources to women (44). Women generally have a wider network of social support within and outside the family, and when they fail to get support from their husband, they will look elsewhere. The results of this study also show that work mostly interferes with leisure activities ( $F(3/612)=32,78; p=.000$ ; Figure 4), which may not be surprising given the fact that an individual is obliged to participate in other roles taken account of in this

study; we have to interact with our spouse, children need to be taken care of, and housework needs to be done from time to time. Of all of these roles, leisure activities are not obligatory and are often neglected or sacrificed for the sake of other obligations.

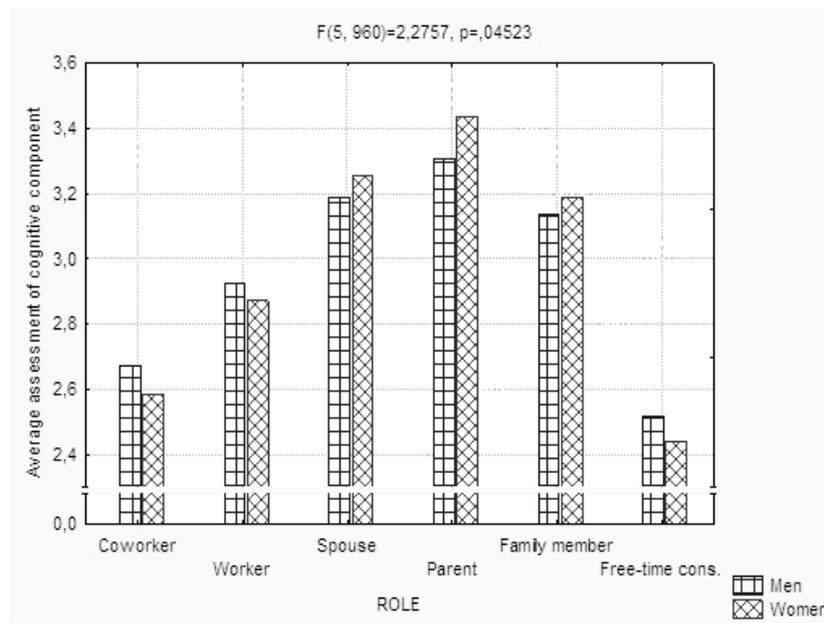
As for the perception of the two types of family-to-work conflict, it seems that there is no difference between men and women (Table 3; Figure 4). However, respondents estimate that their family has a greater influence on their role as a worker than as a co-worker [ $F(1/192)=5,46; p=.021$ ]. Presenting ourselves as valuable workers can be difficult when a problem occurs in our family, which we constantly have in mind and which distracts us. As for the relations with co-workers, we do not have to work on these if we do not feel like it that day, of course, if it is not required by the job. The relations with co-workers are much more flexible and easier to "avoid" than our job activities. On the other hand, our co-workers can be a source of social support in which case our family issues may actually encourage entering into a relationship with them.

#### *The relationship between the salience and conflicts of work and family roles*

Considering the aim of the research, the relationships between the salience and conflicts of different types of roles, separately for men and women, were examined. Correlation analysis obtained several significant but low Pearson correlation coefficients (presented in Table 4). In women, the experience of disruption of marital relations due to the work role was correlated with lower levels of affective involvement in leisure activities, and disruption of parenting due to work was correlated with a lower level of affective



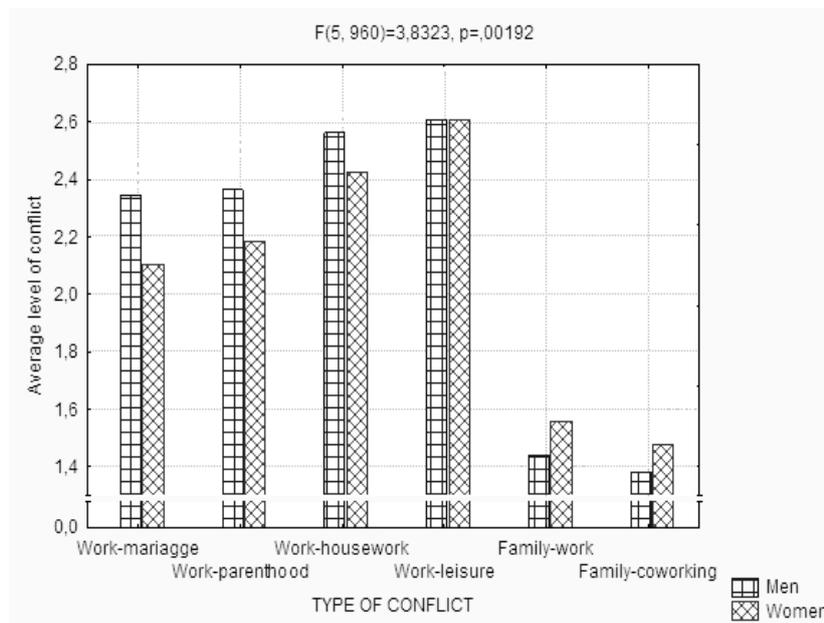
**Figure 2** The degree of the affective component of salience of different roles (co-worker, worker, spouse, parent, family member, and free-time consumer) in men and women



**Figure 3** The degree of the cognitive component of salience of different roles (co-worker, worker, spouse, parent, family member, and leisurite) in men and women

and behavioural involvement in the same activities. It is not possible to make any exact conclusion of causal relations between the variables on the basis of correlations, but we can offer some assumptions about these. Perhaps the overload with work roles brings difficulties in fulfilling marital and parental roles, which women give high salience to. This leads to a lower possibility of engaging in leisure activities, which later on become less important to women. Another assumption is that women who find leisure activities less important take in more responsibilities at their

job and at home. Additional analyses provide some support for the statements above. The affective and behavioural components of the salience of leisure are in a negative, although insignificant, correlation with the behavioural component of work role salience for women in this study ( $r=-.12$ ;  $p>.05$ ), and all the components of leisure role salience are in a negative and significant correlation with their age (correlation coefficients around  $-.25$ ;  $p<.05$ ). In men, the experiences of disruption of marital and family relationships because of work were associated with lower



**Figure 4** Average levels of work-family conflict (work-marriage, work-parenting, work-housework, and work-leisure) and family-work (family-work and family-relationships with co-workers) in men and women

**Table 4** Correlations between 3 components (behavioural, affective, and cognitive) of salience of examined roles (co-worker, spouse, parent, family member, and leisurite) and different types of work-family conflict (work-marriage, work-parenting, work-housework, work-leisure, family-work, and family-co-worker relationships) in men and women

	Women						Men					
	Work-marriage	Work-parenting	Work-housew.	Work-leisure	Family-work	Family-co-worker	Work-marriage	Work-parenting	Work-housew.	Work-leisure	Family-work	Family-co-worker
Co-worker	-0.01	-0.08	-0.10	-0.10	-0.08	0.05	-0.06	-0.05	-0.06	-0.09	-0.13	-0.08
Worker	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.08	-0.03	0.05	-0.07	-0.06	-0.05	-0.06	0.04	0.03
Spouse	-0.09	-0.15	-0.11	0.01	0.08	-0.06	-0.15	-0.13	-0.09	0.01	-0.10	0.04
Parent	-0.07	-0.07	-0.07	0.03	0.04	-0.02	<b>-0.28*</b>	<b>-0.22*</b>	-0.17	-0.02	-0.06	0.02
Family member	-0.08	-0.09	-0.13	-0.11	0.10	0.04	-0.12	-0.09	-0.08	0.04	-0.03	0.12
Leisurite	-0.18	<b>-0.22*</b>	-0.16	-0.14	-0.00	0.08	-0.15	-0.08	-0.08	-0.15	0.03	0.06
Co-worker	-0.05	-0.16	-0.11	-0.04	-0.14	-0.07	-0.03	-0.02	-0.01	0.04	-0.10	-0.17
Worker	-0.03	0.00	0.07	0.15	-0.02	0.02	0.02	0.08	0.10	0.04	0.07	0.07
Spouse	-0.15	-0.17	-0.08	0.00	-0.12	-0.12	-0.01	-0.05	0.07	0.13	-0.16	-0.01
Parent	-0.15	-0.11	-0.06	0.05	-0.06	-0.02	0.01	-0.11	-0.01	0.06	-0.01	-0.01
Family member	-0.06	-0.02	-0.07	-0.00	0.06	0.	0.08	-0.04	-0.00	0.03	-0.06	-0.07
Leisurite	<b>-0.23*</b>	<b>-0.27*</b>	-0.12	-0.05	-0.08	-0.18	0.15	0.16	0.18	<b>0.20*</b>	0.09	0.05
Co-worker	0.02	-0.11	0.00	-0.10	0.10	-0.06	0.01	0.00	-0.07	-0.07	<b>0.23*</b>	0.05
Worker	0.15	0.09	0.13	0.02	<b>0.26*</b>	0.16	-0.06	0.02	-0.03	-0.05	<b>0.20*</b>	0.10
Spouse	-0.01	-0.08	-0.05	-0.01	-0.04	-0.04	-0.05	-0.04	-0.13	-0.06	0.06	0.06
Parent	-0.03	-0.07	0.02	0.09	-0.06	-0.02	-0.07	-0.12	-0.14	-0.11	0.06	0.05
Family member	-0.01	-0.03	0.02	0.03	-0.01	-0.06	0.00	-0.11	-0.12	-0.06	0.11	0.09
Leisurite	-0.08	-0.18	-0.08	-0.13	0.10	-0.09	0.07	0.06	-0.01	0.06	0.17	0.12

Note: Correlations of the three components of salience of the co-worker role and family-co-working conflict with other variables have  $df=95$ . since some respondents have no co-workers. Other degrees of freedom are 101. \* $p<0.05$

levels of behavioural involvement in the parental role. It could be that a man's lower engagement in the parental role causes problems in marital and family relationships additionally when he is preoccupied with his job.

Further on, the disruption of work because of family was associated with a greater cognitive involvement in the role of a worker for both men and women, and in the role of a co-worker for men. This is in accordance with the final assumption of this study, although the assumption was only made for men. The assumption was not confirmed when it comes to the other roles examined. It could be said that the more we expect to achieve different values in the work role, the more we find the disruption of our work role due to family issues difficult. The affective component of role salience was expected to be correlated with the perception of disruption of the role among women, but the only correlation confirming such an assumption was obtained among men. Greater experience of work disrupting leisure activities was associated with greater affective involvement in the role of a leisurite. It is probably more rational to assume that greater emotional commitment of men to enjoying time for themselves makes the disability to enjoy that time because of work more difficult, but then again, maybe their high workload makes them appreciate quality free-time more. It seems crucial to note here that affective leisure role salience in men is only correlated to the salience of the role of a co-worker, while in women it is also correlated to the roles connected to family life. This could mean that women include their family members in the activities they find as leisure, while men view leisure activities as those they spend with their colleagues and people besides their family members.

Other correlations between role conflict and role salience were not significant.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that taking into account different roles included in the work and family life, the different dimensions of salience (importance) of those roles, and the connection of their importance with the perception of interrole disruption (conflict) separately for men and women is meaningful, not only in research, but also in everyday life.

Unfortunately, such as most research, this one has its certain shortcomings. One of them is also one of the most common problems associated with the use of questionnaires. The subjects were given questionnaires, or self-assessment scales, which they were able to fill out wherever and whenever they wanted, resulting in unequal conditions of measurement and socially desirable responding. In addition, perhaps even more important, it was not possible to equalise the respondents with respect to the features of their work tasks and their working hours. Since these factors, as shown by previous studies, significantly contribute to the

explanation of conflicts from one domain/role to the other, the limitations of the generalisation of the results obtained in this study should be noted.

As already suggested, future research should explore some of the variables that could determine the relationship between role salience and the conflict between different roles. Moreover, future research measuring role salience and different role conflicts should take into account the age of respondents because the salience of a role changes as people age (45), making the change in experiences of various role conflicts also possible. Although we had the information on respondents' age, we did not find the number of respondents sufficient, unfortunately, to divide them in age categories and conduct valid comparisons while taking gender into account simultaneously. In addition, it would be interesting to explore the conflicts between the roles that belong to the same domain, for example, parent-marriage or parent-leisure. It would also be interesting to seek potential causal relations between role salience and conflict by performing longitudinal research.

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### **Salijentnost i konflikt radnih i obiteljskih uloga među zaposlenim muškarcima i ženama**

Psiholozi su rano shvatili da radna i obiteljska uloga zauzimaju važno mjesto u životu pojedinca, no većina istraživanja nije uzimala u obzir činjenicu da se svaka od njih sastoji od niza specifičnijih uloga koje ne moraju biti jednake važnosti. Štoviše, nije se uzimalo u obzir da ne moraju svi aspekti radne domene jednako interferirati sa svim aspektima obiteljske domene ili obratno. U skladu s tim, i dosad provedena istraživanja pod obiteljskom su domenom podrazumijevala sve što nije spadalo u radnu, na primjer bavljenje hobiem ne spada ni u radnu ni u obiteljsku domenu. Stoga je cilj ovog istraživanja, u kojem su korištene skale samoprocjene, bio utvrditi salijentnost različitih uloga te ispitati povezanost salijentnosti tih uloga i interferencije različitih uloga kod zaposlenih žena i muškaraca. U istraživanju je sudjelovalo 206 ispitanika, odnosno 103 zaposlena bračna para iz različitih područja Republike Hrvatske. Rezultati su pokazali da ispitanici najsalijentnijima smatraju uloge usko vezane uz obitelj. Ipak, muškarci najviše vremena i energije ulažu u ulogu radnika. Žene više vremena i energije poklanjaju ulozi bračnog partnera, roditelja i člana obitelji, a muškarci ulozi korisnika slobodnog vremena. Ispitanici najvećim procjenjuju konflikt posao - slobodno vrijeme, a spolne su se razlike očitovale samo kod doživljaja ometanja bračnih odnosa zbog posla: muškarci su se izjasnili o većem ometanju nego žene. Ovo istraživanje ponudilo je dokaze o samo niskoj povezanosti salijentnosti nekih uloga s različitim vrstama interferencije između radne i obiteljske domene.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: *bračni partner; kolega; roditelj; slobodno vrijeme; spol*