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## SOME DETERMINANTS OF THE PERCEPTION OF WORK–FAMILY CONFLICT: A DYADIC APPROACH

The general aim of this study was to examine the contribution of perceived social support from family, the quality of family functioning, attitudes about marital roles, and striving for achievement to the perceived conflict between work and family roles by using a dyadic approach. Namely, the interaction of spouses' perceptions was taken into account (actor and partner effects) in predicting work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts. This study was conducted on a sample of 176 employed married couples in the territory of central and western Herzegovina and central Dalmatia. Self-assessment questionnaires were used. In women, social support from family was a significant predictor for both examined types of work–family conflicts, and partner effects were greater than actor effects, especially for family-to-work conflict. Both partners' striving for achievement was a positive predictor of family-to-work conflict in women, while there was only a contribution of the actor striving for achievement to both types of work–family conflict in men. In men, the only partner effect was obtained in the relationship between social support from family and family-to-work conflict. In general, the results indicated that the assessments of male spouses were more related to their wife's work–family conflict than vice versa, and that these variables were more related to family-to-work conflict than to work-to-family conflict.

**Keywords:** work–family conflict, gender role attitudes, striving for achievement, social support, quality of family functioning

The relationship of work and family roles has been in the center of interest of a large number of researchers, especially because of the increasing number of dual-career families. The negative sphere of this relationship, that is, work–family conflict, is the most often studied construct in this context. Work–family conflict is usually defined as the experience that meeting the requirements of one role, makes it more difficult, or even impossible, to meet the requirements of the other role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77), due to an inability to meet the time demands of two roles, tensions or fatigue, and behaviours, required in one role, which are inefficient in the other. Most researches have shown that there should be a distinction made between conflict due to the disrupting influence of work on family life (*work-to-family conflict*), and conflict due to the disrupting influence of family on work life (*family-to-work conflict*) (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992).

A meta-analysis of work–family conflict antecedents by Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, and Baltes (2011) has shown that work and family stress and work/family role conflict, ambiguity, and overload, are positive predictors of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict, with a somewhat greater association among the characteristics of one domain with conflicts, due to the disrupting influence of the corresponding domain to the other domain, especially when it comes to work related stress. In the same study, social support from work and family was a negative predictor of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict, and it has been viewed as a protective factor (antecedent) that precedes stressful work and family characteristics (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Selvarajan, Cloninger, & Singh, 2013; Šimunić & Gregov, 2009). Related to this, a positive, stimulating family climate was considered to reduce the perceived level of work–family conflict, mainly through greater family cohesion and a supportive family network (family social support). In the meta-analysis of Michel et al. (2011) family climate (cohesiveness of the family) was a negative predictor of both family-to-work and work-to-family conflicts.

Features directly related to the individual such as personality traits, role salience, values, and attitudes about the division of labor among members of the family have been increasingly tested as work–family conflict antecedents (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Michel et al., 2011). Since attitudes about gender roles direct or predetermine the responsibilities that an individual will take, the level of preoccupation with work and family, and the level of expected social support, these attitudes have been viewed as important in predicting the perceived level of conflict. However, results regarding the direction of relation between the level of traditionalism/egalitarianism and the size of conflict are contradictory (Hatchman, 2009; Poelmans et al., 2006). This could probably be assigned to the differences in the achieved gender roles and the gender ideology of partners (Aminah, 1999; Greenstein, 1996). Sharing responsibilities in the family, or an individual willingness to share them with spouses, is very likely dependent on the level of traditionalism of the spouse, or the willingness of the partner to accept the division. It seems possible that a traditional gender ideology represents a sort of inflexibility and rigidity,

which is disadvantageous in the today's society oriented towards an increasing gender equality, especially in dual-earner families (Cohen, 2009).

In the research conducted in these areas, striving for achievement turned out to be an interesting variable when taking into account gender ideology and both marital partners (Šimunić, Gregov, & Proroković, 2011). Specifically, men generally had higher levels of striving for achievement than women. More traditional men and women had a higher striving for achievement the more traditional they were, and it was an important positive predictor of work-family conflicts, especially of work-to-family conflict in men. It should be noted that this concept differs from the concept of need for achievement, and is a shortened and adapted name for a general strive for achieving success through competition and power (Nikolić, Pavela, & Šimić, 2014; O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986). Some authors consider it as one of the characteristics of a Type A personality (Williams & Cooper, 1998), which have been linked to work-family conflict. At the same time striving for achievement is rarely examined in work-family research.

If it is taken into account that the intensity of conflict between work and family roles depends on the level of perceived support from partners (Adams, King, & King, 1996), and that the need for support is greater in women than in men (Perrewé & Carlson, 2002), the importance of both instrumental and emotional support is greater in egalitarian women and traditional men (Mickelson, Claffey, & Williams, 2006). Furthermore, if those with a higher level of striving for achievement have more negative attitudes on seeking support (Good, Robertson, Fitzgerald, Stevens, & Bartels, 1996), it is obvious that there are effects of partners on experiencing work-family conflict. It is believed that this effect is more pronounced in families of dual-earner partners, since the working partner is less available and less ready to provide support, which negatively reflects on the existence and intensity of the role conflict. A presence of partner effect implies the presence of an influence from the environment, because one's responses depend on the characteristics of his or her partner. The higher the level of dyadic interdependence is, the higher the partner effect.

In order to determine actor and partner contributions in the experience of work-family conflict, the interdependence and interaction of partners should be taken into account, viewing them as dyads. Kenny, Kashy, and Cook (2006) suggest using techniques such as pooled regression, multilevel modelling, and structural equation modelling, or actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) analyses. A number of studies on couples' work-family interface issues, and the crossover effects of work-family stress and personal traits of partners, published during the last decade, involve such an approach (e.g., Liu & Cheung, 2015a, 2015b; Matthews, Del Priore, Acitelli, & Barnes-Farrell, 2006). Figure 1 depicts two types of dyad member's variables, two antecedents ( $X_1, X_2$ ) and two criterion variables ( $Y_1, Y_2$ ). There are two possible actor effects (the 'a' symbol) and two partner effects (the 'p' symbol). If a person's own X affects his or her own Y, an actor effect is present. On the other hand, if a person's own X affects his or her partner's Y, a partner

effect is present. This model is based on the existence of significant correlations between independent variables of dyad members. The correlation between outcome variables represents a residual interdependence, and it is defined as a part of variance which is not explained by actor and partner effects. The APIM can be used to answer general research questions such as: 1) Is there a significant predictor – response variable relationship, for either or both dyad members? 2) Are there significant differences in the actor or partner effects between dyad members?

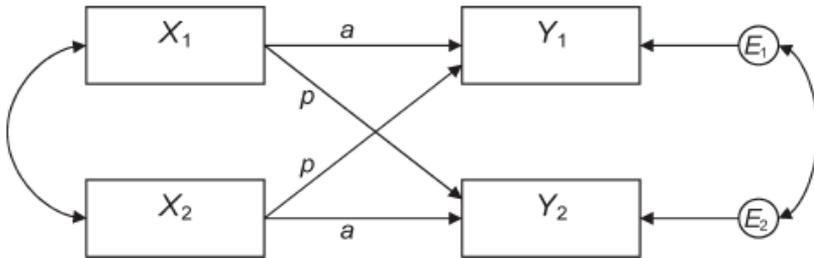


Figure 1. Actor-partner interdependence model (Source: Kenny et al., 2006).

The question in this research is whether the effect of partners is present in men and women, that is, whether men or women are sensitive to the influence of their partner in experiencing work-family conflict? The general aim of this study was to examine the contribution of the perceived social support from family, the quality of family functioning, gender role traditionalism, and striving for achievement to the perception of conflict between work and family roles by using a dyadic approach. It can be assumed that the spouses' perceptions of greater social support from family and quality of family functioning will be negative predictors, while striving for achievement and traditionality of their attitudes on marital roles will be positive predictors of work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts. Women traditionally take more care of the needs of the family, so it can be assumed that women are more sensitive to the characteristics of partners. Since Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina are transitional and developing countries the work-family relationship is still understudied.

## Method

### Sample and Procedure

This study was conducted on a sample of 176 employed married couples in Central and Western Herzegovina and Central and South Dalmatia. The main socio-demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1. The work-

places of the men and women included in this study were very heterogeneous. Table 1 also shows results of the differences between the men and women in this sample. These results have shown that men were older, had a lower level of education, and more overtime work hours than women, which should be taken into account in interpreting further results.

Table 1

*Some socio-demographic characteristics of the sample of employed marital couples (N = 352, N<sub>F</sub> = 176, N<sub>M</sub> = 176)*

		Men	Women	df	t/ $\chi^2$
Age		43.9	41	350	2.84**
Education level	Secondary	93 (52.8)	56 (31.6)	2	16.28**
	Vocational	22 (12.5)	33 (18.6)		
	Higher	61 (34.7)	88 (49.7)		
Overtime hours		6.90	3.58	146	4.62**

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

The questionnaires were distributed noting that it was desirable for the participants to be both married and employed full-time, and to have at least one child in the household. Questionnaires were distributed to spouses and returned in two separate sealed envelopes to guarantee greater anonymity of the respondents' responses and their sincerity. Spouses were asked to choose a common code which was used to identify them, and to fill in the questionnaires separately, with no insight in the other spouse's responses.

## Instruments

**Work-family conflict scale (Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996; Šimunić, Proroković, & Ivanov, 2014).** A scale was originally constructed by Netemeyer et al. (1996) and translated, modified, and adapted by Šimunić et al. (2014) on a larger sample of Croatian subjects. It is used for measuring levels of the disrupting effects of work on family life (work-to-family conflict), and family on work life (family-to-work conflict), taking into consideration time and strain as the causes of conflict. The scale has 12 items or two sets of 6 items which differ only in the direction of influence (work-to-family or family-to-work conflict). Subjects express their agreement with each item on a 7-point scale. Exemplary items are the following: "The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities." for the work-to-family conflict subscale, and "I have to put off doing things at work because of demands on my time at home." for the family-to-work conflict scale. The reliability (Cronbach alpha coefficient) of the

first subscale is .82, while it is .76 for the second subscale. A higher result refers to a greater perception of disrupting influences of one domain on the other.

**Scale of social support from the family (Šimunić, 2008).** The scale was constructed for the measurement of perceived levels of instrumental and emotional social support for work and family matters given by family members. The scale has 9 items and the subjects express their agreement with each item on a 7-point scale. Since men were also included in this research (only women participated in the research of Šimunić year 2008) exploratory factor analyses using the common factors extraction method (communality estimated as  $R^2$ ) with the Kaiser-Guttman criterion of factor extraction were conducted. After casting out one item due to its low saturation with the one factor obtained in this study, the factor explained 36.8% of the common variance. The reliability of this scale is .81. Examples of items in this scale are: "My family recognizes when I do a good job." and "It is not easy to talk with my family members.". A higher result on this scale reflects a greater perception of social support from the family.

**Quality of Family Functioning Questionnaire (Šimunić, Gregov, & Pupić-Bakrač, 2010).** A translation, modification, and adaptation of a questionnaire constructed by Beavers and Hampson (1990) (Self-Report Family Inventory – II) was used in this study. This scale is used to measure the perception of the quality of interactions between family members and the quality of family functioning in general. The scale has 35 items which measure perceptions of the quality of family functioning in five areas: Health/Competency, Conflict, Cohesion, Leadership, and Expressiveness, and it is established on Beavers' structural model of family functioning. Responses are given on a 7-point scale. A score taking all items (from all subscales) into account can be used to measure general quality of family functioning and it was used in this study. Factor analysis (principle factors with communality estimated as  $R^2$  extraction method) by restricting the maximal number of factors to 1, resulted in a factor explaining 39.3% of the variance of the responses on 28 items (7 items were excluded due to factor saturations lower than .30). Exemplary items are: "I feel loved in my home." and "My family mostly functions well while we are together.". The reliability of the scale is .90. A higher result on the scale reflects a higher level of the perceived family functioning quality.

**Striving for Achievement Scale (Nikolić et al., 2014).** This is a translated and adapted version of a subscale of the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS) – "Success, Power, Competitiveness", developed by O'Neil et al. (1986). This scale consists of 11 items, with a 6-point response scale and has three components. Success is defined as an ongoing concern about personal achievements, benefits, competence, failure to progress, and success in one's career. Power is described as an orientation to maintain authority, domination, and influence over others. Competitiveness is defined as a competition with others in order to get something or compare ourselves with others in order to establish superiority in a particular situation. The one factor obtained in the research of Nikolić et al. (2014) was interpreted as Striving for Achievement, defined as an individual's orientation toward

achieving standards of excellence, and surpassing the earlier level of competence through power and competition. Item examples are: "Moving up the career ladder is important to me." and "Being smarter and stronger than other men/women is important to me.". The internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach alpha) of the scale was relatively high (.86). A higher score on the scale reflects a higher level of striving for achievement.

**Scale of attitudes toward marital roles (Jacobson, 1950).** This scale measures attitudes toward marital roles in the context of traditionalism/egalitarian marital roles. The original scale has 18 items. The scale used in this study has 17 items, due to a low factor saturation of one item. The remaining 17 items use a 5-point response scale. Exploratory factor analysis (principal factors extraction method with communality estimated as  $R^2$ ) with the Kaiser-Guttman criterion of factor extraction (latent root > 1) showed a one-factor structure, explaining 41.1% of the common variance. The obtained Cronbach alpha coefficient was .91. Examples of items are: "The husband should help with the housework." and "It's okay for the wife to earn as much as her husband.". A higher score on the scale reflects a more traditional attitude toward marital roles.

## Results

In the context of the research objective, the association between marital partners in the studied variables was examined in order to determine the interdependence of partners, which was a prerequisite for conducting analysis on dyadic data. Therefore, correlations were calculated on independent samples/couples as distinguishable dyads. The results are shown in Table 2. Significant correlations between all partner assessments of the corresponding variables were found. Results of *t*-tests on dependent samples showed that husbands were more traditional in their attitudes on marital roles, and that they had a higher level of striving for achievement than their wives. No differences were found regarding the other assessments.

Actor-partner interdependence models for each predictor, and work-to-family and family-to-work conflict of both spouses (distinguishable dyad), as criteria, were estimated by conducting path analyses in the program Mplus 6.12 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2011) with the Maximum likelihood method of parameter estimation. To justify the performance of such analysis, the absence of extreme multivariate combinations of results on these variables was determined by calculating Mahalanobis's distances for each subject, while the linearity of the relationship between variables was determined by inspecting scatterplots. To demonstrate more clearly what types of models were tested, a display of examples of these APIM models for striving for achievement as a predictor was given in Figure 2. The same was tested for the couple's assessments of their attitude on marital roles, social support from the family, and quality of family functioning.

The standardized regression path coefficients of the saturated models (all paths estimated freely, no degrees of freedom) obtained in this research are shown in Table 3. When controlling for actor–partner interdependence, that is, for the correlations between spouses in the predictor variable, the results show that higher work-to-family conflict in men was related only to their own higher levels of striving for achievement. Higher work-to-family conflict in women was related to their own perceptions of lower social support by the family, and also to their husband's greater marital role attitude traditionalism and his perception of lower levels of family functioning. When it comes to the prediction of family-to-work conflict in men, the results show that it was related to higher levels of their own marital role attitude traditionalism, striving for achievement, their own perception of lower levels of the quality of family functioning, and their wife's perceptions of less social support from the family. Family-to-work conflict in women was primarily related to their own perception of lower levels of social support by the family, greater striving for achievement of both of the partners, a more traditional attitude of their husband, his perception of lower quality of family functioning, and, interestingly, with his perception of a higher level of social support in the family.

To determine whether there were significant differences in the actor or partner effects between dyad members, the estimated saturated APIMs ( $\chi^2 = 0$ ,  $df = 0$ ) were compared to nested models in which all four regression paths ( $b_{ACTOR;Wife} = b_{ACTOR;Husband} = b_{PARTNER;Wife} = b_{PARTNER;Husband}$ ) were constrained to equality. In specific cases, the constrained models were compared to the models where particular constraints were released. Comparisons were made by performing chi-square difference tests.

With the attitude on marital roles of spouses as predictors of family-to-work conflict, the results of chi-square difference testing ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 7.96$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .047$ ) indicated that it was a poor fit to the data. No modification indices were proposed by the program. Hence, different constraints were set suggesting: 1) the equality of the actor and the partner effects, 2) the equality of both actor effects vs. equality of both partner effects, and 3) the equality of the male spouse effects on both criteria vs. the equality of the female spouse effects on both criteria. Only the third solution did not statistically differ from the saturated model ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 0.76$ ;  $\Delta df = 2$ ;  $p = .685$ ), and it was of significantly better fit than the constrained model ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 7.21$ ;  $\Delta df = 1$ ;  $p = .007$ ), indicating that the male and female variable contributions differed mutually. The contribution of the marital role attitude of the husband to family-to-work conflict was greater than the contribution of the wife for both spouses. When it came to work-to-family conflict of spouses as the criteria, the constrained model showed good fit to the data ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 4.52$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .211$ ), but even better fit was shown when freeing the path between the husband's traditionality and the wife's work-to-family conflict (compared to the saturated model:  $\Delta\chi^2 = 0.29$ ,  $\Delta df = 2$ ,  $p = .866$ ; compared to the constrained model:  $\Delta\chi^2 = 4.23$ ,  $\Delta df = 1$ ,  $p = .039$ ). Thus, the predictive value of the partner attitude on marital roles for

family-to-work conflict in women was significantly greater than all other contributions in this model.

With striving for achievement of spouses as predictors of family-to-work conflict, the constrained model ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 1.72$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .63$ ) showed good fit to the data, and no other type of path constraining/freeing showed significant enhancement of model fit. Regarding work-to-family conflict as the criteria, the constrained model ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 5.40$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .145$ ) also showed good fit to the data. To see whether the path coefficient of regression of husband striving for achievement on his work-to-family conflict was significantly higher than others, this path was freed, but the model did not show significantly better fit than the constrained model ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 3.44$ ,  $\Delta df = 1$ ,  $p = .064$ ). These results suggested that the actor and partner effects on men and women work-family conflict variables did not differ.

When considering the spouses' perceived quality of family functioning as predictors of family-to-work conflict, the constrained model showed poor fit to the data ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 14.54$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .002$ ). Only setting the equality of the actor and partner effects of each spouse (but differing from one another) showed good model fit ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 1.96$ ,  $\Delta df = 2$ ,  $p = .376$ ), indicating a greater contribution of the husband's perception than of the wife's perception of family functioning quality to family-to-work conflict. With work-to-family conflict as the criteria, the constrained model showed an adequate and sufficient fit to the data ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 3.42$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .332$ ), meaning that the estimated actor and partner contributions did not differ in this case.

With the spouses' assessments of social support from the family as predictors of work-to-family conflict, the constrained model showed poor fit to the data ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 31.34$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .000$ ). Modification indices suggested freeing the path between women's assessments of social support and work-to-family conflict, resulting in good model fit ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 3.71$ ,  $\Delta df = 2$ ,  $p = .157$ ). This indicated that the path coefficient was significantly greater than all the others estimated by the model. On the other hand, with regard to family-to-work conflict as the criteria, the constrained model ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 71.11$ ,  $\Delta df = 3$ ,  $p = .000$ ), as well as all other types of constraining/freeing paths in the model, showed poor fit to the data, indicating that all the coefficients differed significantly. The actor contribution (effect) in women was greater than the one in men, the actor contribution was greater and of different direction than the partner contribution in women. The partner contributions were of different direction when comparing men and women, while the partner contribution was greater than the actor contribution in men. The contribution of the wives' perceptions of social support from family to their own family-to-work conflict was of the greatest predictive value.

Table 2

*Descriptive statistics, results of t-tests on dependent samples, and Pearson correlation coefficients for determining the differences and intercorrelations of the examined variables on the samples of spouses ( $N_{\text{couples}} = 176$ ;  $r = .15$ ,  $p = .05$ ;  $r = .19$ ,  $p = .01$ )*

	M	SD	t	p	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Work-to-family conflict – W	21.1	7.70			1	<b>.25</b>	<b>-.39</b>	.03	-.05	-.14	.12	.08	<b>-.18</b>	.08	<b>.15</b>	<b>-.16</b>
2. Family-to-work conflict – W	10.5	5.52			1	<b>-.50</b>	<b>.26</b>	.12	<b>-.45</b>	.10	<b>.36</b>	<b>-.29</b>	<b>.25</b>	<b>.18</b>	<b>-.32</b>	
3. Social support by family – W	51.7	8.35			1		<b>-.14</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>.62</b>	<b>-.13</b>	<b>-.25</b>	<b>.39</b>	<b>-.25</b>	<b>-.29</b>	<b>.45</b>	
4. Striving for achievement – W	28.3	7.64			1		<b>.33</b>	<b>-.30</b>	<b>.02</b>	<b>.19</b>	<b>-.14</b>	<b>.43</b>	<b>.17</b>	<b>-.24</b>		
5. Attitudes toward marital roles – W	30.9	9.18			1		<b>-.14</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.45</b>	<b>-.07</b>			
6. Family functioning quality – W	162.8	24.6			1			<b>-.00</b>	<b>-.21</b>	<b>.32</b>	<b>-.40</b>	<b>-.36</b>	<b>.59</b>			
7. Work-to-family conflict – M	21.5	8.41	-0.39	.699					<b>.34</b>	<b>-.27</b>	<b>.19</b>	.03	<b>-.10</b>			
8. Family-to-work conflict – M	9.8	4.97	1.44	.152						<b>1</b>	<b>-.35</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.16</b>	<b>-.24</b>		
9. Social support by family – M	52.4	8.81	-0.97	.333							<b>1</b>	<b>-.29</b>	<b>-.34</b>	<b>.61</b>		
10. Striving for achievement – M	31.1	8.74	-4.26	.000								<b>1</b>	<b>.39</b>	<b>-.52</b>		
11. Attitudes toward marital roles – M	37.9	12.8	-7.77	.000									<b>1</b>	<b>-.50</b>		
12. Family functioning quality – M	164.6	24.15	-1.15	.252										<b>1</b>		

*Note.* W = assessments of women; M = assessments of men. Correlations in bold  $p < .05$ .

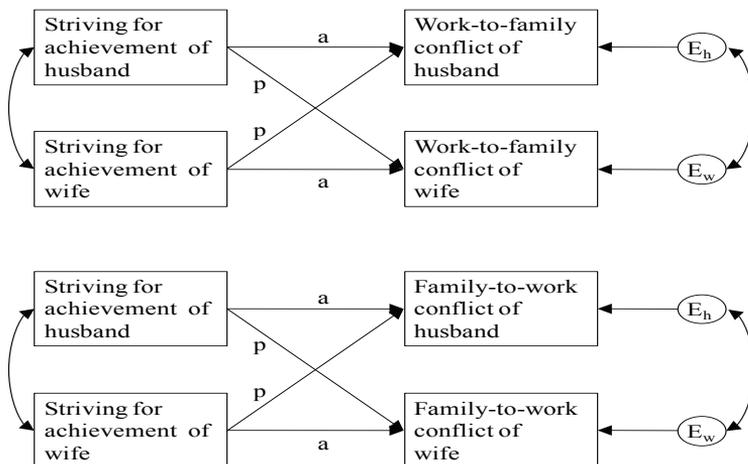


Figure 2. Representation of APIM models testing striving for achievement of spouses as predictors of 1) work-to-family conflict and 2) family-to-work conflict.

Table 3

Freely estimated standardized regression (beta) coefficients obtained in 8 path analyses for 4 different predictor variables with 1) work-to-family conflict in men and women and 2) family-to-work conflict in men and women as the criteria, and the dyad as the unit of analysis ( $N_{couples} = 176$ ).

Predictor	Effect	Work-to-family conflict		Family-to-work conflict	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
Traditionalism of attitude on marital roles	actor	.03	-.05	.16*	.04
	partner	-.03	.15*	-.02	.18*
Striving for achievement	actor	.23**	-.00	.23**	.19*
	partner	-.08	.08	.09	.16*
Quality of family functioning	actor	-.09	-.05	-.23**	-.08
	partner	-.01	-.15*	-.06	-.31**
Social support by family	actor	-.06	-.40**	.07	-.50**
	partner	-.13	.02	-.25**	.31**

\*\*  $p < .01$ . \*  $p < .05$ .

## Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine the contribution of the perceptions of social support from family, the quality of family functioning, striving for achievement, and the attitudes on gender roles to the perception of conflict between work and family roles by using a dyadic approach. Namely, the interaction of the spouses' perceptions was taken into account (actor and partner effects). This specific type of interaction (APIM) was estimated by using path analysis, simultaneously taking into consideration data from both members of the dyad, and the correlations between them. Analyzing data on a dyadic level made it possible to estimate the contribution of one's spouse's perceptions on his or her experience of work–family conflict. The interdependence of partners existed among all the examined variables. When it came to the assessments of the social support in the family and the quality of family functioning, this correlation was understandable, since the partners were examining a common environment. The positive correlation between spouses' individual characteristics could be assigned to the so-called compositional effect (Kenny et al., 2006), meaning that the dyad members were similar before joining the dyad (dating, marriage), but the effect of the partner and mutual influence (influence of the characteristics and behaviour of the partners, or direct persuasion) were also possible.

It was expected that higher levels of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict would be associated with higher levels of striving for achievement and traditionalism of attitudes on marital roles along with lower levels of family social support and the quality of family functioning. The direction of the obtained significant relations was in accordance with the expectations, except for family-to-work conflict in women being related to their partner's perception of greater social support in the family. However, not all the examined relations were significant when looking at both actor and partner assessments in men and women and the two types of work–family conflict.

The disrupting influence of work on family life in men was only related to their higher level of striving for achievement. Thus, the more they strived for achieving success through power and competition, the more important their work was to them. Therefore, men probably let their work disrupt their family life more. Gender role attitudes, quality of family functioning, and social support in the family were characteristics more related to the functioning in the family, and therefore might not be such systematic factors in experiencing work-to-family conflict. The experience of the disrupting influence of work on family roles in women was related to their own perception of lower social support by family and their spouse's higher level of traditionalism and perception of lower quality of family functioning. It could be assumed that women were the main nurturers, and that they were more occupied with the family obligations, which was shown in the recent research on couples in these areas (Bartolac, Kamenov, & Petrak, 2011; Dobrotić & Pečnik, 2013; Kokorić, Šimunić, & Gregov, 2014). Related to this, when

they could not rely on help from other members of the family, they had more obligations when coming home from work or even during their work-time. The fact that the men in this sample were more preoccupied with work at least through more working hours, could indicate a higher need for social support and more expectations to be preoccupied with the family in women. The significant relation of their husband's perceptions of the quality of family functioning did not actually differ significantly from other relations in the model (which were insignificant). This could be due to the more traditional male partners who were unsatisfied with the fact that their wives work, and who expected more from their wives at home (Amato & Booth, 1995). All together, this could have caused a greater sense of a disrupting influence on family life by additional work tasks. Since the relations examined here could go the other way around, it seemed plausible that the disruption of the wives' work in the family could cause men viewing less cohesiveness and harmony, and bringing more conflicts in the family.

Greater traditionalism of attitudes on marital roles of the men, and their perception of lower quality of family functioning was associated with higher levels of family-to-work conflict in both men and women. Striving for achievement, associated with more traditional attitudes, assumes an increased investment in work, which decreases the time and availability for the needs of the family. In situations where family conditions prevent further investment in work, striving for achievement may increase family-to-work conflict. The negative influence of family conditions is reflected by the effect of the partner's perception of family functioning in women. It could be said that if a man perceives poor communication and collaboration in the family, he is himself unwilling to participate in the family activities, which might further decrease the quality of family functioning, and increase a woman's experience of a negative impact of the family on her work domain. Since mediation has not been tested here, this could be a suggestion for further research. In addition, a woman's perception of social support is positively associated with her husband's perception of the quality of family functioning, which could mean that a lower perception of the quality of family functioning in men presupposes lower social support from the partner. This is in accordance with the women's perception of family support as a significant negative predictor of family-to-work conflict in both men and women. The result showing that family-to-work conflict in women is associated to their husband's perception of more social support in the family could be a logical result, since it might show that when a man perceives more support in the family the supporter is mainly his wife. It means that she might be the one who, for example, takes days off from work when the children are sick, or when her husband is on a business trip, which is also in accordance with traditional gender role expectations, and which directly implies the disturbance of family issues on work performance and efficiency.

The results of this study further confirm findings by Mickelson et al. (2006) and Perrewé and Carlson (2002) that women, who are more egalitarian, are more sensitive to support from family, or that support is more important to them than

it is to men in coping with stress. The results also indicate higher individuality in men, and more sensitivity and adjustability of women to the expectations and needs of their partners (Greenglass, 2002; Ho, Chen, Cheung, Liu, & Worthington, 2013; Westman & Etzion, 2005). This difference is explained by different expectations of men and women with regard to their gender role. Since women are more involved in meeting the needs of the family members, it is possible that they are thus more exposed to events that affect their family members. Therefore, it is likely that they need more support in situations when they do not manage to synchronize family and work tasks.

In conclusion it could be generally said that the results show that strivings for achievement, attitudes on marital roles, social support and quality of functioning in the family of the male spouses are more related to their wife's work-family conflict than vice versa, and that these variables have more relations to family-to-work conflict than to work-to-family conflict. Relatively high levels of perceived family support and the quality of family functioning, as well as a significant negative correlation between family support and family functioning with family-to-work conflict indicate generally a low level of the family stress, which could be a reason for such a low perceived level of work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts obtained in this research. Hence, future research should be conducted on families with more pronounced the work-family conflict issues. In addition, work stress has not been included in this study, and the type and intensity of stress could have different effects on the conflict between work and family roles, depending on gender ideology and striving for achievement. The men in this research, for example, have had more working hours than women, which could indicate a higher level of work stress. Also, work schedules of the couples have neither been taken into account. Not controlling for such factors is a possible drawback of this research. On the other hand, controlling such factors may be too artificial because it would probably be very hard to find a large sample of employed spouses and parents with equivalent work conditions.

Finally, this research involves cross-sectional and non-experimental (survey) data, which does allow causal interpretation of the observed relationships between the variables. Therefore, the use of the terms 'partner and actor effects' in these models is only improvisatory, and they should not be interpreted as effects per se. More objective assessments would be beneficial as well, for example, partners could assess each other's personal traits. It is necessary to have further research that involves larger and more representative samples of couples by using methodology, which would allow more reliable conclusions regarding the types of effects. The application of dyadic approach in this study has important implications for practitioners (clinical psychologists, HR managers) interested in promoting work-family balance as means to achieving other outcomes, such as greater employee commitment, as well as enhancing satisfaction with work and family, and decreasing burnout. The results of this study serve as a guide for practitioners to focus on employees' or couples' well-being either in organizational or clinical contexts.

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## NEKE ODREDNICE KONFLIKTA RADNE I OBITELJSKE ULOGE: DIJADNI PRISTUP

Opći cilj ovog istraživanja bio je ispitati doprinos percepcije socijalne podrške od obitelji, kvalitete obiteljskog funkcioniranja, tradicionalnosti stava o bračnim ulogama i težnje k postignuću na percepciju konflikta između radnih i obiteljskih uloga, koristeći dijadni pristup. Naime, interakcija percepcije supružnika je uzeta u obzir (akter i partner efekti). Istraživanje je provedeno na uzorku od 176 zaposlenih bračnih parova u područjima središnje i zapadne Hercegovine i srednje Dalmacije. Korištene su skale samoprocjene. Path analiza odnosno analiza traga je korištena za ispitivanje interakcija između supružnika, ili akter i partnerskih doprinosa percepciji 1) konflikta zbog ometajućeg utjecaja rada na obitelj i 2) konflikta zbog ometajućeg utjecaja obitelji na rad. Tradicionalnost stava partnera o bračnim ulogama se pokazao kao značajan prediktor konflikata radne i obiteljske uloge kod žena. Što su tradicionalniji stavovi njenog partnera, viša je razina konflikata. Niža razina percipirane kvalitete obiteljskog funkcioniranja od strane muškaraca je bila povezana s većim procjenama konflikata radne i obiteljske uloge kod njihovih žena. Vlastita težnja k postignuću je bila prediktor obje vrste radno–obiteljskog konflikta kod muškaraca, dok je kod žena težnja k postignuću oba partnera bila povezana s konfliktom zbog ometajućeg utjecaja obitelji na rad. Vlastita procjena manje socijalne podrške od obitelji kod žena se istaknula kao prediktor većim procjenama obje vrste konflikta, a procjena supruga o pak većoj podršci od obitelji je bila u pozitivnoj povezanosti s njenom većom procjenom konflikta zbog ometajućeg utjecaja obitelji na rad. Općenito, značajni prediktori aktera uglavnom su se odnosili na muškarce, a značajni prediktori partnera su se uglavnom odnosili na žene, dok su ispitivane varijable ujedno više povezane s konfliktom zbog ometajućeg utjecaja obitelji na rad.

**Ključne riječi:** konflikt radne i obiteljske uloge, stavovi o rodnim ulogama, težnja k postignuću, socijalna podrška, kvaliteta obiteljskog funkcioniranja