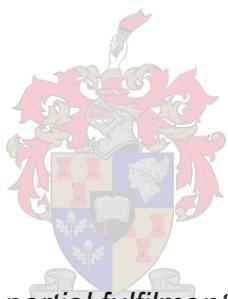


**THE ROLE OF PERSONALISTIC VARIABLES IN THE EXPERIENCE  
OF WORK-LIFE INTERACTION AND ITS EFFECT ON EMPLOYEE  
WORK ENGAGEMENT**

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degree of Master of Commerce (Industrial Psychology) at the  
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## DECLARATION

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## **ABSTRACT**

Employee engagement has become imperative for the long term sustainability and performance of organisations. In the current study, work-life interaction was hypothesized to have a direct effect on employee work engagement.

Work-life balance, as a facet of work-life interaction, was defined in this study as having enough time to fulfil activities in both work and family contexts; maintaining a sense of equilibrium or harmony in life, having equal or balanced involvement, effort and time spent on various roles; as well as a balance between demands and resources in a person's life, achieving a state of satisfaction in both employment and personal roles (De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott & Pettit, 2005; Hudson, 2005). Work-life balance has positive consequences for the employee in the form of higher levels of satisfaction and commitment, and improved personal health and wellbeing. For the organisation it is associated with improved recruitment and retention, improved employee productivity and performance, improved organisational performance and profitability, and increased work engagement.

In the current study the overarching concept of work-life interaction was utilised to guide the empirical research. The study was motivated by the intention to clarify the antecedents of work-life interaction in a particular work environment in order to inform efforts aimed at promoting positive work-life interaction. Personalistic traits were anticipated to influence the relationship between organisational variables and work-life interaction. A literature review has led to a theoretical model to be utilised in investigating the determinants of work-life interaction and whether the nature of work-life interaction enhances employee work engagement. The aim of the study was to determine whether a negative relationship exists between role conflict, work demands and work-life interaction and a positive relationship exists between work-family culture and work-life interaction. The research further aimed to establish whether specific personalistic variables such as conscientiousness, neuroticism, agreeableness, negative affectivity, positive affectivity and emotional intelligence influence the relationships between the organisational variables and work-life interaction.

The observed inter-correlations show that the organisational variables are weakly to moderately correlated with most of the work-life dimensions. The results confirmed that there are negative correlations between role conflict, work demand and the positive forms of work-life interaction, and positive correlations between these two variables and the negative forms of work-life interaction. In contrast, work-home culture is positively related to the positive forms of work-life interaction, and negatively to the negative forms of work-life interaction. The moderated regression analyses found that only neuroticism and agreeableness had significant moderating effects on the relationship between work demand and work-life interaction, whilst a greater number of mediating effects were observed. An overview of the multiple regression analyses with the work-home interaction dimensions as dependent variables, found a significant difference between the amount of variance explained by the organisational variables and the additional variance explained by the personalistic variables in two analyses pertaining to positive work-home interaction and positive home-work interaction.

The study has confirmed the role of organisational variables in the experience of work-life interaction and the positive role of the work-home culture of the organisation has been highlighted. The results provided limited support for the role of personalistic variables as moderators and more substantial support for its role as mediators of work-life interaction. The impact of positive affectivity was especially noticeable. The results further indicated that work engagement was significantly positively correlated with positive work-home interaction, negatively correlated with negative work-home interaction, and positively correlated with positive home-work interaction.

These findings provide additional motivation to include selected personalistic variables in the selection process so that the likelihood of work engagement could be optimised through increased work-live balance. It further suggests focusing the attention of employees suffering from negative work-life interaction on their personal processing of the challenges experienced and their coping strategies

The results indicated that the conceptualised theoretical model was seriously flawed and too simplistic and that it required serious reconsidering.

## SAMEVATTING

Werknemerbetrokkenheid het noodsaaklik geword vir die langtermyn volhoubaarheid en prestasie van organisasies. In die huidige studie is die hipotese gestel dat werk-lewe-interaksie werknemers se werksbetrokkenheid op 'n direkte wyse bevorder.

Werk-lewe-balans is in hierdie studie soos volg gedefinieer: Dit is om genoeg tyd te hê om aktiwiteite binne beide werk- en gesinsverband af te handel, deur 'n volgehoue sin van ekwilibrium of harmonie in die lewe te handhaaf, met gelyke of gebalanseerde betrokkenheid, insette en tyd gewy aan verskillende rolle, sowel as 'n balans tussen die eise en hulpbronne in 'n persoon se lewe, en die gevoglike bereiking van 'n vlak van bevrediging binne beide werk- en persoonlike rolle. (De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott & Pettit, 2005; Hudson, 2005). Werk-lewe-balans het 'n positiewe uitwerking op die werknemer, in die sin van hoër vlakke van werkstevredenheid en toewyding, en verbetering in persoonlike gesondheid en welstand. Vir die organisasie word dit geassosieer met verbeterde werwing en retensie van personeel, verbeterde werksproduktiwiteit en prestasie, verbeterde organisatoriese prestasie en winsgewendheid, en verhoogde werksbetrokkenheid.

In die huidige studie is werk-lewe-interaksie as oorkoepelende konsep vir die doeleindes van die empiriese studie aanvaar. Die studie se oogmerk was om die aanleidende oorsake van die werk-lewe-interaksie in 'n bepaalde werksomgewing te identifiseer ten einde pogings te informeer wat gemik is op die bevordering van werk-lewe-balans. Die verwagting was dat persoonseienskappe die verhouding tussen organisatoriese veranderlikes en werk-lewe-interaksie sou beïnvloed. 'n Literatuuroorsig het gelei tot 'n teoretiese model wat gebruik is in 'n ondersoek na die determinante van werk-lewe-interaksie en die vraag of werk-lewe-balans werknemers se werksbetrokkenheid verhoog. Die doel van die studie was om vas te stel of daar 'n negatiewe verhouding is tussen rolkonflik, werkseise en werk-lewe-interaksie, en 'n positiewe verhouding tussen werk-lewe-kultuur en werk-lewe-interaksie. Die navorsingsprojek het verder beoog om te bepaal of spesifieke persoonsveranderlikes soos pligsgetrouwheid, neurotisme, aangenaamheid, negatiewe affektiwiteit, positiewe affektiwiteit en emosionele intelligensie die verhoudings tussen die onafhanklike veranderlikes en die afhanklike veranderlikes respektiewelik beïnvloed.

Die waargenome interkorrelasies het getoon dat die organisatoriese veranderlikes swak tot matig gekorreleer het met die meerderheid werk-lewe-interaksie veranderlikes en werknemerbetrokkenheid. Die resultate het bevestig dat daar negatiewe korrelasies was tussen rolkonflik, werkseise en die positiewe vorms van werk-lewe-interaksie, en positiewe korrelasies tussen hierdie twee veranderlikes en die negatiewe vorms van werk-lewe-interaksie. Daarteenoor is werk-lewe-kultuur positief verbind met positiewe vorms van werk-lewe-interaksie, sowel as werknemerbetrokkenheid, en negatief aan die negatiewe vorms van werk-lewe-interaksie. Die gemodereerde meervoudige regressie-ontledings het getoon dat slegs neurotisme en inskiklikheid beduidend die verband tussen die organisatoriese veranderlikes en die werk-lewe-interaksie dimensies gemodereer het, terwyl daar 'n groter getal bemiddelende effekte waargeneem is. In 'n oorsig van die meervoudige regressie-ontledings met die werk-lewe-interaksie dimensies as afhanglike veranderlikes, is 'n betekenisvolle verskil gevind in die variansie verklaar deur middel van die organisasie veranderlikes en die bykomende variansie wat deur die persoonsveranderlikes verklaar is.

Die studie het die rol bevestig van organisatoriese veranderlikes in die ervaring van werk-lewe-interaksie; en die positiewe rol van die werk-lewe-kultuur van die organisasie is uitgelig. Die resultate het beperkte steun verleen aan die rol van persoonsveranderlikes as moderators van die verband tussen organisatoriese veranderlikes en werk-lewe-interaksie, maar meer substansiële steun aan persoonsveranderlikes as mediators van hierdie verband. Die impak van positiewe affektiwiteit was veral opmerklik. Die huidige bevindinge het getoon dat werknemer betrokkenheid beduidend positief korreleer het met positiewe werk-huis-interaksie, negatief gekorreleer het met negatiewe werk-huis-interaksie, en positief gekorreleer het met positiewe huis-werk-interaksie.

Hierdie bevindinge verskaf bykomende motivering om geselekteerde persoonsveranderlikes in die seleksieproses in te sluit, sodat die waarskynlikheid van werknemerbetrokkenheid geoptimaliseer kan word deur verhoogde werk-lewe-balans. Dit dui verder ook daarop dat die aandag van werknemers wat negatiewe werk-lewe-steurings ervaar, gefokus moet word op hul persoonlike verwerking van die uitdagings wat hulle in die gesig staar en hul hanteringstrategieë.

Die resultate het aangetoon dat die gekonseptualiseerde teoretiese model ernstig gebrekkig en simplisties was en dat ernstige herbesinning daaromtrent nodig is.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introductory Remarks

Living and working in the present day, most employees in the corporate sector need to balance work, family and lifestyle demands in environments where everything is moving faster. Increased focus and pressure on higher effectiveness, efficiency and productivity has become imperative for the sustainability of all organisations (Brough, O'Driscoll & Kalliath, 2005). Employers seem to expect everyone to be able to do everything, fit everywhere and do it equally well. At the same time, social pressures and household situations forces individuals to achieve more socially or to care for more members of a family. Some people do seem to have the ability to cope equally well with work and personal roles, having the ability to balance the role demands and resources available to achieve a perfect balance between their work and personal lives and be engaged in their work, performing optimally. On the other hand, others just do not seem to have the ability to cope with and balance simultaneous role demands in their work and personal lives, decreasing their ability to engage and perform.

According to Steyl and Koekemoer (2011), studies on the work-life interface have mainly focused on the conflict perspective, especially between work and family conflict, proposing that demands and roles in the work and family domains are incompatible, causing work-family conflict. As the understanding of work-family conflict expanded, studies started to explore the work-family interference phenomenon, trying to understand the causes and consequences of the one domain interfering with the other domain, namely work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW) respectively. Research on this topic expanded even further, distinguishing between the direction of work-family conflict or interference and that these two concepts may have different causes and consequences (Steyl & Koekemoer, 2011).

Recently, research (Steyl & Koekemoer, 2011) has started to explore work-life balance, expanding the definition of work-family conflict to include personal and home factors to the life domain of a person, investigating the conflict or interference effect between work and life roles. Although the definition and measures of work-life

balance has not been exhausted, several studies as reported by Steyl and Koekemoer (2011) have examined the causes and effects of work-life balance and how it can be achieved in the workplace. The benefits of work-life balance, support from the organisation, the lack thereof, as well as the disadvantages of not achieving work-life balance have been studied extensively.

In the current study, work-life balance will be further investigated to explore its effect on work engagement. The influence of personality factors on work-life interaction will also be investigated, anticipating that people with different personality profiles can experience work-life balance or conflict differently and achieve work engagement.

### **1.2 Defining constructs within the work-life interaction domain**

Work-life balance can be defined as achieving equilibrium with respect to investments in time, involvement and satisfaction with both work and non-work domains of a person's life. Work-life balance can thus be described as having equal or balanced involvement, effort and time spent on various roles; as well as a balance between demands and resources in a person's life, achieving a state of satisfaction in both employment and personal roles (Hudson, 2005; Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003).

Recent studies have started differentiating between work-life balance and work-life conflict, arguing that these two constructs are completely different, and consequently should be defined and measured differently. Work-life conflict is defined as the conflict between work and family demands, as well as conflict between work and other role expectations and responsibilities in private life (Hammig, Gutzwiller & Bauer, 2009).

A related concept, namely work-life interference, has been defined by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985, p77) as "a form of inter-role conflict in which role pressure from work and family domains are mutually incompatible so that participation in one role (home) is made more difficult by participation in another role (work)". Similarly Pocock (2011) defines work-life interference to occur when work interferes with other responsibilities or activities in a person's personal life, restricting time with life roles, leading to feelings of being rushed or pressed for time or leading to feelings of dissatisfaction with work-life balance.

The main contributory factor associated with work-life balance is organisational support. Organisational support in the form of work-life balance initiatives, a positive work-life culture, flexibility and supportive management has a direct positive effect on an employee's perceived control over work and life roles and their experience of work-life balance or conflict (Richman, Civian, Shannon, Hill & Brennan, 2008). On the other hand, there are several factors that can cause work-life imbalance or conflict.

In the current study work-life interaction as an overarching construct will be used. The reason for the preference for work-life interaction as a construct is that it encompasses both the negative connotations associated with work-life conflict and work-life interference, as well as the positive connotations associated with work-life balance, and differentiates in terms of the direction of the interaction, between the interaction from work to life, or from life to work (De Klerk & Mostert, 2010).

### **1.3 Organisational Facilitation of Positive Work-life Interaction**

The support and facilitation of flexible work practices provided by organizations to aid employees in their attempts to achieve work-life balance has recently been viewed by employees as valuable workplace tools to manage work and life roles (Richman et al., 2008). Facilitation of work-life balance from an organisational perspective can include many factors. The current study will look at work-life balance initiatives, organisational culture and organisational support in general.

#### **1.3.1 Work-life balance initiatives**

Work-life balance initiatives are benefits and practices provided by an organisation to its employees to assist them to effectively meet their work and personal life obligations. These initiatives are generally aimed at facilitating flexibility and support to employees to meet and balance the responsibilities from both work and non-work roles in their lives, reducing the impact of interference between work and non-work demands (O'Driscoll, Poelman, Spector, Allen, Cooper & Sanchez, 2003). The initiatives provided by many organisations include flexible working hours, working from home arrangements, child care facilities, financial and/or informational assistance with child and elder care services, employee assistance programmes, flexible working arrangements and organisational support for utilising these benefits.

Having control over working hours and flexible working arrangements provide employees with the ability to balance work and family obligations, resulting in less stress and role conflict. Work-life balance initiatives are most effective when they enhance employees' autonomy and increase their capacity to perform well in work and life roles (Lero, Richardson & Korabik, 2009). Work-life balance initiatives provide employees with the ability to make "choices influencing when, where and for how long they engage in work related tasks" (Hill, Grzywacz, Allen, Blanchard, Matz-Costa, & Shulkin, 2008, p. 152), enabling employees to control their work and life roles, decreasing conflict between these two domains and as a result achieve work satisfaction and engagement.

### **1.3.2 Organisational culture**

According to Thompson, Beauvais and Lyness (1999) work-life culture refers to the collective perception by members of an organisation that it supports and values the integration of employee's work and personal lives. Organisations having a positive work-life culture are organisations where employees feel free to make use of work-life balance benefits or arrangements without being discriminated against or negatively affected by the utilisation thereof.

The main objective of work-life balance initiatives is to assist employees in balancing their work and personal life roles in an attempt to reduce work-life conflict (Richman, Civian, Shannon, Hill & Brennan, 2008). Employee's perception of work-life balance policies and benefits are crucial for the reduction of work-life conflict, as individuals will only make use of these initiatives if they are certain that their manager, supervisor or colleagues will not hold it against them or some degree of negative career development will be the consequence of it. People are therefore more likely to make use of certain policies or act in certain ways if they perceive these acts as tolerated by, supported and approved of by certain relevant and significant others (Dikkers, Geurts, Den Dulk, Peper, Taris, & Komپier, 2007).

In order to effectively reduce work-life imbalance or work-family conflict and increase the use of work-life balance arrangements, organisations should create a work-family culture that supports employees in the use of the company's work-life balance initiatives and arrangements.

### **1.3.3 Organisational support**

Organisational support enables employees to be better able to control the work-life conflict relationship in their lives. Having organisational support establishes a better person-environment fit and has been shown to be a better predictor of reduced psychological distress and improved quality of life (Richman et al., 2008). Employer acknowledgement, support and understanding in conjunction with effective work-life balance initiatives and support programmes can be very valuable in assisting employees in balancing and coping successfully in the multiple roles in their lives, achieving work-life balance.

Organisational support consists of, but is not limited to, a combination of work-life balance arrangements and initiatives, flexible work policies and practices, positive work-life culture and work-life balance education and information provided by an organisation. Organisational support facilitates positive experiences and attitudes in the work domain for employees, which transfers to the life domain, contributing to work-life balance. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) define this phenomenon as work-family enrichment, due to the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role. They proposed that the resources and flexibility provided by organisations in an attempt to support employees to balance their work and life roles, directly contribute to the positive experience and achievement of work-life balance. Greenhaus and Powell further suggest that the resources generated at work due to organisational support, could be utilised to directly enhance performance in life roles.

It should however be noted that many other factors might be facilitators or antecedents of work-life balance, of which their effect can either be a positive or negative. Organisational culture or work-family culture, as a facilitator of work-life balance, together with several other determinants that affect work-life balance or imbalance, will be discussed later in this research study.

### **1.4 Outcomes of Work-Life Balance**

Work-life balance initiatives and flexible work practices have become priority for many employers in the modern workplace, as employers have realised that workplace flexibility have resulted in positive business results, such as attracting and retaining key and scarce skills in a competitive labour market, increasing employee

motivation, satisfaction, efficiency and effectiveness, resulting in improved employee work engagement and productivity (Richman et al., 2008). For employees this means improved work and life wellbeing and satisfaction. Results from both Lero et al. (2009) and Beauregard and Henry's (2009) multi-level analysis and research have shown multiple benefits and outcomes resulting from the provision of work-life balance initiatives and from employees achieving work-life balance, both for the individual and the organisation.

#### **1.4.1 Individual Benefits**

The achievement of work-life balance holds several benefits for the employee. The provision of work-life balance initiatives and support by the organization strongly affects an employee's decision to join an organization or to stay with their current employer, as well as their overall work and life satisfaction.

##### ***1.4.1.1 Reduction in work-life conflict***

Work-life balance initiatives can assist individual employees to manage their work and life roles and demands. Work-life balance initiatives serve as resources for employees to manage their work-life conflict and as a result they succeed in balancing their work and life strains and demands. Several studies reported by Beauregard and Henry (2009) have shown that the use of flexible working hours, perceived control, family supportive policies, practices and perceptions have been associated with lower levels of work-life conflict.

##### ***1.4.1.2 Satisfaction and commitment***

The availability of work-life balance initiatives, the actual use of these initiatives and reduction of work-life conflict are very likely to change employees' attitudes and perceptions of an organisation; and in turn affect their personal satisfaction and commitment towards their job and organisation. Lero et al. (2009) have found that employees have reported increased job satisfaction and organisational commitment by making use of work-life balance initiatives. Beauregard et al. (2009) have also found that the availability of several work-life balance initiatives, use of it, and satisfaction with it, were associated with increased organisational commitment, reduced turnover intentions; and increased job satisfaction and loyalty.

#### **1.4.1.3 Improved personal health and wellbeing**

The effort-recovery (E-R) model, as originally proposed by Meijman and Mulder (1998), provides the theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between several determinants of work-life balance and personal health and wellbeing. The E-R model facilitates understanding of the impact that certain work stressors can have on personal well-being, as it proposes that effort expenditure in the form of work, is associated with short-term physiological and psychological costs, in terms of fatigue, tension and stress. The negative effects of these costs can be reversed when the individual reduces effort investment and exposure to work load and pressure. This process is known as the recovery phase, as the individual takes time to break away from effort investment and accompanied pressures (Taris, Verhoeven, Geurts, Kompier & van der Linden, 2006; Van der Hulst & Geurts, 2001).

If sufficient time is taken for recovery, negative loading effects will be kept at a minimum and thus excessive fatigue and stress will be low. Negative loading built up during the working day will come to an end when time is taken to recover, physical and psychological systems will stabilize during resting periods, and no negative physiological and psychological effects will occur. Several studies (De Croon, Sluiter, Frings & Dresen, 2003; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinkley, 2005; Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh & Houtman, cited in Taris et al., 2006) have shown that high levels of effort expenditure and low levels of recovery are associated with high levels of work-life interference and low levels of personal well-being. It can thus be assumed that making use of work-life balance initiatives provides individuals with recovery opportunities, enabling them to achieve reduced stress, depression and exhaustion levels together with reduced role strain. Lero et al. (2009) found in his study that work-life balance practices had a positive impact on reducing job stress and improved morale and mental health.

#### **1.4.2 Organisational benefits**

Several organisational benefits can be derived from the provision of work-life balance initiatives and the fact that employees, making use of these initiatives achieve work-life balance. Even though many researchers argue that the use of work-life balance initiatives does not result in reduced work-life conflict, many indirect benefits can arise from these endeavours (Lero et al., 2009). In the study conducted by Lero et al. (2009), it was found that the provision of work-life balance initiatives, together with

perceived organisational and supervisor support has been related to a number of beneficial employee outcomes, including higher job satisfaction, higher organisational commitment over time, lower job stress, lower burnout, lower turnover intentions and turnover, lower work-family conflict and role strain, fewer health symptoms and higher job and career satisfaction.

#### ***1.4.2.1 Improved recruitment and retention***

Work-life balance initiatives offered by an organisation, together with an organisational culture that supports the use thereof, can play a vital role in attracting new human capital and reducing current employee turnover (Lero et al., 2009). When employees' needs and values for work-life balance initiatives are satisfied and consistent with what the organisation offers, a person/organisational fit develops, resulting in increased attraction of human resources and reduced turnover intentions of current human resources. Lero et al. (2009) found that both men and women in the labour market considered a work-life balance friendly organisation as a major factor of consideration when choosing a new employer. In his multi-level analysis, Lero et al. (2009) found that the availability and use of work-life balance initiatives greatly reduced turnover intentions over time and enhanced recruitment and retention strategies immensely. Similarly Beauregard et al. (2009) also found that the provision of work-life balance initiatives increases recruitment and retention; increases the attraction of scarce and unexploited skills; and reduces turnover intentions among employees. He further suggested that the provision of flexible career paths may serve as a source of competitive advantage in attracting and retaining new staff.

#### ***1.4.2.2 Improved employee productivity and performance***

Several factors may lead to increased employee productivity and performance, but it has been shown that many factors related to the achievement of work-life balance or the mere perception of availability or use of work-life balance initiatives has significant associations with increased productivity and performance. Lero et al. (2009) found in various studies a positive association between the availability and use of work-life balance initiatives and individual performance and quality of work, a negative relationship with absenteeism and tardiness, and consequently a positive relationship with improved overall performance. Similarly Beauregard et al. (2009) also found that the use of flexible work arrangements were associated with reduced levels of absenteeism and increased employee productivity.

#### **1.4.2.3 Improved organisational performance and profitability**

Several direct and indirect outcomes for improved organisational performance are related to the outcomes discussed in the previous section. (Beauregard et al., 2009; Lero et al., 2009)

The first major indirect outcome is reduced cost, as a result of reduced absenteeism, improved recruitment and retention costs. The second indirect outcome is individual performance, as individual outcomes of work-life balance, like well-being, satisfaction and commitment deliver a number of other results, such as increased overall organisational morale and commitment, productivity and performance and as a result increased organisational performance and productivity. Individual outcomes are also likely to relate to increased levels of customer services as employees are more engaged and satisfied in their work. Increased customer service leads to increased customer satisfaction, and as a result higher sales and greater profits. A third indirect outcome relates to that of return on benefits, as organisations offering work-life balance initiatives are perceived as employers of choice, attracting scarce skills, achieving the competitive advantage when competing for skills in the labour market (Beauregard et al., 2009; Lero et al., 2009).

Work-life balance is expected to lead to greater profitability as a result of increased performance, productivity and customer satisfaction, reduced employee turnover and reduced cost of employee health. Both Lero et al. (2009) and Beauregard et al. (2009) found the pursuit of work-life balance and other associated initiatives to be related to increased productivity, performance, sales growth, profitability and reduced turnover and absenteeism levels, all contributing to the bottom line of a company. The organisational outcomes related to work-life balance are likely to be the indirect outcomes of employee work engagement, and thus the realisation of increased organisation performance and profitability as a result.

From the evidence above, it can be assumed that the availability and use of work-life balance initiatives, and the autonomy and flexibility of work arrangements increases positive attitudes and perceptions about the organisation amongst employees, it improves their commitment and satisfaction levels, and in return, based on the social exchange theory, improves individual employee motivation, productivity and performance. In a mutually beneficial exchange, each party supplies the wants of the

other party at lower cost to the self than the value of the resources the other party provides. In such a model, mutual relationship satisfaction ensures relationship stability (Encyclopedia of Public Relations, 2005). It can thus be argued that achieving work-life balance and the associated outcomes are likely to facilitate employee work engagement, which in itself has several individual outcomes related to job satisfaction, sense of achievement and inclusion.

#### ***1.4.2.4 Increased work engagement***

Work engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption” (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002, p. 702). Highly engaged employees feel a “strong identity with their work, they perceive their work as meaningful, inspirational and challenging, and tend to apply knowledge and utilise skills and resources to a greater extent in their work” (Lu, Siu, Chen & Wang, 2010, p. 102). Employee engagement is also referred to as affective commitment, defined as an “employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation” (Meyer & Allen, 1997, p. 67.). Furthermore Gibbons (2006) defined employee engagement as a heightened emotional and intellectual connection that an employee has with his/her job, organisation, manager or co-workers, that in turn, influences him/her to apply additional discretionary effort to his/her work. Employee work engagement can thus be described as an employee’s involvement in and connection with his/her work in such a manner that it motivates them to exert more effort than what is expected from them, to perform optimally and to retain their jobs.

Both Lu et al. (2011) and Sui, Lu, Brough, Lu, Bakker, Kalliath, O'Driscoll, Phillips, Chen, Sit, and Shi (2010) argues that the resources that are developed to facilitate work-life balance are also likely to facilitate employee work engagement and that employees that do achieve work-life balance are more likely to be engaged in their jobs. They proposed that certain job resources designed to facilitate work-life balance, such as reduced job demands, performance feedback, skill variety, stimulation of personal growth, learning and development, job autonomy and family friendly organisational policies and support, may also be positively related to employee work engagement.

In their particular study, Lu et al. (2011) found significant correlations between job demands, family mastery and employee work engagement; they specifically found a significant relationship with a small effect size between family mastery and work engagement. Family mastery refers to the extent to which individuals control their family lives (Lu et al., 2011). Correspondingly Siu et al. (2010) found significant correlations between family friendly organisational policies, supervisor support and job autonomy, work-life balance and employee work engagement; specifically they found an association of medium effect size between work engagement and work-family enrichment. Richman, Civian, Shannon, Hill and Brennan (2008) also found significant positive relationships between perceived work flexibility, supportive work-life policies and employee engagement. Mostert and Rathbone (2001) also found a significant and positive relationship between positive work home interaction and engagement. All these results thus provide evidence for the premise that resources, such as reduced job demands, work flexibility, job autonomy, management support and supportive work-life policies designed to promote work-life balance, can also facilitate employee work engagement.

In addition, several studies have found that the experience and consequent achievement of work-life balance results in employee work engagement. Richman (2006) have found that the ability of employees to manage work and life demands as a result of the availability of perceived work flexibility and work-life balance initiatives provided by the organisation, were strongly related to higher levels of employee work engagement. Richman et al. (2008) conducted a meta-analytic study, where it was found that flexible work arrangements and practices are related to several personal benefits, such as improved health and wellbeing, but also increased productivity, effectiveness, satisfaction and employee work engagement. They have also found that employees with perceived flexibility, that have flexible work arrangements available to them, and that actually make use of flexible work practices, had significant levels of increased satisfaction, commitment and productivity, reduced levels of stress and absenteeism and as a result, higher levels of work engagement. Richman et al. specifically found that perceived flexibility and supportive work-life practices were the best predictors of employee engagement.

## 1.5 Why is Positive Work-life Interaction Important?

The promotion and continuation of work-life balance will become progressively more important for the future sustainability of organisations. The failure to achieve balance between work and life responsibilities of employees is highly likely to result in serious consequences on both personal and organisational levels. The individual consequences include, but are not limited to, increased levels of stress and stress-related illnesses; lower life satisfaction; higher rates of family conflict, violence and divorce; rising incidents of substance abuse and burnout (Lu, Siu, Chen & Wang, 2011; Parkes & Langford, 2008). Organisational consequences include higher turnover rates, reduced productivity and performance; decreased job satisfaction, lower levels of organisational commitment and increased employee absenteeism (Hobson, Delunas & Kesic, 2001). These consequences of failing to balance work and life roles can result in emotional and financial cost for both the individual and organisation, as individual wellbeing deteriorate and organisational success decreases. The achievement of work-life balance is however very rewarding and holds several positive outcomes, as discussed above, but why are the outcomes so imperative to accomplish?

Edwards and Rothbard (2000) suggests that the achievement of work-life balance may have a positive spill-over effect on an individual's perceptions, emotions and behaviour. Positive experiences, attitudes and emotions in one domain of a person's life can be transferred to another domain of life, creating more positive experiences. Lu et al. (2010) postulate that positive aspects of the work-family balance phenomena have been shown to facilitate enrichment in the personal and work lives of individuals. Greenhouse and Powell (2006, p. 73) define work-family enrichment as "the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role". Being able to achieve balance in either or both work and life domains will thus spill-over to the other domain/s, facilitating a positive approach to the handling of roles, and in the process improving the performance, satisfaction and engagement in all domains. This connection between work-life balance and positive spill-over will create a platform for employee work engagement and its resultant organisational and individual benefits.

It can thus be argued that employees that make use of flexible work arrangements, who are able to manage their work demands and hours, and perceive a supportive

work-family culture, are more likely to achieve work-life balance and be highly engaged in their work.

In the current study it is also argued that personality and other personalistic variables may play a role in the achievement of work-life balance, and will thus act as enablers of the resources necessary for work engagement. Work engagement as a final outcome refers to the extra-ordinary behaviours and efforts exerted by employees, a very necessary resource and asset to have in today's economy to be able to successful and sustainable.

### **1.6 Individual Differences in Work-life Interaction**

"Personality refers to dynamic mental structures and coordinated mental processes that determine individual's emotional and behavioural adjustments to their environments" (Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark & Baltes, 2011, p 698). Personalistic traits or variables on the other hand is referred to as personal resources, in the form of psychological and social means by which people cope with the various stresses in their environment (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2013). Personal resources are aspects of the self that are generally linked to resilience and refer to individuals' sense of their ability to control and impact upon their environment successfully (Hobfoll, Johnson, Ennis, & Jackson, 2003). Personal resources, such as personality traits, characteristics, competencies or styles are functional in controlling the environment and exerting impact on it in a successful way. Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2007) proposed that personal resources may function either as moderators or as mediators in the relationship between organisational factors and personal outcomes, or they may even determine the way people comprehend the environment, formulate it, and react to it.

Emotional intelligence, and especially certain personality traits, has been shown to influence behavioural patterns and interpretations of objective situations in a variety of life domains (Wayne, Musisca & Fleeson, 2004). Personality and emotional intelligence can thus be expected to influence the way in which individuals experience, react to, and manage the same situation or feeling. It can be hypothesised that different employees with different personality profiles will experience work-life interaction differently and also react to it differently, achieving different results in their attempt to balance it.

Personality and other personalistic variables (such as emotional intelligence) are thus likely to influence the perception of conflict between work and life roles and responsibilities; the degree to which effort investment and recovery are managed; the problem-solving strategies that individuals use to balance work and life obligations, and will in turn affect the degree to which the individual experience work-life strain and interference, as well as manage it.

It is anticipated in the current study that an employee's personality and other personalistic variables will influence the relationship between the determinants of work-life interaction and the actual experience thereof and in their endeavour to achieve work-life balance. In this study the concept personalistic variables will be utilised to refer to personality traits, emotional intelligence and other, to be identified, intrapersonal characteristics. It is further anticipated in the current study that the impact that the personalistic variables have on work-family interaction is likely to influence the outcomes of work engagement.

In the current study the overarching concept of work-life interaction will be utilised to refer to the negative work-life interactions, like work-life conflict or work-life interference, as well as the positive work-life interactions that are associated with work-life balance.

### **1.7 Research Initiating Question**

From the introductory remarks it is evident that a research initiating question has unfolded. The research initiating question is whether it is possible to increase the positive forms of work-life interaction and decrease the negative forms of work-life interaction experienced by clarifying the antecedents of work-life interaction and its consequential effects; and whether such an increase in the positive forms of work-life interaction will lead to a higher level of employee engagement. Furthermore, the research initiating question encompasses the question as to whether personalistic variables have an effect on the relationship between the antecedents of work-life interaction and the nature and direction of work-life interaction.

The current study is therefore motivated by the intention to clarify the antecedents of work-life interaction in a particular work environment in order to inform efforts aimed at decreasing the negative forms of work-life interaction and promoting the positive

forms of work-life interaction. Personalistic variables are anticipated to influence the relationship between organisational determinants and work-life interference.

If evidence can be found that an increase in the positive forms off work-life interaction will be associated with a higher level of work engagement, taking into consideration the impact of personalistic variables, it will have the potential to greatly affect human capital and talent management strategies, as work-life balance policies, the provision of work-life balance initiatives, the development of a positive work-life balance organisational culture and taking cognisance of the effect of personalistic variables on these relationships, may greatly enhance efforts to facilitate employee work engagement which can significantly improve organisational outcomes.

At this point in time an initial research goal could be formulated that entails investigating which organisational variables have a significant impact on the nature of the work-life interaction experienced and to investigate whether personalistic variables affect the experience of work-life interaction. This research goal will be revisited and rephrased after a thorough literature review has been conducted.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introductory Remarks

The experience of work engagement and work-life balance (WLB) by an employee is currently being investigated (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008; Lu et al., 2011; Mostert & Rathbone, 2001) in various aspects of the work environment, and has been widely researched (Richman et al., 2008; Siu et al., 2010) and proposed to have positive effects and outcomes for both individual and organisational productivity and success. Since many organisations endeavour to increase employees' work engagement and work-life balance, the effect of work-life balance on work engagement needs to be investigated. However personalistic factors that can have an impact on that relationship also need to be taken into consideration.

The antecedents of work-life balance or imbalance will firstly be reviewed; where after the effect of personalistic variables on the relationship between the antecedents and the experience of work-life interaction will be investigated. In the current study, it was anticipated that personalistic variables might have an effect on the relationship between the antecedents of work-life interaction and the experience of the work-life interaction; and that an individual who has achieved work-life balance will experience higher levels of work engagement. (Lu et al., 2011; Mostert & Rathbone, 2001; Richman, 2006 & Siu et al., 2010)

### 2.2 Defining Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance proposes a relationship between work-life and non-work life and that it is integrated, and therefore should interact in a harmonious way. However, as the global economy experiences more strain, so do companies, resulting in increased stress levels, excessive job demands, increased competition and pressure, and longer working hours in an attempt to increase production and performance and decrease costs (De Klerk & Mostert, 2010). Over time these excessive stresses, strains and pressures have resulted in work-life interference, work-life imbalance or work-family conflict. In the current study the term work-life interaction will be utilised to represent all of the interactions between work and non-work/life roles.

According to Hudson (2005) work-life balance, in contrast to work-life interference, is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement or fit between the multiple roles in a person's life. Work -life balance can also be defined as having enough time to fulfil activities in both work and family contexts (De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott & Pettit, 2005). When defining work-life balance, Hudson (2005) refers to maintaining a sense of equilibrium or harmony in life. A study conducted by Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) measured work-life balance according to three dimensions, namely:

- Time balance, referring to the amount of time spent on work and non-work roles;
- Involvement balance, referring to the level of psychological involvement in or commitment to work and non-work roles;
- Satisfaction balance, referring to the level of satisfaction with work and non-work roles.

Taking these three dimensions into consideration, work-life balance can be defined as achieving equilibrium with respect to investments in time, involvement and satisfaction with both work and non-work domains of a person's life. Work-life balance can thus be described as having equal or balanced involvement, effort and time spent on various roles; as well as a balance between demands and resources in a person's life, achieving a state of satisfaction in both employment and personal roles (Greenhaus et al., 2003).

Maxwell and McDougall (as cited in Dash, Anand & Gangadharan, 2012, p. 52) takes another approach in defining work-life balance as being "about adjusting working patterns regardless of age, race or gender, so that everyone can find rhythm" to help them combine and balance work with their other life or non-work roles, responsibilities or aspirations. It should be noted that this definition of work-life balance does not only include, but also expands the previous definitions of work-family conflict, as it includes other life activities in addition to family care, such as social interaction, religion, leisure, sport, hobbies, studies and social responsibilities. This definition can thus be applicable to all levels of employees in an organisation, not only working mothers, single parents or white collar employees. It should also be noted that conflict or imbalance can be bi-directional, in that work demands or strains can cause conflict or imbalance in a person's life domain or that life demands and

strains can cause conflict or imbalance in a person's work domain. In the current study, the work to life balance or imbalance will be studied.

### **2.3 Defining Work-Life Interference**

Work-life imbalance or interference occurs when certain factors cause individuals to fail in effectively balancing and fulfilling their work and family/life roles at the same time. Work-life imbalance or interference refers to a broader definition in relation to work-family conflict and is defined as "a form of inter-role conflict in which role pressures from the work and life, or non-work domains, are mutually incompatible. That is, participation in the work (family/life) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family/life (work) role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, pp. 77). According to Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2006) the demands of each role includes several responsibilities, duties, obligations, commitments and expectations which require several resources, such as time, energy, skills and support functions. When the compatibility between the demands and resources are in a state of imbalance, it has the potential to result in work-life interference, otherwise referred to as work/non-work conflict or work-life imbalance.

The direction and impact of interference should be noted; as work-life interference has been increasingly recognised as consisting of two distinct though related concepts, namely work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW). WIF is also referred to as work-to-family conflict or work-home interference and occurs when work interferes with family, home or personal life. FIW is also referred to as family-to-work conflict or home-work interference and occurs when family, home or personal life interferes with work life (Byron, 2005).

Definitions of interference between work and family/home has predominately focused on the negative impact that work has on the home domain or vice versa, without considering the fact that interaction between work and home might also be positive (de Klerk & Mostert, 2010). Byron (2005) has found empirical support for differentiating between the direction and impact of work and family/home conflict or interference (Kossek & Ozeki, as cited in Byron, 2005) and that these two concepts may have different causes and effects (Frone, Russel & Cooper, 1992a, 1992b; Kelloway, Gottlieb & Barham, as cited in Byron, 2005).

## 2.4 Defining Work-life Interaction

Pocock, Williams and Skinner (2007) define work-life interaction as a relationship between work and life as an interface between two interconnected spheres that may involve positive or negative spillover. Pocock, Williams and Skinner (2007) presents work-life interaction as a multi-dimensional concept that involves a bi-directional influence between work and life (i.e. work influences life experiences, and life influences work experiences), both positive (facilitative) and negative (conflict) effects and both time and emotional/psychological (i.e. feeling stressed, fatigued, tense, depressed etc.) dimensions of strain. Geurts et al. (2005) also investigated the total spectrum of work-home interaction, “defining it as not only a process of interaction between both work and home, but also more specifically, as an interactive process in which a worker’s functioning (behaviour) in one domain is influenced by either negative or positive load effects that have built up in other domains” (de Klerk & Mostert, 2010, p. 2). This definition suggests that the interaction that occurs between a person’s work and personal life can occur in both directions and that the influence can either be positive or negative (de Klerk & Mostert, 2010). Several studies in the work family domain progressed to a more comprehensive understanding of the work-life interaction concept, including components of both conflict and facilitation, and that these components should be regarded as bidirectional in that work can interfere with personal life and personal life can interfere with work (Byron, 2005; Carlson & Frone, 2003; Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, 2006; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer, 2007; Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006 as cited in Innstranda, Langballeb, Espnesa, Falkumc & Aasland, 2008).

The concept of work-life interaction is preferred in the current study as it encompasses and differentiates both positive and negative interactions and refers to the direction of the influence. One could therefore say that it represents all the types and direction of interaction between work life and personal life and includes all the definitions of work-life conflict, work-life interference, work-life facilitation as well as work-life balance or imbalance, in contrast to the positive connotations associated with achieving work-life balance or the negative connotations of experiencing work-life conflict. Work-life interaction thus comprises of four dimensions, namely negative work-life interaction (NWLI), referring to a situation where work life interacts with

personal life with a negative influence; positive work-life interaction (PWLI), referring to a situation where work life interacts with personal life with a positive influence; negative life-work interaction (NLWI), referring to a situation where personal life interacts with work life with a negative influence and finally positive life-work interaction (PLWI), referring to a situation where personal life interacts with work life with a positive influence. Negative influence refers to negative load reactions that build up in one domain of life that hampers a person's functioning in the other domain, whereas positive influence refers to positive load reactions that build up in one domain of life that enables a person's functioning in the other domain.

## 2.5 Organisational Determinants of Work-Life Interaction

The world of work is characterised by several organisational structures, policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities that need to be performed effectively and efficiently in order to achieve business objectives. However, recent economic pressures have brought about change to this world, as increased demands on time, energy and resources has amplified the pressure on organisations to produce output and on individuals to exert greater work performance (Dikkers et al, 2007; Singh, 2010). With this becoming the norm in the modern workplace, many organisational determinants had come forth that influences an employee's ability to balance work and life roles, which will be discussed next.

In the present study, work-life balance is referred to as having enough time and resources to fulfil work and life roles. Work-life interference results when the compatibility between the demands and resources are in a state of imbalance. The causes of these failures of balance may be the result of several factors. Through extensive research, studies (Byron, 2005) in this domain have evolved to classify the causes or antecedents of work-life interference into three main categories, namely work domain variables, non-work domain variables; and individual and demographic variables. Work domain variables usually consist of workplace factors such work-related role conflicts, work demands and working hours. Non-work domain variables range from family and home demands and responsibilities to lifestyle and other social practices and callings. Individual and demographics domains consist of personality traits and behaviours and other individual differences such as age, gender, marital status and other circumstantial variances. The different determinants of work-life interference will be discussed next. (Byron, 2005)

Many studies and researchers have studied various organisational determinants, causes and antecedents of work-family conflict and work-life interference. In particular, Taris et al. (2006) found that low levels of job control were associated with high levels of work-life interference. Similarly Ballout (2008) have found that excessive job involvement positively relates to work-family conflict. Ballout also found that job stressors that consist of role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload play a role in determining work-family conflict. Interestingly, in a study conducted by Demerouti, Bakker and Bulters (2004) a reciprocal relationship was found between work-life interference and exhaustion. Work-life interference had lagged, short- and long-term effects on exhaustion, and exhaustion had short- and long-term effects on work-life interference.

Correspondingly, Duxbury and Higgins (as cited in Beauregard, 2004) have found advanced forms of office technology to be associated with increased workloads and greater job stress, impacting work-life interference, as the internet and mobile phones has made it possible for employees to work anytime and from anywhere, distorting the boundaries between work and home. Beauregard (2004) has also found that changes in the workplace or organisational circumstances can significantly impact employees' work-life interference. Through several studies she found that factors such as high employee turnover, reassignment of employees, deteriorating work conditions and organisational politics all contributed to employees' work-life interference.

It is possible to hypothesise that other factors that might influence work-life interference, although not empirically tested, are regular work-related travelling or working away from your normal workplace, causing individuals to be away from home for prolonged periods. Attending frequent training sessions or meetings that take up a lot of work time, results in working overtime or working at home, influencing work and family interactions. The type of work that people do, as well as the work environment that people work in, such as extremely physical work; cold, noisy or dusty work conditions and even open-plan offices, might also put strain on employees, causing stress, fatigue and negative spill-over, impacting the individual's ability to balance work and life roles.

Many factors can be the cause of work-life interference as they either individually or collectively put pressure on employees to balance demands and responsibilities

related to their work and life roles. However role conflict, work demands and work-family culture are still considered the most significant antecedents of work-life interference, and will be discussed next in detail.

### 2.5.1 Role conflict

According to Byron (2005) work-family conflict, also referred to as work-family interference, is a type of inter-role conflict that occurs when the demands of work and family roles conflict. Multiple role involvement exhausts one's time and energy to fulfil these roles and influences one's ability to balance these several roles at once. In the current study, role conflict will primarily be defined as a result from role overload and role strain.

According to Coverman (1989) role overload is defined by several authors as having too many role demands and too little time to fulfil them, especially when performing several roles simultaneously. Role overload can also be conceptualised as role strain, referring to an imbalance between the demands at hand and the resources available to manage those demands. Role overload and role strain can thus be defined as the experience of difficulty with fulfilling several simultaneous role commitments (Scharlach, 2001). Role overload and strain is likely to result in role conflict in situations where there are no resources or aid mechanisms to assist an employee to fulfil their multiple and simultaneous roles effectively. In his study, Scharlach has hypothesized and found that the greater the demands from work and family roles; the greater the lack of adequate and sufficient resources and support from work and home; the higher the demands from work and the lower workplace support and child care facilities, the greater the increase in role strain.

Role conflict on the other hand is described as "when demands of one of the multiple roles make it difficult to fulfil the demands of another role" and "the extent to which a person experiences pressures within one role that are incompatible with the pressures that arise within another role" (Coverman, 1989, p. 967-968). Role conflict occurs when one role demands so much time and resources that none is left for the fulfilment of other roles. Greenhaus and Beutell (as cited in De Villiers & Kotze, 2003) suggest that role conflict occurs when either time devoted to the requirements of one role, or strain from participating in a role or specific behaviours required by a role, make it difficult to fulfil the requirements of another role. Role overload and role

strain; and the stress associated with it can be amplified when resources for coping with them are limited, such as adequate child care facilities or flexible work hours. A job placing enormous pressure on the time and energy of an individual leaves less time and energy to fulfil family roles, resulting in role conflict (Coverman, 1989; Scharlach, 2001).

According to the study done by Scharlach (2001) a number of factors contributed significantly to role overload and strain, such as long working hours, having a demanding job, less opportunities for adequate child care arrangements, receiving less support from co-workers and the organisation. These results provide evidence for the premise that employees with high family demands and/or work demands and poor support systems at home and work are those with the highest levels of role conflict (Scharlach, 2001). Several other work related factors can contribute to role overload and strain, such as doing more than one person's job due to a lack of human resources, having unrealistic and excessive work-related goals to achieve within a short period of time, role ambiguity due to poor job induction and instructions, or simply having too much work to do with too little time to do it. With this in mind, many individuals measure their success in life on their ability to excel in both work and family roles, being able to manage and balance work and life roles. However, for most individuals, career advancement means a trade-off between individual success and family success, favouring career success at the expense of family success, resulting in role conflict (Ballout, 2008). In the current study, work demands and the organisation's culture with regard to work-life balance will be considered as the main contributing factors towards role conflict resulting in work-life interference, which will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

In the current study, it is anticipated that work-related role conflict will have a positive effect on the negative forms of work-life interaction and a negative effect of the positive forms of work-life interaction (Hypothesis 1).

### **2.5.2 Work demands**

Work demands refer to heavy workloads, fast pace and conflicting priorities in a person's job with having little to no influence or control over how that work load is planned and scheduled; and having a low spectrum of choices or creative options with regard to how it should be executed. High work demands are usually related to

insufficient time to complete tasks, insufficient or inadequate tools and resources to complete tasks, unrealistic performance targets with impractical deadlines, lack of support and guidance from supervisors or managers in completing tasks, lack of adequate skills and knowledge by the employee to complete the task, insufficient training provided on how to successfully complete tasks and lack of autonomy in how work should be performed (Scharlach, 2001; Dikkers et al., 2007; Taris et al., 2006). In the current study work demands will be defined as having excessive work load with insufficient time to complete it, resulting in employees to work extended hours to meet the work demands. There are several negative outcomes related to managing work demands, which can result in work-life interference.

Work-life interference often results due to work demands that restrict individuals to satisfactorily perform other family and life related roles, as a result of deficient time to perform all the required roles in a person's life and limited opportunity to recover. The Effort-Recovery model, as theorised by Meijman and Mulder (1998), proposes that continuous and recurrent exposure to high levels of work demands (work load and long working hours) results in excessive effort expenditure. These extreme levels of effort expenditure establish itself when an individual works overtime on an occasional, unplanned basis and on short notice in order to meet high workloads. Excessive effort expenditure is likely to result in negative load reactions, as in the attempt to manage work demands, an employee has no time or opportunity for internal recovery, as there is simply no time to take a break. Frequent occurrences of lack of recovery as a result of work demands result in increased negative load reactions in a person's work and private life. These load reactions are then likely to develop into negative spill over or interference with functioning in the home or life domain.

The Effort-Recovery model thus proposes that work load and time demands can have detrimental effects on employees' health when opportunities for recovery between successive periods of effort expenditure are insufficient (Van Hooff, Geurts, Kompier & Taris, 2006). Failure to recover is often the result of insufficient quantity (due to long working hours) and/or quality (improper rest due to excess activation in work roles due to work load) of effective recovery efforts. Effort expenditure in one role, requires recovery at some stage, however, the expected effort expenditure in other roles may interfere with recovery processes, resulting in a negative spiral of

load reaction, insufficient recovery and negative spill over, investing additional effort in an attempt to balance all roles, and having a negative effect on health, well-being and work-life balance.

Work-life interference is likely to result from work demands, as the worker's functioning at home is influenced or impeded by negative load reactions that have built up at work as a result of high work load and long working hours (Dikkers et al., 2007). Work-life interference is also likely to result from work demands as opportunities for recovery is highly depended on an employees work characteristics, how much work they have to do, and how much time, resources and support from the organisation they have to do it.

#### **2.5.2.1      *Work load***

Work load refers to quantitative work load on the job, meaning the amount of work or work pressure that the person experiences in his or her job. Various studies (Britt & Dawson, 2005; Demerouti, Bakker & Bulters, 2004; Peeters et al. cited in Dikkers et al., 2007) have found that work load was related to increased work-life interference, thus proposing a causal relationship between work load and work-life interference.

In the study done by Dikkers et al. (2007) they found that work load and work-life interference have a causal relationship across time, supporting their hypothesis that relatively high levels of work load are related to increased levels of work-life interference after some time. Taris et al. (2006) also found high job demands to be linked to high levels of work-life interference. These findings are in line with other studies (Demerouti, Bakker & Butler, 2004; Leiter & Durup, as cited in Dikkers et al., 2007) that found that extensive and recurring work load causes high levels of work-life interference.

#### **2.5.2.2      *Working hours***

A small but significant negative relationship was found between working hours and work-life interference and health and well-being, as a result of fatigue due to excessive working hours (Hughes & Parkes, 2007). The effort-recovery model proposes that working long hours or working overtime leaves less time for recovery, resulting in negative loading that cause prolonged fatigue and interference with functioning at home. Negative load effects build up during the working day, prolong

during the evenings and develop into negative spill over from work to home as less time is spent on recovery. Van der Hulst and Geurts (2001) postulate that overtime is likely to occur in high work load situations, resulting in extensive effort investment and limited time for internal recovery (short breaks within work time) and external recovery (relaxation after work). Long working hours are related to limited rest, which results in fatigue and poorer health and are more likely to result in work-life interference.

Taris et al. (2006) has found some evidence, although not very strong, that high levels of overtime and long working hours were associated with high levels of work-life interference. Brough, O'Driscoll and Kalliath (2005) and Hughes and Parkes (2007) respectively also showed that there is a significant relationship with a large to medium effect size respectively, between long working hours and work-life interference, demonstrating that employees working longer hours experienced a greater extent of negative work time and strain spill over into home and life domains, escalating work-life interference.

Hughes and Parkes (2007) found evidence for the moderating effect that control over working time has on the relationship between working hours and work-life interference, illustrating that having a degree of control over hours worked reduces the effect that working hours have on work-life interference. Thus employees who have some flexibility in their number of hours worked, experience less conflict and negative spill over from work to home. It can thus be anticipated that control over working hours are likely to reduce work-life interference, as more time is spent on home and family roles and also on recovery, reducing role conflict. This can possibly only be achieved if the work load is manageable.

In the current study, work load and long working hours will be measured in terms of work demands, proposing that pressuring and excessive work demands are primarily, but not exclusively, caused by high levels of work load and long and excessive working hours. Work demands in the form of long working hours and the experience of considerable work load will reduce a person's capability to devote time and resources to life and/or family roles in their life. It is thus anticipated that work demands will have a positive effect on the negative forms of work-life interaction and a negative effect of the positive forms of work-life interaction (Hypothesis 2).

### 2.5.3 Work-family culture

According to Thompson, Beauvais and Lyness (1999) work-family culture refers to the collective perception by members of an organisation that the organisation supports and values the integration of employee's work and family lives. Organisations having a positive work-family culture are organisations where employees feel free to make use of work-life balance benefits or arrangements without being discriminated against or negatively affected as a result of doing so. A positive work-family culture is characterised by the support of an organisation to its employees enabling them to balance their work and family lives.

Dikkers et al. (2007) propose that work-home culture can be conceptualised in terms of five dimensional constructs namely:

- (a) Organisational support, the degree to which the organisation supports the employee's integration of work and family roles and show sensitivity to employees' family responsibilities.
- (b) Supervisor's support, an employee's perception of how understanding and supportive his or her direct supervisor is of their desire to integrate home and family roles.
- (c) Colleagues' support, an employee's perception of how understanding and supportive his or her colleagues are of their desire to integrate work and family roles and the degree of assistance they offer to stand in for work responsibilities.
- (d) Career consequences, an employee's perception of negative career development as a consequence of making use of work-family benefits.
- (e) Organisational time demands, the expectation that employees should spend a certain amount of time evidently at work, resulting in the perception that taking time for family responsibility is not possible due to this limitation.

The main objective of work-family arrangements is to assist employees in balancing their work and life/family roles in an attempt to reduce work-family conflict. Work-family balance arrangements can, however, be ineffective if employees do not feel free and comfortable to use them, as the organisational culture does not support it (Mesmer-Magnus & Visweswaran, 2006).

Various studies (Allen, 2001, Anderson et al., 2002; Batt & Valcour, 2003; Eby et al., cited in Dikkers et al., 2007) have shown that when employees perceive a positive work-home culture in their organisation, they are more likely to make use of work-life balance initiatives and experience a degree of work-life balance. Dikkers et al. (2007) have also found significant support for their hypothesis that employees who perceived a high level of organisational support to work-family arrangements were more likely to make use of it. They also found that employees using work-life balance initiatives experienced less work-family interference.

However, according to a study conducted by Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran (2006), they found a less significant relationship between a friendly family-work environment and work-life balance initiatives, and work-family conflict. They found that utilising work-life balance initiatives did not provide too much support in balancing work and life roles and indeed did not reduce work-family interference significantly. They also found that a supporting work-family culture did encourage employees to make use of work-family arrangements. On the other hand, O'Driscoll et al. (as cited in Brough, O'Driscoll & Kalliath, 2005) found that the use of organisational resources was directly associated with reduced work-family interference, but not family-work interference. They also found that employees' perceptions of organisational support fully mediated the relationship between resource usage and work-family interference, indicating that work-home culture positively effects work-life balance.

In the present study, work-home culture is perceived to be a combination of an employee's perception of:

- Organisation, supervisor and colleague support
- Organisational support and the motivation to make use of work-life balance initiatives
- Control over working hours and flexible working arrangements
- Work demand autonomy
- The actual utilisation of work-life balance initiatives

In the current study, it is anticipated that an individual that perceives a positive work-home culture will make use of work-life balance initiatives and will experience a decrease in the negative forms of work-life interaction, and an increase in the positive forms of work-life interaction (Hypothesis 3).

For the further purposes of the current study, it is argued that making use of work-life balance initiatives does not necessarily reduce work-family conflict; however employees feel more at peace using them when they perceive a positive and supportive work-family culture in their organisation. In the study of Scharlach (2001) it was found that the use of work-life balance programmes provided by the employer, flexible working arrangements and work and family resources did not do much to reduce role strain. Also, having support systems, such as adequate child care facilities and support from co-workers and supervisors, did not reduce role strain. It could be inferred from this study that there are other factors that lead to increased levels of role strain which causes role conflict and enhances work-life imbalance.

Work-family culture, work load, working hours and role conflict are key organisational factors in determining an employee's degree of work-life balance. Many organisations do provide their employees with innovative work-life balance initiatives in an attempt to assist them to effectively meet their work and family obligations. The initiatives provided by many organisations include flexible work hours, child care facilities, employee assistance programmes, flexible working arrangements and organisational support of utilising these benefits. Having control over working hours and flexible working arrangements provides employees with the ability to balance work and family obligations, possibly resulting in less stress and role interference. Work-life balance initiatives provide support and assistance to employees to cope with their most overpowering challenge of balancing work and life. Employer acknowledgement, support and understanding, in conjunction with effective support programmes, can be very valuable in assisting employees in balancing and coping successfully. Employees are more willing to make use of work-life balance initiatives if they perceive it to be supported by their peers, supervisor and organisation, thus perceiving a positive work-family culture. Therefore to effectively reduce work-life imbalance or work-family conflict and increase the use of work-life balance arrangements, organisations should create a work-family culture that supports

employees in the use of these arrangements. (Mesmer-Magnus & Visweswaran, 2006; Dikkers et al., 2007; Scharlach, 2001)

However as previously mentioned, making use of work-life balance arrangements by some employees did not necessarily reduce either role conflict or work-family conflict. In other studies, to the contrary, the use of these arrangements does provide significant assistance to some employees to balance their work and life responsibilities. Why then does it help some individuals and not others? It can be hypothesised that the personality traits of the individual can play a moderating role in the endeavour of individuals to try and balance work and life roles and, whether the utilisation of work-life balance initiatives will assist them in being successful therein. Also, certain personality types will moderate the effect that some determinants of work-family conflict have on the ability of an individual to balance work and life responsibilities.

Thus it is expected that individual personality factors will play a significant moderating role in the experience of, or attempt to, achieve work-life balance.

## **2.6 Individual Determinants of Work-Life Interaction**

Various situational and organisational variables have been identified as significant determinants of work-life imbalance. However recently, various studies have focused on individual and dispositional factors as antecedents of organisational behaviour, exploring the interaction between dispositional or personality variables and work-life balance, proposing that individual differences have the ability to influence a person's experience and management of work-life balance or imbalance. Various researchers (Dash, Anand & Gangadharan, 2012; De Klerk & Mostert, 2010; Parkes & Langford, 2008; Steyl & Koekemoer, 2011) have thus studied personality traits, individual differences and demographic factors to be determinants or antecedents of work-family conflict. These studies have, however, produced mixed results. Despite these studies very little is known about the effect that individual differences can have on the relationship between situational determinants of work-life interaction and the experience of work-life interaction. (Dash, Anand & Gangadharan, 2012; De Klerk & Mostert, 2010)

In the current study personality traits, affective states and emotional intelligence will be primarily discussed in terms of the effect that it may have on an employee's experience of, and coping with, certain determinants of work-life interaction.

### **2.6.1 The Relationship between Demographics and Work-Life Interaction**

Demographics refer to quantifiable statistics of a given population and usually refer to individual variables such as gender, age, ethnicity, languages, disabilities, mobility, home ownership, employment status, and even location. In most major studies, demographics are considered as an influencing variable on the relationships being studied.

Since the 1980's demographics became an important factor in the study of work-life balance, as more women with children entered the labour market. As a result most studies only involved women and initiatives were developed to support women in the workplace to balance their work and family roles. However, recently many changes in the workplace, economy and technology have taken place, as well as the type of people that operate in it, increasing the need to understand the interactions between employees' work and non-work domains. (De Klerk & Mostert, 2010; Dash et al., 2012)

Lately more women with child care responsibilities have entered the workplace, many in management or senior roles. Similarly single parents or individuals with adult care responsibilities, irrespective of age, gender or culture, are becoming more common in organisations. With organisations downsizing and restructuring, the unemployment rate has increased and economic growth decreased, forcing couples to both be active in employment activities. Many men and women have reported working longer hours with greater demands at their workplace (De Klerk & Mostert, 2010; Dash et al., 2012). With technology improving at excessive speed, it is becoming easier for employees to either work from home or bring work back home, interfering with the balance between work and home or personal lives. Given the modern times, employees are starting to focus more on a complete and integrated live, focusing on religion, hobbies, leisure, sports and many other activities related to individual interests, impacting the work/non-work relationship. Such demographics, structural and lifestyle transformations greatly impact the relationship of work and non-work domains of employees. More and more pressure is placed on employees to meet

both work and non-work demands and expectations, in a world that is focused on service excellence, effectiveness and efficiency, resulting in different outcomes for both the employee and the organisation. Therefore, work-life balance is no longer a concern for only working mothers, it recently became a phenomenon that all classes and groups of employees strive for. Several researchers have studied the relationship between demographic variables and the work-home or work/non-work interaction, which will be discussed next. (De Klerk & Mostert, 2010; Dash et al., 2012)

In a study conducted by De Klerk and Mostert (2010), investigating the socio-demographic predictors of work-life interaction in a South African context with a sample consisting of employees from the South African Police Service, the construction industry, the nursing profession and the mining industry, they found no significant relationship between marital status and work-home interaction. They did, however, find significant relationships between occupation, age, parental status, education level, gender and language with the dependent variable work-home interaction. On the other hand, Dash et al. (2012) found no significant differences in work-life balance among different demographic groups. They specifically tested for gender, age, marital status, management level and number of dependents, but could not find any statistically significant differences in the experience of work-life balance for these different demographic groups. Guest (as cited in Parkes & Langford, 2008) also found age, gender, marital status and dependent children, had no effect on work-life conflict.

Steyl and Koekemoer (2011) again found mixed results, as they also did not find any statistically significant relationship between gender, age, qualification or parental status with work/non-work conflict respectively. They did, however, found significant differences in work/non-work conflict for employees in different language and marital status groups. The study of Steyl and Koekemoer interestingly found that employees who spoke African languages experienced higher levels of private or non-work conflict with work than Afrikaans or English speaking employees. This might be due to the strong cultural obligations that African speaking employees have that might impact their work and cause conflict between their private and work roles. Finally, a study conducted in Pakistan by Chaudhry, Malik and Ahmad (2011) found a significant and negative relationship between age and work-life conflict, no significant

difference in experience of work-life conflict between male and female employees, but a significant difference in experience of work-life conflict between married and unmarried employees.

The inconsistencies among the results reported above might be due to the different measuring tools that were applied to these different cultural and international groups, whilst supposedly measuring similar constructs.

Although not the primary objective of this study, the findings with respect to the demographic variables will be presented for descriptive purposes

### **2.6.2 The Relationship between Personality and Work-Life Interaction**

“Personality refers to dynamic mental structures and coordinated mental processes that determine individual’s emotional and behavioural adjustments to their environments” (Michel et al., 2011, p 698). Personality is also referred to as a combination of emotional, attitudinal and behavioural response patterns unique to every individual, determining the distinctive manner in which people respond to different scenarios in their life (Engler, 2009).

Certain personality traits, as well as emotional intelligence, have been shown to influence behavioural patterns and interpretations of objective situations in a variety of life domains (Wayne et al., 2004). Fride and Ryan (as cited in Beauregard, 2006) proposes a model in which dispositional variables can influence the work-home interface in three different ways. They argue that personality may affect the type and amount of work and home role requirements that an individual experiences, it may influence an individual’s perceptions of work and home requirements; and it may influence the coping styles and strategies that individuals use to manage the interference between home and work, and in turn affect their experience of work-life balance or work-life imbalance (Beauregard, 2006). In the current study personality traits are hypothesised to influence the relationship between the antecedents of work-life balance and the actual experience of work-life balance, as it is expected that individuals with different personality trait profiles will experience work-life balance or imbalance differently.

Various personality and demographic characteristics may have a pronounced effect on the degree to which employees experience and cope with work-family conflict or

imbalance. In similar vein various researchers have established that personality and individual characteristics play a role in determining to what extent individuals experience interference between work and home. In a study conducted by Carlson (1999) it was found that Type-A personality traits and negative affectivity were significantly related to behaviour based work-family conflict. Similarly, Beauregard (2005) found the personality trait of perfectionism to be significantly related to work-home and home-work interference. In another study conducted by Andreassi and Thompson (2007), it was found that there is a significant negative relationship between locus of control and work-family conflict. Correspondingly, Blanch and Aluja (2009) found personality traits such as impulsive sensation seeking, neuroticism-anxiety, aggression-hostility, activity and sociability to be negatively related to work-family interference. An extensive study conducted by Rotondo and Kincaid (2008) reported that a direct action approach by individuals and positive thinking as coping styles with respect to work-family conflict were associated with lower levels of family-work conflict and higher levels of work-family facilitation.

Cognisance is taken of the fact that there may be various personality traits that could also have a direct effect on work-life interaction, but in this particular study, they will not be considered for testing. In the current study, selected personality traits and emotional intelligence will be discussed with respect to their role in the experience of work-life interaction.

#### **2.6.2.1      *Conscientiousness***

Conscientiousness defines a person that is acting according to his/her conscience. It includes elements such as self-discipline, carefulness, thoroughness, high organisational skills, deliberation (the tendency to think carefully before acting), orderliness, efficiency and a high need for achievement (Wayne et al., 2002). Conscientious individuals are generally very hard-working, responsible and reliable. Bruck and Allen (2003) describes an individual who scores high in this dimension as purposeful, determined, punctual, reliable, organised, strong willed and usually achieves academic and organisational success.

When taken to an extreme, they may also be workaholics, perfectionists, and compulsive in their behaviour and work. Kossek, Noe and De Marr (1999) stated that employees high in conscientiousness are likely to invest high levels of time and

energy in both their work and life domains, as they have a high commitment to perform at their best in whatever roles they are performing and as a result experience higher levels of work-life interference. Individuals high in conscientiousness might have a high need for achievement, performance and success, paired with a unrealistic and critical evaluation of their own performance, never being good enough, resulting in excessive stress, exhaustion and misuse of time and resources with a negative interference effect between work-to-home and home-to-work respectively. In contrast, individuals low in conscientiousness is without much drive or enthusiasm to complete tasks or achieve results, doing something in a lazy or careless way. They can be described as careless, apathetic, aimless, indifferent and unreliable. One could hypothesise that the relationship between conscientiousness and work-life interaction could be of a curvilinear nature, but in the absence of previous known empirical support for this notion, the relationship was treated as linear in the current study.

Conscientious people have always been seen as high performers in a variety of work domains, and it is thus likely that individuals high in conscientiousness, who have highly demanding jobs, will be more efficient in handling role conflict and work specific stressors due to their meticulous traits, effective organisational and efficient time management skills. Due to their efficacy, conscientious individuals might complete tasks more effectively and efficiently with the time and resources they have available, reducing incompatible time pressures and resources, possibly reducing role strain, stress and conflict. Highly conscientious individuals are therefore less likely to experience work-life interference and more able to achieve work-life balance.

The study conducted by Wayne et al. (2002) found conscientiousness to be negatively related to work-family conflict with a small effect size. They found no significant relationships between conscientiousness and any of the forms of work-to-family and family-to-work interaction, with the exception of a small positive correlation with the positive forms of family-to-work interaction. Similarly Bruck and Allen (2003) also found small negative relationships between conscientiousness and three forms of time, strain and behaviour based work-family conflict respectively. They also found conscientiousness to be negatively related to family-work interference with a small effect size, indicating that more conscientious people tend to experience less family interference with work.

In the current study, it is anticipated that conscientiousness interacts with role conflict, work demands and work-family culture, and that it moderates their respective relationships with the dimensions of work-life interaction (Hypotheses 7, 8 & 9 respectively).

### **2.6.2.2      *Neuroticism***

Neuroticism defines a person that has a permanent tendency to experience negative emotional states and emotional instability. Individuals who score high in neuroticism are more likely than the average person to experience feelings such as anxiety, insecurity, defensiveness or clinical depression (Wayne et al., 2004). Bruck and Allen (2003) describes an individual who scores high in this dimension as experiencing constant worry, fear, guilt, sadness, anger, embarrassment and disgust. They respond poorly to environmental stress, and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. Alternatively, individuals low in neuroticism will be emotionally stable, even tempered, relaxed and calm. They will be able to handle situations in a much less stressful and upsetting way.

Neurotics may be less effective in completing tasks as they spend most of their time on worrying or focusing on negative aspects of the task than actually doing something to complete the task. These traits are likely to lead individuals to experience excessive work and family-related stress, and to find it more difficult to cope with and manage time, roles and responsibilities, which will cause them to experience high levels of role strain and work-family conflict (Wayne et al., 2002). Due to the nature of this trait, individuals high in neuroticism have a biased cognitive orientation towards experiences, always perceiving it in a negative light. They are likely to be easily distressed by role conflict, work demands and a negative work-home culture. They will thus be less able to influence the effect that certain determinants of work-family conflict will have on their experience of work-family conflict.

It is thus anticipated that individuals high in neuroticism will experience high levels of role conflict and work demands, be less likely to deal with strain between work and family domains, and thus be less able to achieve work-life balance and therefore experience high levels of work-family conflict. In their research studies, both Wayne

et al. (2002) and Bruck and Allen (2003) found a significant relationship between neuroticism and work-family conflict, with medium effect sizes respectively. None of the above studies found any relationship between neuroticism and the different forms of work-life interaction, with the exception of Wayne et al. (2002) who found neuroticism to be significantly negatively related to positive work-to-family interaction.

In the current study, it is anticipated that neuroticism interacts with role conflict, work demands and work-family culture, and that neuroticism moderates their respective relationships with the dimensions of work-life interaction (Hypothesis 10, 11 & 12 respectively).

#### **2.6.2.3 Agreeableness**

Agreeableness defines individuals who have the tendency to be pleasant and accommodating in social situations. People who score high on this dimension are kind, sympathetic, considerate, forgiving, friendly, generous, soft-hearted, cooperative, good natured and helpful (Bruck & Allen, 2003). They have an optimistic view of other people. They tend to believe that most people are honest, respectable, and trustworthy. Research also shows that people high in agreeableness are better able to control negative emotions like anger in conflict situations. Those who are high in agreeableness are more likely to use constructive tactics when in conflict, either with people or situations (Wayne et al., 2002). On the other hand, people who score low in agreeableness have an exaggerated sense of self-importance and a feeling of superiority toward other people; they are usually competitive, short-tempered, suspicious and cynical with respect to other people's intentions.

Due to the nature of this trait, individuals high in agreeableness are less likely to perceive interpersonal or situational conflict and more likely to experience support and success at work and home. They will thus be more capable of influencing the effect that certain determinants of work-family conflict will have on their experience of work-family conflict. It is thus anticipated that individuals high in agreeableness who experience high levels of role conflict and work demands, are less likely to experience work-family conflict and more able to achieve work-life balance. Wayne et al. (2002) and Bruck and Allen (2003) achieved concurring results in their studies of agreeableness and work-family conflict, both found a negative relationship with weak and medium effect sizes respectively. Wayne et al. (2002) found small positive

relationships between agreeableness and the positive forms of family-to-work interaction, but no relationship with positive work-to-family interaction. Bruck and Allen (2003), however, found agreeableness to be negatively related to the negative forms of work-family interference and family-work interference with small effect sizes.

In the current study, it is anticipated that agreeableness interacts with role conflict, work demands and work-family culture, and that agreeableness moderates their respective relationships with the dimensions of work-life interaction (Hypothesis 13, 14 & 15 respectively).

For further elaboration, Wayne, Musisca and Fleeson (2004) examined the predictive power of the big five personality traits in relation to work-family conflict and facilitation. The study explored whether personality predicts conflict or facilitation between work and family, and the results were quite interesting. They found significant evidence that a high level of conscientiousness related to low work-family conflict, neuroticism was positively related to work-family conflict and family-work conflict, agreeableness was negatively related to work-family conflict, but not family-work conflict, and no relationships were found between extraversion, openness, and work-family conflict or family-work conflict. Their results also showed that personality explained 15% additional variance in work-family conflict over and above the other determinants of work-family conflict considered in other research. With respect to facilitation, they found neuroticism to be significantly and negatively related to work-family facilitation; extraversion to be positively related to work-family facilitation and family-work facilitation, and conscientiousness and agreeableness were positively related to family-work facilitation, but not work-family facilitation, and openness was significantly and positively related to work-family facilitation, but not family-work facilitation. Their results also showed that personality explained 8% additional variance in facilitation over and above the determining variables of work-family conflict considered in other research. Wayne et al. (2004) also investigated whether work-family conflict and facilitation were predictive of work-life balance outcomes. They found that individuals high in neuroticism were less satisfied with their jobs, individuals high in conscientiousness reported investing more effort into their jobs, and agreeableness and extraversion were positively related to job and family satisfaction.

Taken as a whole it can be argued that the personality traits of conscientiousness, neuroticism and agreeableness do play a role in the experience of attempts to achieve work-life balance. As the discussion above has shown, not enough support for the inclusion of Extraversion and Openness as antecedents of work-life balance could be found in the literature review to consider inclusion in this study. Several personalistic variables, other than the Big Five, will also be investigated to establish whether it also has an effect on the experience of work-life interaction.

#### **2.6.2.4 Affectivity**

Affectivity can be classified as dispositional traits that include stable and consistent ways of thinking, feeling and acting, exhibited by individuals across situations. It acts as the framework through which the appraisal of situations is made (Stoeva, Chiu & Greenhaus, 2002).

Negative affectivity (NA) refers to a general state of anxiety, anger and nervousness. These people are prone to subjective distress, fear and depression, and tend to experience constant feelings of anger, fear, disgust, discomfort, dissatisfaction and hatred (Stoeva et al., 2002). Negative affectivity is also characterised by a tendency to experience aversive emotional states and a negative self-concept, and to experience life in a generally more negative light. Individuals with a high level of negative affectivity are likely to find themselves in situations where they encounter more stressors, and are thus highly likely to experience higher levels of work-family conflict (Bruck & Allen, 2003).

Positive affectivity (PA) refers to a general state of enthusiasm, activity and alertness (Karatepe & Uludag, 2008). Individuals with a high level of positive affectivity are prone to subjective feelings of joy, energy and excitement. Positive affectivity is also characterised by a tendency to experience positive emotional states and a positive self-concept, and to experience life in a generally more positive light. These people are likely to find themselves in pleasant situations, where they process information accurately and efficiently, solve problems and achieve successful results, and are thus highly likely to experience lower levels of work-family conflict.

Negative affectivity correlates with neuroticism, whereas positive affectivity correlates with extraversion (Bruck & Allen, 2003). Both Karatepe and Uludag (2008) and Michel and Clark (2009) have reported a positive relationship between negative affectivity

and work-family conflict and a negative relationship between positive affectivity and work-family conflict. More specifically, Michel and Clark (2009) found a negative relationship between NA and the negative form of work-to-family interaction and a positive relationship between PA and the positive form of work-to-family interaction, both with a medium effect size. Both Stoeva et al. (2002) and Karatepe and Uludag (2008) only tested for the negative forms of interaction and both found NA to positively relate to the negative form of work-to-family interaction with a small effect size and PA to negatively relate to the positive form of work-to-family interaction with a small effect size.

Several studies have investigated the relationship between personality and work-family conflict that have contributed valuable insights to the study of these variables. Bruck and Allen (2003) investigated the relationship between the Big Five Personality traits, Type A personality, negative affectivity, and work-family conflict. Bruck and Allen did not find significant relationships between extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience, Type A personality, and work-family conflict. They did, however, find a significant relationship between negative affectivity, agreeableness, and work-family conflict. It is interesting to note though that in their study conscientiousness was negatively related to family-work interference, which could perhaps be attributable to the hypothesised curvilinear relationship between conscientiousness and family-work interference, and neuroticism had a significant positive relationship with overall work-family conflict. In general they found that the Big Five traits accounted for significant additional variance in work-family conflict over and above other determining variables of work-family conflict, like PA and NA, considered in other research. In correspondence with the study of Bruck and Allen, Carlson (1999) also found no significant relationship between Type A personality and work-family conflict, and a significantly positive relationship between negative affectivity and work-family conflict. Carlson's study demonstrated that personality explained 5% additional variance in work-family conflict, over and above other determinants of work-family conflict, like work-role conflict, work-role ambiguity, family-role conflict and family-role ambiguity.

In the current study, it is anticipated that negative affectivity interacts with role conflict, work demands and work-family culture, with negative affectivity moderating the experience of work-life interaction (Hypothesis 16, 17 & 18 respectively).

In contrast to the above, it is anticipated that positive affectivity interacts with role conflict, work demands and work-family culture, with positive affectivity moderating the experience of work-life interaction (Hypothesis 19, 20 & 21 respectively).

#### **2.6.2.5      *Emotional intelligence***

Emotional intelligence (EI) is described as a capacity, skill or a self-perceived ability, to identify, assess, and manage the emotions of one's self and of others. Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 189) defined EI as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions." This broad concept of emotional intelligence has undergone extensive empirical research and debate resulting in the standard consensus and distinction of two different approaches to studying emotional intelligence, namely the trait approach to emotional intelligence and the ability approach to emotional intelligence. Petrides, Pita and Kokkinaki (2007, p.287) defines trait emotional intelligence as "a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies" and proposes trait emotional intelligence to consist of self-control, emotionality, sociability and wellbeing. Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 189) defines ability emotional intelligence as "the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions." Petrides (2011) makes it very clear that measures of trait and ability emotional intelligence must be differentiated, as correlations between the two measures are invariably low and thereby supporting a distinction between the two constructs.

In the current study, EI was regarded as an individual trait as described in the trait approach to emotional intelligence which refers to an individual's self-perception of his/her emotional abilities. Carmeli (2003) views EI as a competency that enhances positive attitudes towards work, and drives positive behaviours and better outcomes. This collection of emotional skills provides individuals with the ability to cope effectively with situational and interpersonal demands, pressures and conflicts. It can be anticipated that individuals high in EI will be better able to balance work and family life and prevent work-family conflict (WFC) due their wise perceptions of the value that work-life balance can add to their emotions (Carmeli, 2003). Emotionally intelligent people are likely to have the skills and capacity to manage conflict between work and life, as they are capable of effectively identifying and managing the

emotions that goes along with it, reducing the degree to which role conflict and work demands affect the experience of work-life balance.

Both Carmeli (2003) and Lenaghan et al. (2007) specifically tested the relationship between EI and WFC, and both studies found a significantly negative relationship of medium effect size. Indicating that individuals high in EI experience lower levels of WFC, as they are more capable of managing the experience of work-family conflict, and therefore be better able to achieve work-life balance.

It is thus anticipated that individuals with a higher level of EI are likely to have the ability to reduce the degree of interference that role conflict has on work-life balance. In the current study, it is anticipated that emotional intelligence interacts with role conflict and moderates the experience of work-life interference (Hypothesis 22).

## 2.7 Summary

In the current study, the determinants of work-life interference have been investigated, together with the possible effect that personalistic variables may have on the relationship between the determinants of and the experience of work-life interaction. The study has further explored the suggestion that the level of work-life interaction will be related to the degree of employee work engagement experienced.

The synopsis of the literature review indicated that research on work-life interaction has found a very valid place in the human behavioural studies, since it plays an important role in how employees experience either interference or facilitation of different roles in their lives; and how that affects their work performance, satisfaction and engagement with respect to the different requirements of their private and work roles. As discussed in chapter one, work-life balance can be facilitated through the provision of various work-life balance initiatives and organisational support of work-life balance. Should work-life balance be achieved, it holds a variety of positive outcomes and benefits for both the organisation and the individual. The current study postulates that the achievement of work-life balance holds the potential to enable employee work engagement, an outcome desired by most organisations, as engagement holds many benefits for workplace as well, particularly but not limited to work performance.

From the literature review a consistent premise originated, suggesting that the nature and direction of work-life interaction is associated with the degree of employee work engagement. The positive forms of work-life interaction is expected to be associated with a higher degree of work engagement, while the negative forms of work-life interaction is expected to be associated with a lower degree of employee work engagement (Hypothesis 22).

The determinants of work-life interaction identified in the current study, have proven itself worthy of consideration; as work-related role conflict, work demands and work-family culture have in several studies been found to be significant antecedents of work-life interaction. These determinants have been identified in the current study as the most salient causes of work-life interaction. The current study further explored the possible effect of personalistic variables on the relationship between the determinants of work-life interaction and the experience of work-life interaction. Although a wide spectrum of dispositional factors exist that can play a role in the indicated relationship, only certain factors have been found to be significant antecedents in the literature review.

The findings of this study are anticipated to provide support for the notion that work engagement will be promoted by the facilitation of work-life balance, as it is expected that managing the work demands and working hours of employees by means of work-life balance initiatives, together with the development of a positive work-life culture in the organisation, will assist employees in achieving work-life balance. It is further anticipated that certain personality traits will be associated with differences in the experience of work-life balance and that managing the work-life balance domain in accordance with the personality of an employee, will result in an optimal level of work-life balance and in increased employee work engagement. The expected results should motivate human capital practitioners to provide and manage work-life balance initiatives for employees, as it is expected to be a significant predictor of work engagement.

This study wishes to inform or enhance the understanding of human capital practitioners of the role of personalistic variables in the pursuit of work-life balance. If the role of personalistic variables is confirmed, the personalistic variables studied in this study might be defined as desired characteristics during selection. These personalistic characteristics may be considered as desired traits for the achievement

of work-life balance over and above the essential characteristics required for optimal job performance in a specific position.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introductory Comments

From the literature review an argument systematically unfolded with respect to the effect of personality on the experience of work-life balance and its resultant effect on the achievement of employee work engagement, as depicted in the proposed theoretical model (Figure 3.1).

The literature review has led to a research initiating question and a proposed theoretical model to be utilised in investigating the determinants of work-life interaction and whether work-life interaction influences employee work engagement. The study will aim to determine whether negative relationships exist between role conflict, work demands and the positive forms of work-life interaction, and positive relationships exist between work-family culture and the positive forms of work-life interaction. The research will further aim to establish whether selected personalistic variables such as conscientiousness, neuroticism, agreeableness, negative affectivity, positive affectivity and emotional intelligence moderate the relationships between the independent variables and work-life interference.

#### 3.1.1 Dependent Variables

Dependent variables refer to the output or the results of the explanatory model studied and are expected to change in response to changes in the independent variables. A dependent variable is also known as a response variable, measured variable, explained variable, outcome variable, experimental variable or output variable.

The measurements and results obtained with respect to the dependent variables represent the outcomes that employees will experience as a result of their individual perceptions, experiences and management of their work and private lives based on the network of influencing factors. The dependent variables have been discussed in Chapter 2 and have been defined as the dimensions of Work-Life interaction.

### 3.1.2 Independent Variables

The independent variables in this study are presented as a network of interactive variables that influence the relationships depicted in Figure 3.1 to achieve the dependent variables. Independent variables refer to the causes of the tested relationships and are measured to evaluate whether the independent variable has an influence or effect on a specified dependent variable or whether it could possibly be seen as the cause thereof. An independent variable is also known as a predictor variable, controlled variable, manipulated variable or explanatory variable.

The measurements and results obtained with respect to the independent variables represent the antecedents and the moderating variables of the relationships between the organisational variables and work life interference. The independent variables have been discussed in Chapter 2 and will thus only be listed below. They are:

- 1) Role conflict
- 2) Work demand
- 3) Work-home culture
- 4) Conscientiousness
- 5) Neuroticism
- 6) Agreeableness
- 7) Negative affectivity
- 8) Positive affectivity
- 9) Emotional Intelligence

## 3.2 Research questions

Previous research has demonstrated that several organisational factors can be the cause of work-life interaction and by managing these influencing factors work-life balance may be optimised (Dikkers et al., 2007; Mesmer-Magnus & Visweswaran, 2006; Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999; Scharlach, 2001). Research has further been expanded to include the effect of personality traits as antecedents or moderating variables, arguing that different personalities will experience and achieve work life balance in different ways. This research study aimed to explore whether it is possible for different employees with differing personality profiles to experience

differing degrees of work-life interaction and as a consequence achieve differing degrees of employee work engagement.

In the current study, the following research questions have been investigated:

- Do organisational variables, such as work demands, work-related role conflict and work-family culture influence the nature of work-life interaction experienced?
- Do personalistic variables act as intervening variables in the relationships between the determinants of work-life interaction and the nature of work-life interaction experienced?
- Does the experience of work-life interaction influence the level of employee work engagement?

### **3.3 Research objectives**

These research questions will be addressed by pursuing the following research objectives:

- To investigate the effect of organisational variables like role conflict, work demands and work-family culture on the nature of work-life interaction.
- To investigate whether the personalistic variables moderate the experience of work-life interaction.
- To investigate the relationship between work-life interaction and employee work engagement.

### **3.4 Substantive Research Hypotheses**

Based on the arguments and research questions of this study, a number of direct hypotheses can be formulated. The hypotheses are in accordance with the proposed relationships between the latent variables as derived from the literature review and as depicted in the proposed theoretical model.

The following research hypotheses and associated statistical hypotheses were formulated:

**Hypothesis 1:**

Role conflict has a negative effect on the positive forms of work-life interaction and a positive effect on the negative forms of work-life interaction

$$H_{01}: \rho(X_1, Y_1) = 0$$

$$H_{a1}: \rho(X_1, Y_1) < 0$$

**Hypothesis 2:**

Work demand has a negative effect on the positive forms of work-life interaction and a positive effect on the negative forms of work-life interaction

$$H_{02}: \rho(X_2, Y_1) = 0$$

$$H_{a2}: \rho(X_2, Y_1) < 0$$

**Hypothesis 3:**

Work-home culture has a positive effect on the positive forms of work-life interaction and a negative effect on the negative forms of work-life interaction.

$$H_{03}: \rho(X_3, Y_1) = 0$$

$$H_{a3}: \rho(X_3, Y_1) < 0$$

**Hypothesis 4:**

Conscientiousness moderates the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{04}: \beta_4 (X_1 * X_5) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a4}: \beta_4 (X_1 * X_5) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 5:**

Conscientiousness moderates the relationship between work demands and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{05}: \beta_5 (X_2 * X_5) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a5}: \beta_5 (X_2 * X_5) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 6:**

Conscientiousness moderates the relationship between work-family culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{06}: \beta_6 (X_3 * X_5) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a6}: \beta_6 (X_3 * X_5) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 7:**

Neuroticism moderates the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{07}: \beta_7 (X_1 * X_6) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a7}: \beta_7 (X_1 * X_6) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 8:**

Neuroticism moderates the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{08}: \beta_8 (X_2 * X_6) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a8}: \beta_8 (X_2 * X_6) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 9:**

Neuroticism moderates the relationship between work-family culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{09}: \beta_9 (X_3 * X_6) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a9}: \beta_9 (X_3 * X_6) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 10:**

Agreeableness moderates the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{010}: \beta_{10} (X_1 * X_7) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a10}: \beta_{10} (X_1 * X_7) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 11:**

Agreeableness moderates the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{011}: \beta_{11} (X_2 * X_7) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a11}: \beta_{11} (X_2 * X_7) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 12:**

Agreeableness moderates the relationship between work-family culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{012}: \beta_{12} (X_3 * X_7) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a12}: \beta_{12} (X_3 * X_7) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 13:**

Negative affectivity moderates the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{013}: \beta_{13} (X_1 * X_8) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a13}: \beta_{13} (X_1 * X_8) < 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 14:**

Negative affectivity moderates the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{014}: \beta_{14} (X_2 * X_8) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a14}: \beta_{14} (X_2 * X_8) < 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 15:**

Negative affectivity moderates the relationship between work-family culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{015}: \beta_{15} (X_3 * X_8) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a15}: \beta_{15} (X_3 * X_8) < 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 16:**

Positive affectivity moderates the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{016}: \beta_{16} (X_1 * X_9) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a16}: \beta_{16} (X_1 * X_9) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 17:**

Positive affectivity moderates the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{017}: \beta_{17} (X_2 * X_9) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a17}: \beta_{17} (X_2 * X_9) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 18:**

Positive affectivity moderates the relationship between work-family culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{018}: \beta_{18} (X_3 * X_9) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a18}: \beta_{18} (X_3 * X_9) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 19:**

EI moderates the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{019}: \beta_{19} (X_1 * X_4) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a19}: \beta_{19} (X_1 * X_4) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 20:**

EI moderates the relationship between work demands and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{020}: \beta_{20} (X_2 * X_4) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a20}: \beta_{20} (X_2 * X_4) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 21:**

EI moderates the relationship between work-family culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

$$H_{021}: \beta_{21} (X_3 * X_4) = 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

$$H_{a21}: \beta_{21} (X_3 * X_4) > 0 | \beta_i \neq 0$$

**Hypothesis 22:**

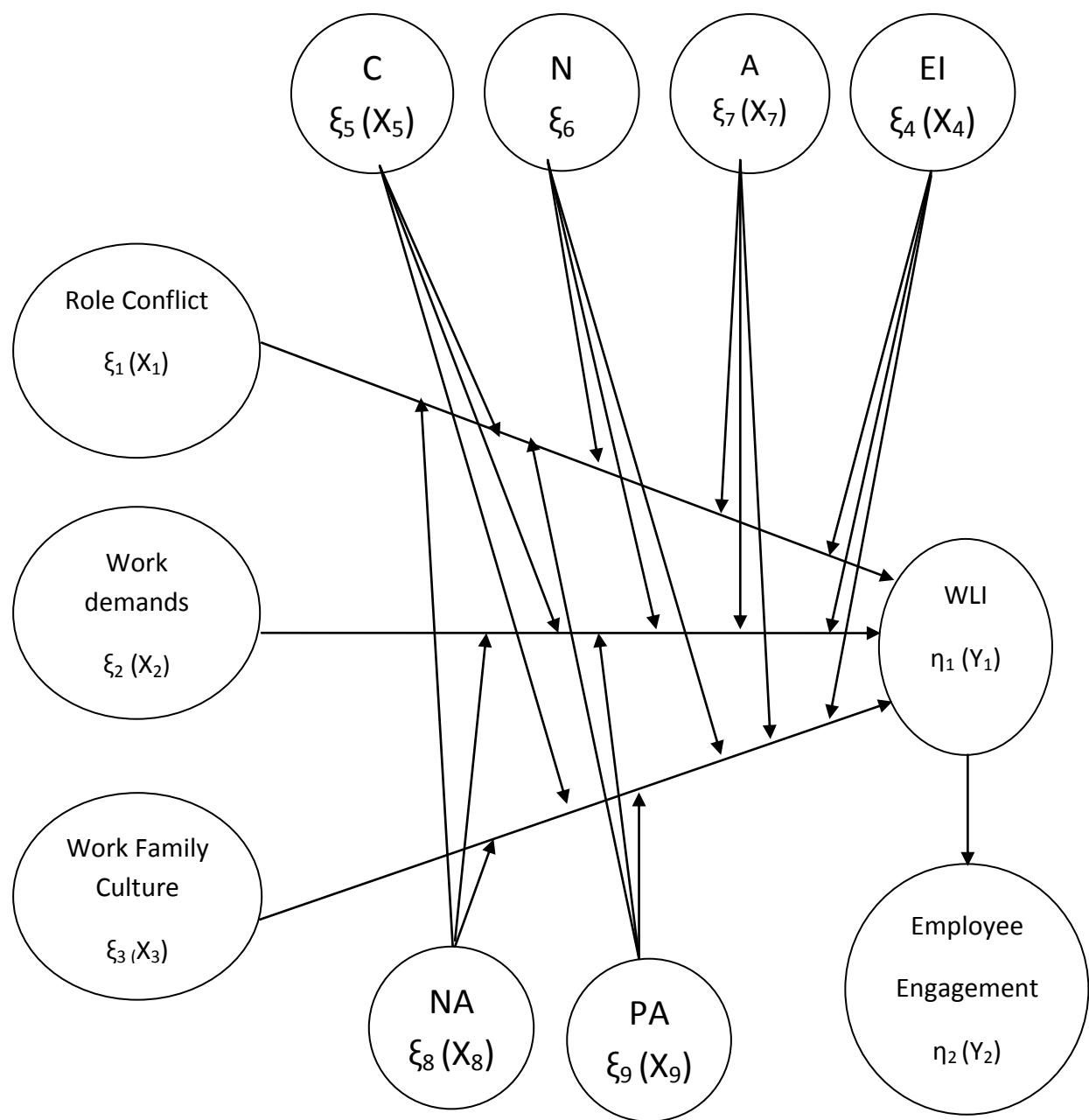
The dimensions of work-life interaction have a significant relationship with employee work engagement.

$$H_{022}: \rho (Y_1, Y_2) = 0$$

$$H_{a22}: \rho (Y_1, Y_2) < 0$$

The proposed theoretical model and anticipated relationships between the variables is graphically represented in Figure 3.1. The model suggests a direct relationship between work demands, work-related role conflict and work-life interaction and a direct relationship between work-family-culture and work-life interaction. The model furthermore suggests that conscientiousness, neuroticism, agreeableness, negative affectivity and positive affectivity have a moderating effect on the relationships between work demands, work-related role conflict, work-family culture and work-life interaction respectively. Furthermore the model suggests that emotional intelligence has a moderating effect on the relationship between role conflict and work-life interaction. Lastly the model suggests a direct relationship between work-life interaction and work engagement.

In the current study, the validity of the hypothesized relationships is to be investigated empirically.



**Figure 3.1: Proposed theoretical model**

### 3.5 Research Design

Research design is defined as a set of guidelines that are followed to address the research problem. A research design is a plan of how the researcher intends to conduct the research; it focuses on the kind of study that is being planned and the kind of results that is aimed for (Mouton, 2001). The research design enables the researcher to anticipate appropriate research decisions that need to be made to maximise the validity of the results (Mouton, as cited in Mjoli, 2008). The research design thus proposes the framework that regulates the manner in which the validity of the hypothesised relationships between variables will be studied, ensuring empirical evidence that can be interpreted unambiguously for or against the assumed interactions (Kerlinger, 1973).

The current research study will follow a quantitative approach to systematically and empirically test a range of hypotheses that was hypothesised as a result of a research initiating question and literature review. This quantitative research approach will be used to investigate the proposed moderating effect that personality has on the relationship between the antecedents of and the experience of work-life balance, and its resultant effect on employee work engagement, as depicted in the proposed theoretical model. The research design will follow a post hoc non-experimental research design, by which the researcher will analyse the data collected after the study has been concluded, without manipulating or controlling the variables in any way (Kerlinger, 1973).

For the current study a survey research approach (exploratory survey study) was used to empirically investigate the difference in experience and consequent behaviour of humans when being confronted by certain situations in their lives. A questionnaire was used to ask respondents how they react to certain elements related to work life interference. Survey research is probably the best method to collect original data from the respondents to describe a population that is otherwise too large to observe directly (Mjoli, 2008).

Both correlational and multivariate statistical techniques were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables, however taking into consideration that correlations do not necessarily imply causal relations between the variables.

This study evaluated the inter-correlations between the variables as proposed in the theoretical model, as well as analysed the multiple regression correlations between the variables in the theoretical model.

### **3.6 Participants and Sampling**

Research participants were drawn from a selection of Namibian based corporate companies. The sample of participants have been drawn by means of non-probability, convenience sampling. The sample consisted of a group of companies operating in a wide variety of industries, which included manufacturing of fast moving consumable goods, finance and auditing services, information technology, property management, retail, industrial engineering and administrative and financial support services.

The unit of analysis for this research sample was the individual employee. The sample consisted of males and females, ranging from 20-60 years of age, and representing all cultures and races of the country. The requirement for inclusion in the study was that employees needed to have worked in the targeted company for at least one year. The sample included employees in all junior, middle and senior management levels and departments of the organisations sampled. A large enough sample was sourced to achieve a total of 166 valid responses.

### **3.7 Procedure of Data Collection**

All junior to senior management level employees in the companies were asked to volunteer for the study and all those who volunteered were asked to participate in the study. Questionnaires were sent out via company e-mail servers, to all employees who have an e-mail account, to complete on a voluntary basis. The collection of data was completed within a period of three months. Questionnaires were accompanied by a letter explaining the purpose of the study, instructions for completing the study, defining the components included in the study and an informed consent form for respondents to complete. Permission was requested from the Human Capital Director and /or Managing Directors of the respective companies to recruit participants to participate in the research. Participants completed an electronic survey anonymously and submitted it automatically via a web based survey function.

### **3.8 Measuring Instruments**

A self-compiled research survey questionnaire was used by the researcher to gather the data. Questionnaire items tested the different variables as hypothesised in the proposed theoretical model and were obtained either by utilising assessment instruments that were available for use in the public domain or by obtaining permission to use the items from the original authors of the instruments.

#### **3.8.1 Biographical data**

Biographical data was gathered to obtain information on various variables that are useful for categorising individuals into groups of respondents. The questionnaire included items that measured categorical variables, ranging from gender, age, ethnic group, marital status, employment status of spouse, number of dependents, type and level of job, and work-life balance support facilities available at the respective organisations (Section 1).

#### **3.8.2 Work engagement**

Work engagement was measured by utilising the shortened version of The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES -9), developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). This scale measures work engagement through three subscales namely, Vigour, Dedication and Absorption. Each subscale is measured by three items and is scored on a seven-point frequency rating scale (Section 2).

Several studies (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008; Mostert & Rathbone, 2001; Seppala, Mauno, Feldt, Hakanen, Kinnunen, Tolvanen & Schaufeli, 2009; Sui et al., 2010) have established that the UWES-9 boasts internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) ranging between .89 and .97 for all three factors, and that the three factors were highly correlated, as correlations between the latent factors ranged from .83 to .97. Reliability and validity were also confirmed, as the UWES-9 measured work engagement in a similar fashion across different occupations, samples and time variants, group- and time-invariance hypotheses were well supported by the study of Seppala et al. (2009), confirming construct validity.

A study by Schaufeli et al. (2006) also confirmed a Cronbach's alpha score of higher than 0.80 for the total UWES-9 score across different nations and languages. They confirmed high internal consistencies, good data fit and significant correlations

between the latent variables. They furthermore confirmed that “the UWES-9 score can be used as an overall measure of work engagement” (Schaufeli et al., 2006).

### **3.8.3 Work-life interaction**

Work-life interaction was measured with the Survey Work-Home Interaction Nijmegen (SWING) instrument developed by Wagena and Geurts (2000) at the Radboud University in Nijmegen, Netherlands. The SWING is very unique as it distinguishes between the quality and direction of work-home interaction, and is based on the theoretical perspective of the Effort-Recovery model. The SWING consists of four factors, namely the negative work-home interaction, negative home-work interaction, positive work-home interaction and positive home-work interaction. These four dimensions are measured using 27 items, with a response scale ranging from never (0) to always (3). A high score indicates a high level of “interference”. It is very effective as it captures the positive and negative dimensions of the work-life interface, as well as the direction and degree of influence between work and home functioning (Pieterse & Mostert, 2005). In the current study all the directions of interaction were included in the survey. Pieterse and Mostert (2005) found the SWING to be a very reliable and valid instrument to use for measuring work-home interaction in Southern Africa. The alpha scores for each of the four scales of interaction were NWHI = 0.87, NHWI = 0.79, PWHI = 0.79 and PHWI = 0.76 respectively. All their findings confirmed the reliability and construct validity of the SWING instrument. Pieterse and Mostert furthermore failed to find significant differences between the four factors or between different demographic groups. They also obtained construct equivalence for all four factors after removing three problematic items with Tucker’s phi coefficients for. Geurts et al. (2005) reported similar findings in their study, as they also obtained significant internal consistencies for each of the four scales of interaction, namely NWHI = 0.84, NHWI = 0.75, PWHI = 0.75 and PHWI = 0.81.

### **3.8.4 Determinants of work-life interaction**

Role conflict, work demand and perceived work-home culture were measured by a combined questionnaire consisting of three sections. A four point Likert scale was used for all sections, to which candidates could respond per item using a response scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Higher scores will indicate a higher degree of each variable. The Cronbach Alpha for each dimension

and scale was calculated. Although the questions were derived from relatively dated instruments, these instruments are still considered by most researchers in this field to be the most valid and reliable scales to use to test these particular constructs.

The fourth section measured the person's degree of work-related role conflict using the Rizzo, House and Lirtzman's (1979) eight-item measure of role conflict. Examples of the statements are: "I receive incompatible demands from two or more people" and "Do you have more to do than you could handle comfortably?" (Carlson, 1999, p. 243).

The fifth section measured the person's degree of work demand by measuring work load and overtime worked. Work load was measured by a sub-scale from the NOVA-WEBA (Dhondt & Houtman, 1992) questionnaire, developed to identify risk factors for work stress. Work load in the NOVA-WEBA questionnaire consists of five items based on the psychological demands scale of the Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ, Karasek, Brisson, Kawakami, Houtman, Bongers & Amick, 1998) with a response scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). A high score indicates high job demands. Examples of questions are: "Do you have a lot of work to do?" and "Do you have to work very fast?" (Dikkers et al., 2007, p. 306).

Overtime worked was measured by calculating the average number of hours worked overtime per week per participant. This was calculated by subtracting the number of hours per week the participant had to work according to his/her contract from the number of hours they indicated that they worked in an average week (Taris et al., 2006). A higher score indicated more overtime worked. The two sets of items were combined and the scores were summated to obtain a score for work demand.

Section 6 measured the person's perception of work-home culture measured with an 18-item instrument developed by Dikkers, Geurts, Den Dulk, Peper and Kompier (as cited in Dikkers et al., 2007). The 18 items in the questionnaire primarily measured supervisor and colleagues support in terms of the previously proposed five work-home culture components (organisational support, supervisor's support, colleagues' support, career consequences & organisational time demands).

### 3.8.5 Big Five Personality traits

The Neuroticism, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness personality traits were measured by making use of 30 items derived from the International Personality Item Pool (<http://ipip.ori.org/newNEOKey.htm>), which is based on the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R). The original version of the measurement was the Neuroticism-Extroversion-Openness Inventory (NEO-I). This version only measured three of the Big Five personality traits. It was later revised to include all five traits and renamed the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI). The test was developed by Costa and McCrae (1991) for use with adult (18+) men and women. It is a psychological personality inventory consisting of five subsections, each with twelve items and sixty questions in total, measuring the factors of Extraversion (E), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), Neuroticism (N), and Openness to Experience (O). Responses were indicated on a four point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Higher scores indicate a higher level with respect to each dimension (Bruck & Allen, 2003).

Costa and McCrae (2006) declared the internal consistency information of the NEO-PI-R presented in the manual as high, with the following alpha coefficients for the different traits, N= .92, E= .89, O= .87, A= .86, C= .90. Test-retest reliability of the NEO is also good, as the results of the test-retest reliability of the NEO after 3 months were N= .87, E= .91, O= .86 (McCrae & Costa, 2006), and after 6 years were N= .83, E= .82, O= .83, A= .63, C= .79. Costa and McCrae points out that this does not only show good reliability of the domains, but also that they are stable over a long period of time (past the age of 30), as the scores over 6 years were only marginally different than the scores measured a few months before (Costa & McCrae, 2006). Wayne et al. (2002) have confirmed this in their study, as they have also found significant evidence for reliability and validity, with Cronbach's alpha scores of A=.83, N= .74, and C= .60. Studies conducted by Gow, Whiteman, Pattie and Deary (2005) and Jensen-Campbell, Rosselli, Workman, Santisi, Rios and Bojan (2002) also achieved high internal consistency scores for the big five personality traits with the following alpha coefficients, E=.86, A=.81, N=.85, C=.77 and O=.80. The International Personality Item Pool has also shown to correlate highly with the NEO-PI-R with correlation ranging between .85 to .92 when corrected for unreliability (International Personality Item Pool, 2001).

### 3.8.6 Affectivity

Affectivity was measured using the Negative Affectivity Positive Affectivity Schedule (PANAS) developed by Watson, Clark and Tellegen (1988). Although this is a fairly outdated measuring instrument, it was established in the literature review that this instrument is still the most commonly used and reliable instrument. This instrument measures positive affectivity (PA) and negative affectivity (NA) respectively. Responses are indicated on a four point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Crawford and Henry (2004) reported internal consistencies as measured by Cronbach's alpha scores for PA= .89 and for NA= .85. Although Crawford and Henry originally reported poor but significant model fit to the data and a negative correlation between PA and NA when measured as two independent factors, they achieved better model fit statistics when the two factors were considered to co-vary. They also found evidence that the two constructs are relatively independent.

### 3.8.7 Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence was measured using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by Schutte and Malouff (1998). This scale is based on the model of Salovey and Mayer (1990) and was later formulated into the EIS. The EIS consists of 33 items which assesses to which extent individuals perceive, understand, regulate and control emotions adaptively. Respondents rate their agreements with statements on a four point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). The internal consistency for this scale, as measured by Cronbach's Alpha was shown to be .90 (Carmeli, 2003; Lenaghan et al., 2007) and between .87 and .90 (Schutte & Malouff, 1998). Lenaghan, Buda and Eisner (2007) declared that the EIS is a reliable, valid measure of Emotional Intelligence as conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer.

## 3.9 Statistical Analysis

The data of this study was analysed by means of quantitative statistical techniques to establish the strength, direction and significance of specific relationships between the selected variables. To establish whether each of the determinants of work-life interaction correlates significantly with the experience of work-life interaction, a number of zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients have been calculated. In order to establish whether the personalistic variables have a moderating effect on the

relationship between the determinants of work life interaction and the experience of work life interaction, a series of moderated multiple regression analyses have been performed. In order to clarify the results obtained, further multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine the amount of additional variance explained in the case of each of the dependent variables when the personalistic variables were added to the predictive model. Given the results obtained for the series of moderated regressions that were conducted, the hypothesis that the personalistic variables may be mediating the relationship between the organisational variables and the four dimensions of work-life interaction was also investigated by means of a series of Sobel analyses.

The relationships between the dimensions of work-life interaction and work engagement were investigated by means of zero-order Pearson correlations. The hypothesis was subsequently developed that the personalistic variables also influence the relationships between the dimensions of work-life interaction and work engagement. Subsequent analyses were therefore performed to investigate this hypothesis.

The Best Subsets Regression method were used in the multiple regression analyses to determine which independent variables (predictors) should be included in the multiple regression model. This method involves identifying all of the possible regression models derived from all the possible combinations of predictor variables, using  $R^2$  to look for the best model. The predictor models with the highest  $R^2$  or that do the best at meeting the criteria being tested are identified, being characterised as the best subset, and are further refined and evaluated to find the model that best describes the proposed theoretical model. (The Pennsylvania State University, 2013)

### **3.9.1 Psychometric analysis**

Psychometric analyses were conducted on all measuring instruments to establish the internal consistency reliability of the instruments. Cronbach Alpha statistics were used to determine the degree to which there is consistency or reliability in the item responses, since it assesses the extent to which a set of test items (variables) can be treated as measuring a single or uni-dimensional latent construct. Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranges from -1 to 1, a high score indicating a high reliability level. A Cronbach Alpha value of .70 (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997) or greater and a minimum

inter-item correlation of .20 (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2009) will be regarded as an acceptable internal consistency, as indicated in Table 4.1 and 8.2.

### 3.9.2 Correlational analysis

To determine the strength and significance of the correlations between the different variables, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) and the corresponding probabilities were calculated. This calculation defines how well an independent variable relates to a dependent variable in a linear equation, estimating the correlation between these two variables. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) ranges from -1 to 1. A value of 1 indicates that a linear equation describes the relationship perfectly and positively, indicating that if  $X$  increase,  $Y$  increase. A score of -1 indicates that a linear equation describes the relationship perfectly, but negatively, meaning that if  $X$  increase,  $Y$  will decrease. A value of 0 indicates that the linear relationship is inappropriate and non-existing (Steyn, Smith, Du Toit & Strasheim, 1995).

Cohen's (1988) index of practical significance (effect size) was used to describe the correlation coefficients as follows:

- $r < .10$  indicates an insubstantial or trivial relationship
- $.10 > r < .30$  indicates a weak correlation of a small effect size
- $.30 > r < .50$  indicates a moderate correlation of a medium effect size
- $r > .50$  indicates a strong correlation with a large effect size

A significance level of  $p < .05$  were regarded as statistically significant and  $p < .01$  will be regarded as statistically highly significant.

### 3.9.3 Multiple regression analysis

Regression analysis is a technique used to analyse the relationship between, and prediction ability of a single dependent variable and a set of independent variables. Prediction ability involves the extent and significance level to which an independent variable or set of variables can predict the dependent variable. In the current study moderation regression analyses were conducted to create an interactional effect (moderator\*independent variable) in order to establish the size and significance of

the moderating effect of several personalistic variables on the relationship between work-life interference and the determinants of work-life interference. (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006; Salkind, 2007).

Following this analysis, the best subsets multiple regression and Sobel techniques were utilised to evaluate the possibility that the personalistic variables play a moderating or mediating role with respect to the relationship between the independent variables (antecedents of work-life interaction) and the dimensions of work-life interaction. The final series of multiple regression analyses were aimed at establishing the amount of additional variance explained in work engagement when the dimensions of work-life interaction and personalistic variables were added to the prediction model.

### **3.10 Concluding remarks**

In this chapter the dependent and independent variables in the theoretical model, as well as the research initiating questions and research objectives were defined. The substantive research hypotheses were derived from the literature review and the theoretical model was constructed with the aim to seek evidence for the research initiating questions and the research objectives. The description of the research design, the sampling, the measuring instruments, and data collection were presented in such a fashion that the study could be replicated. The statistical analyses that were used to evaluate the research data were discussed. The research results will be discussed in the following section.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH RESULTS

### 4.1 Introductory Comments

The following section presents and discusses the results of the statistical analyses performed on the data gathered. The sample demographics will be presented first, followed by the psychometric properties of the measurement instruments, the inter-correlations between the various variables, the moderated regression analyses, the multiple regression analyses and further statistical analyses.

### 4.2 Sample

Electronic questionnaires were sent out to the entire e-mail database of the targeted companies. The companies, in which the sampled employees worked, consisted mostly of organisations operating in the manufacturing, financial services, retail, property and information technology industries. They were all located in Namibia, while most were situated in the country's capital city Windhoek. This sample mainly consisted of employees in the lower, middle and senior management levels of the organisations, as they were typically the employees with a valid company e-mail address. Questionnaires were sent to more than 600 e-mail addresses, of which a response from 166 (N=166) employees were received. Table 4.1 describes the demographical information of the sample, indicating marital status, gender, ethnic group, whether their partners are employed and number of dependents.

**Table 4.1*****Descriptive statistics of the sample***

<b>Demographical Information</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>
	Married	78	47%
	Single	40	24%
	In a relationship	48	29%
<b>Gender</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>
	Male	89	54%
	Female	77	46%
<b>Ethnic group</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>
	White	103	62%
	Coloured	35	21%
	Black	28	17%
<b>Partner employed</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>
	Yes	113	68%
	No	48	29%
	Not applicable	5	3%
<b>Number of Dependents</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>
	4	7	4%
	5	73	44%
	6	29	17%
	8	29	17%
	10	22	13%
	12	4	2%
	13	2	1%

The descriptive statistics indicated that the mean age of the respondents were 32 years, ranging from 25 to 64 years of age. The gender distribution of the study sample reflected 89 (54%) males and 77 (46%) females. This indicates a good balance of gender distribution in the sample. The ethnic distribution of the study sample consisted of 103 (62%) white, 35 (21%) coloured and 28 (17%) black employees. These statistics regarding ethnic group do not represent as balanced a

representation of the races as one would have been desired. Of the 166 respondents in the study sample, 78 (47%) indicated that they were married, 40 (24%) indicated that they were single and 48 (29%) indicated that they were in a relationship. They were also requested to indicate whether their partners were employed, whereupon 113 (68%) indicated that their partners were indeed employed, 48 (29%) indicated that their partners were not employed and 5 (3%) indicated that the question was not applicable to them as they were probably single. This question apparently confused the single respondents and should have been formulated better. Respondents were also requested to indicate their number of dependents, of which they had an average of 6.6 dependents. This seems exceptionally high.

The type of organisation and level in the organisation are indicated in Table 4.2 and 4.3.

**Table 4.2**

***Description of sample in terms of the type of organisations***

Type of organisation	f	%
Manufacturing	85	51%
Financial Services	35	25%
Retail	28	17%
Property	10	6%
Information Technology	7	4%

**Table 4.3:*****Description of sample in terms of the employee levels in the organisation***

Level in organisation	f	%
General staff	33	20%
Lower management	34	20%
Middle management	70	42%
Higher management	23	14%
Executive level	7	4%

Respondents were questioned on whether their organisation provides work-life balance support initiatives and, if they do, what types they provide. The descriptive statistics indicated that the majority of respondents (69; 41%) have a friendly work-life balance culture and support system in the organisation, even though they do not provide that many initiatives to encourage or support work-life balance. The study sample did, however, indicate that 43 (26%) have flexible working arrangements and 34 (20%) have flexible working hours, with a very low percentage reporting any of the other support initiatives, as indicated in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4*****Work-life Balance Support Initiatives***

Work-life Balance Support Initiatives	f	%
Flexible working arrangements	43	26%
Flexible working hours	34	20%
Child care facilities	2	1%
Working from home options	7	4%
Employee assistance program	21	13%
Friendly work-life balance culture & support in the organisation	68	41%

### 4.3 Results of the Psychometric Analyses

Most of the measuring instruments have returned relatively high and satisfactory Cronbach Alpha values. The relatively high internal consistency found for each measuring instrument, as indicated by Cronbach Alpha values are represented in Table 4.5 and 4.6.

**Table 4.5**

***Psychometric Properties of the Work-related Instruments***

Work Descriptors	Items	M	SD.	$\bar{r}_{ij}$	$\alpha$
Work Engagement (WE)	9	46.92	90.4	.52	.90
Negative WHI (NWHI)	3	6.39	2.00	.61	.82
Negative HWI (NHWI)	4	5.92	1.74	.44	.76
Positive WHI (PWHI)	4	9.89	2.49	.49	.79
Positive HWI (PHWI)	4	10.83	3.21	.62	.85
Role Conflict (RC)	7	15.73	3.83	.37	.80
Work Demand (WD)	7	18.00	3.25	.31	.75
Work-Home Culture (WHC)	13	32.63	5.23	.28	.82

**Table 4.6**

***Psychometric Properties of the Personalistic Instruments***

Personality	Items	M	SD	$\bar{r}_{ij}$	$\alpha$
Conscientiousness (C)	10	31.15	3.57	.24	.75
Neuroticism (N)	10	20.73	3.89	.26	.77
Agreeableness (A)	10	30.68	3.18	.21	.71
Positive Affect (PA)	10	29.76	6.11	.52	.91
Negative Affect (NA)	10	16.16	5.00	.38	.85
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	32	95.50	10.73	.28	.92

The item analysis did identify a number of items that could be regarded as problematic. Item 13 in the Work-Home Culture instrument (Table 4.7) was identified

as a weak contributor to the internal consistency of the instrument, as the corrected item-total correlation of .06 was significantly lower than the rest of the items and an increase in the alpha would result if this item were to be removed (.85 from .82). Item 11 in the Agreeableness instrument (Table 4.8) were also identified as having a low item-total correlation and did not appear to reflect the same underlying latent variable as the majority of the items in the instrument, as the corrected item total correlation of -.06 were significantly lower than the rest of the items and an increase in alpha would result if this item were to be removed (.76 from .71).

**Table 4.7*****Psychometric Properties of the Work-Home Culture Instrument***

Item	M if deleted	Var. if deleted	SD if deleted	$\bar{r}_{ij}$	$\alpha$ if deleted
Work Home Culture 1	29.79	23.14	4.81	.53	.81
Work Home Culture 2	29.79	23.9	4.89	.45	.81
Work Home Culture 3	30.30	23.17	4.81	.58	.80
Work Home Culture 4	30.19	22.69	4.76	.61	.80
Work Home Culture 5	30.07	23.90	4.89	.38	.82
Work Home Culture 6	29.89	23.87	4.89	.42	.82
Work Home Culture 7	30.21	23.30	4.83	.53	.81
Work Home Culture 8	30.17	22.77	4.77	.58	.80
Work Home Culture 9	30.18	22.12	4.7	.55	.81
Work Home Culture 10 (reversed)	30.12	23.96	4.9	.41	.82
Work Home Culture 11 (reversed)	30.37	23.50	4.85	.51	.81
Work Home Culture 12 (reversed)	30.29	23.45	4.84	.52	.81
Work Home Culture 13 (reversed)	30.12	26.15	5.11	.06	.85

**Table 4.8*****Psychometric Properties of the Agreeableness Scale***

Item	M if deleted	Var. if deleted	SD if deleted	$\bar{r}_{ij}$	$\alpha$ if deleted
Personality 3	27.54	8.13	2.85	.47	.67
Personality 6	27.60	7.95	2.82	.61	.66
Personality 8	27.57	8.50	2.92	.31	.70
Personality 11	27.98	9.86	3.14	-.06	.76
Personality 14	27.73	8.25	2.87	.46	.68
Personality 17	27.63	8.96	2.99	.29	.70
Personality 20 (reversed)	27.59	7.80	2.79	.56	.66
Personality 23 (reversed)	27.22	8.83	2.97	.27	.71
Personality 26 (reversed)	27.67	8.02	2.83	.48	.67
Personality 29 (reversed)	27.60	7.61	2.76	.51	.66

The measuring instruments and items selected to test the variables of the current study were chosen from the best instruments that were available in the public domain and all have been proven to be valid and reliable. In the interest of maintaining the comparability of the established instruments, both the work-home culture and the agreeableness items were retained as part of the relevant measuring instruments.

#### **4.4 Inter-correlations between Selected Variables**

The correlations between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction were investigated and are reported in Table 4.9 and 4.10. Hypothesis 1 assumed a direct positive relationship between role conflict and the negative forms of work-life interaction and a negative relationship with the positive forms of work-life interaction. Hypothesis 2 assumed a direct positive relationship between work demand and the negative forms of work-life interaction and a negative relationship with the positive forms of work-life interaction. Hypothesis 3 assumed a direct negative relationship between work-home culture and the negative forms of work-life interaction and a positive relationship with the positive forms of work-life interaction.

The observed inter-correlations depicted in Table 4.9 demonstrated that the organisational variables were weakly to moderately correlated with work-life interaction.

**Table 4.9*****Correlations between the organisational variables and the dimensions of WLI***

ORG	VAR	PHWI	NHWI	PWHI	NWHI
Role Conflict (RC)		-.15	.24**	-.29***	.35 ***
Work Demand (WD)		-.11	.09	-.19*	.49***
Work-Home Culture (WHC)		.18*	-.01	.34***	-.26***

\*p&lt;.05      \*\*p&lt;.01      \*\*\*p&lt;.001

NWHI, negative work-home interaction; PWHI, positive work-home interaction; NHWI, negative home-work interaction; PHWI, positive home-work interaction.

As seen in Table 4.9, the statistical results indicate statistically significant relationships between role conflict; and the negative and positive forms of work-life interaction, with a small to moderate effect size, providing support to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 1. It should be emphasized that the relationship between role conflict and negative WHI has the most substantial correlation, with a medium effect size and a high significance level of  $p<.001$ . These findings are in line with the findings of Fu and Shaffer (2000) who also found statistically significant negative relationships between role conflict and role overload, and work-to-family interference respectively. Coverman (1989) achieved similar findings in that he found statistically significant negative relationships between role conflict and role overload respectively, and job and marital satisfaction.

The relationship between work demands and work-life interaction, as anticipated in Hypothesis 2, should be seen in relation to the direction of interference from work to family/home. As seen in Table 4.9, the relationship between work demand and negative work home interaction was found to be a significant positive relationship with a medium effect size ( $r=.49$ ;  $p<.001$ ). The negative correlation between work demand and positive work home interaction was statistically significant with a small effect size ( $r=-.19$ ;  $p<.05$ ), providing support to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 2. The correlations between work demand and both the positive and the negative forms of home-work interaction had a small effect size. This finding has also been supported by Dikkers et al. (2007).

Hypothesis 3 suggests a positive relationship between work-home culture and work-life interaction. Table 4.9 indicates a significant positive correlation with a small effect size between work-home culture and the positive HWI and the positive WHI. However, the statistics indicate a significant negative correlation with a small effect size between work-home culture and negative WHI and no correlation between work-home culture and negative home-work interference. The direction of interference should once again be taken into consideration, in that work-home culture does not affect the factors that cause interference from home to work, which is supported by the studies of Dikkers et al. (2007) and Brough et al. (2005), and thus provides enough support to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 3.

Table 4.9 below displays the correlations between the personalistic variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

**Table 4.10**

***Correlations between personalistic variables and WLI***

Pers Var	PHWI	NHWI	PWHI	NWHI
Conscientiousness (C)	.17*	-.17*	.22**	-.16*
Neuroticism (N)	-.05	.23**	-.28***	.20**
Agreeableness (A)	.16*	.02	.27***	-.23**
Positive Affect (PA)	.27***	-.21**	.47***	-.22**
Negative Affect (NA)	-.10	.12	-.11	.08
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	.30***	-.05	.39***	-.14

\*p<.05      \*\*p<.01      \*\*\*p<.001

The statistical results indicate a statistically significant relationship between conscientiousness and all four work-life interference variables with a small effect size. Conscientiousness was positively related to the positive forms of work-life interaction and negatively related to the negative forms of work-life interaction. Wayne et al. (2004) achieved similar results in that they found conscientiousness to be negatively related to work-family conflict (WFC) and family-work conflict (FWC).

Neuroticism was significantly positively correlated with negative HWI; negatively correlated with positive WHI and positively correlated with negative WHI, all with a

medium effect size. Wayne et al. (2004) achieved similar results in that they found neuroticism to be positively related to WFC and FWC.

From the statistical results it is clear that agreeableness was significantly positively correlated with positive HWI; positively correlated with positive WHI and negatively correlated with negative WHI, all with a small effect size. Wayne et al. (2004) also found agreeableness to be negatively related to WFC and positively related to FWC. Positive affectivity was significantly positively correlated with positive HWI, negatively correlated to negative HWI, positively correlated with positive WHI and negatively correlated with negative WHI, all with a small to medium effect size. Karatepe and Uludag (2008) achieved similar results in that they found PA to be negatively related to WFC and FWC. The statistical results indicate an insubstantial and non-significant correlation between negative affectivity and work-life interference. This is partially supported by the findings of Karatepe and Uludag (2008), as they found a significant positive relation between NA and WFC, but also no statistically significant relation between NA and other forms of interference or conflict.

Finally, emotional intelligence seems to relate only to the positive aspects of work-life balance, as the statistical results indicate that emotional intelligence relates highly significantly to positive work-home and home-work interference respectively, with medium effect sizes, and no significant correlations with negative work-home and home-work interference respectively. These findings are similar to Lenaghan et al. (2007) and Biggart, Corr, O'Brien and Cooper (2010) who achieved similar results, as they found EI to be negatively correlated with WFC and total trait EI to be negatively correlated with WFI and FWI respectively.

#### **4.5 Results of the Moderated Regression Analyses**

Moderated regression analysis involves the utilisation of linear multiple regression analysis to quantify the effect of a moderating variable in multiple regression analyses. In this kind of regression analysis, moderation occurs when the relationship between two variables is subject to a third variable, namely the moderator or moderating variable. The effect of a moderating variable is characterized statistically as an interaction variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relationship between dependent and independent variables. (Cohen, Cohen, Leona & West, 2003).

Hypotheses 4 to 21 suggest that the personalistic variables will have a moderating effect on the relationship between the determinants of WLI (independent variables) and the dimensions of WLI (dependent variables). Table 4.11 summarises the findings of the moderated regression analyses of the relationships between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

**Table 4.11**

***Personalistic variables as moderators of the relationships between role conflict and the dimensions of WLI***

IV	Moderator	DV	Interaction coefficient	R^2 with interaction	R^2 IV only	F	p
Role Conflict	C	Negative WHI	0.00	0.12	0.12	0.00	0.98
Role Conflict	C	Negative HWI	-0.09	0.06	0.06	1.33	0.25
Role Conflict	C	Positive WHI	-0.08	0.09	0.08	0.99	0.32
Role Conflict	C	Positive HWI	-0.09	0.03	0.02	1.19	0.28
Role Conflict	N	Negative WHI	0.08	0.13	0.12	1.24	0.27
Role Conflict	N	Negative HWI	-0.02	0.06	0.06	0.05	0.82
Role Conflict	N	Positive WHI	-0.05	0.09	0.08	0.50	0.48
Role Conflict	N	Positive HWI	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.70	0.40
Role Conflict	A	Negative WHI	0.00	0.12	0.12	0.00	0.99
Role Conflict	A	Negative HWI	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.78	0.38
Role Conflict	A	Positive WHI	0.03	0.08	0.08	0.19	0.66
Role Conflict	A	Positive HWI	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.34	0.56
Role Conflict	PA	Negative WHI	-0.01	0.12	0.12	0.02	0.89
Role Conflict	PA	Negative HWI	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.51	0.48
Role Conflict	PA	Positive WHI	0.03	0.08	0.08	0.17	0.68
Role Conflict	PA	Positive HWI	-0.08	0.03	0.02	1.11	0.29
Role Conflict	NA	Negative WHI	0.08	0.13	0.12	1.10	0.29
Role Conflict	NA	Negative HWI	-0.06	0.06	0.06	0.58	0.45
Role Conflict	NA	Positive WHI	0.00	0.08	0.08	0.00	0.99
Role Conflict	NA	Positive HWI	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.33	0.57
Role Conflict	EI	Negative WHI	0.08	0.13	0.12	1.08	0.30
Role Conflict	EI	Positive WHI	-0.06	0.09	0.08	0.56	0.45
Role Conflict	EI	Positive HWI	-0.07	0.03	0.02	0.84	0.36

From the above table it is evident that none of the personalistic variables had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between work-related role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction. Hypotheses 4, 7 and 10 proposed that conscientiousness, neuroticism and agreeableness respectively moderate the relationships between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction. The results were not significant and the relevant null hypotheses were thus not rejected. Hypotheses 13 and 16 proposed negative affectivity and positive affectivity to moderate the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were obtained and the null hypotheses

were thus not rejected. Hypothesis 19 proposed emotional intelligence (EI) to moderate the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were obtained and the null hypothesis was thus not rejected.

Table 4.12 summarises the findings of the moderated regression analyses of the relationships between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

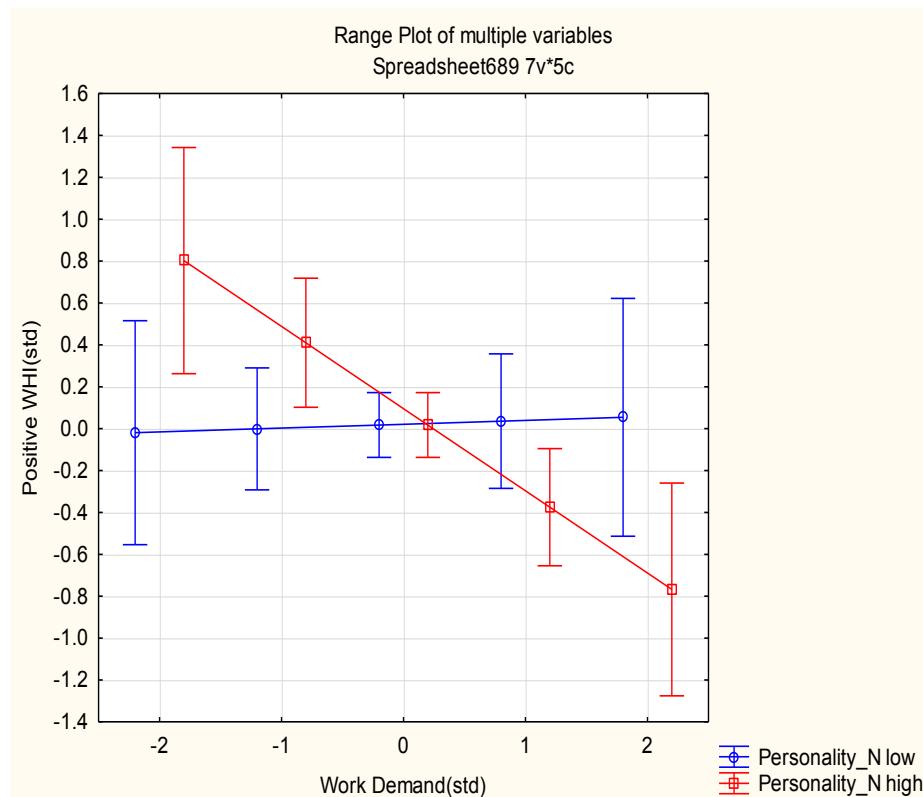
**Table 4.12**

**Personalistic variables as moderators of the relationships between work demand and the dimensions of WLI**

IV	Moderator	DV	Interaction coefficient	R <sup>2</sup> interaction	R <sup>2</sup> IV only	F	p
Work Demand	C	Negative WHI	-0.09	0.25	0.24	1.75	0.19
Work Demand	C	Negative HWI	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.14	0.71
Work Demand	C	Positive WHI	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.70
Work Demand	C	Positive HWI	0.06	0.02	0.01	0.65	0.42
Work Demand	N	Negative WHI	0.09	0.25	0.24	1.59	0.21
Work Demand	N	Negative HWI	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.43	0.51
Work Demand	N	Positive WHI	-0.15	0.06	0.04	3.86	0.05
Work Demand	N	Positive HWI	-0.04	0.01	0.01	0.30	0.58
Work Demand	A	Negative WHI	0.16	0.27	0.24	5.54	0.02
Work Demand	A	Negative HWI	-0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.93
Work Demand	A	Positive WHI	-0.14	0.06	0.04	3.17	0.08
Work Demand	A	Positive HWI	-0.06	0.02	0.01	0.57	0.45
Work Demand	PA	Negative WHI	0.09	0.25	0.24	1.63	0.20
Work Demand	PA	Negative HWI	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.21	0.65
Work Demand	PA	Positive WHI	-0.08	0.04	0.04	1.02	0.31
Work Demand	PA	Positive HWI	-0.09	0.02	0.01	1.42	0.24
Work Demand	NA	Negative WHI	0.03	0.24	0.24	0.18	0.68
Work Demand	NA	Negative HWI	-0.06	0.01	0.01	0.50	0.48
Work Demand	NA	Positive WHI	-0.09	0.05	0.04	1.37	0.24
Work Demand	NA	Positive HWI	-0.15	0.03	0.01	3.41	0.07

Table 4.12 indicates that two of the personalistic variables did moderate the relationships between work demand and the dimensions of work life interaction, in that the relationship between work demand and positive work-home interference was moderated by neuroticism and the relationship between work demand and negative work-home interference was moderated by agreeableness.

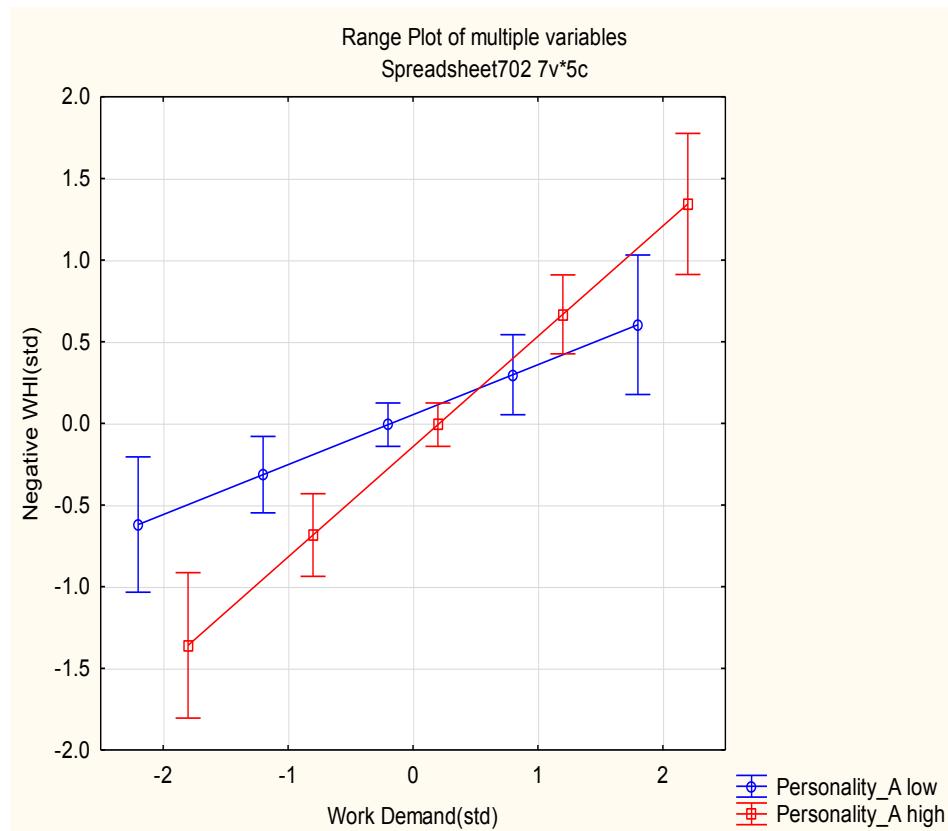
From the above results it can be seen that neuroticism had a significant negative moderating effect on the relationship between work demand and positive WHI. The first figure below (Figure 4.1) indicates that when neuroticism is high, the relationship between work demands and positive work-life interference becomes increasingly negative, providing partial support for rejecting the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 8.



**Figure 4.1: Moderating effect of neuroticism on the relationship between work demand and positive WHI**

Similarly agreeableness had a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between work demand and negative work-life interference. The second graph below (Figure 4.2) indicates that when agreeableness is high, the positive relationship between work demands and negative work-life interference becomes even more positive, providing partial support for rejecting the null hypothesis of

Hypothesis 11. This finding is in correspondence with the studies reported by Bruck and Allen, (2003); Kinnunen et al., (2003) and Wayne et al., (2004).



**Figure 4.2: Moderating effect of agreeableness on the relationship between work demand and negative WHI**

Hypothesis 5 proposed conscientiousness to moderate the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were obtained to support rejecting the null hypothesis. Hypothesis 14 and 17 proposed that negative affectivity and positive affectivity moderate the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were found to support the rejection of the null hypotheses. Hypothesis 20 proposed emotional intelligence (EI) to moderate the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were obtained that would support rejecting the null hypothesis.

Table 4.13 summarises the findings of the moderated regression analyses of the relationships between work-home culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction.

**Table 4.13**

***Personalistic variables as moderators of the relationships between work-home culture and the dimensions of WLI***

IV	Moderator	DV	Interaction coefficient	R <sup>2</sup> interaction	with R <sup>2</sup> IV only	F	p
W-H Culture	C	Negative WHI	0.10	0.08	0.07	1.73	0.19
W-H Culture	C	Negative HWI	-0.07	0.01	0.00	0.91	0.34
W-H Culture	C	Positive WHI	-0.09	0.12	0.11	1.45	0.23
W-H Culture	C	Positive HWI	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.08	0.78
W-H Culture	N	Negative WHI	-0.10	0.08	0.07	1.71	0.19
W-H Culture	N	Negative HWI	0.08	0.01	0.00	1.05	0.31
W-H Culture	N	Positive WHI	0.03	0.12	0.11	0.19	0.66
W-H Culture	N	Positive HWI	-0.13	0.05	0.03	2.83	0.09
W-H Culture	A	Negative WHI	-0.01	0.07	0.07	0.02	0.88
W-H Culture	A	Negative HWI	-0.02	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.81
W-H Culture	A	Positive WHI	0.03	0.12	0.11	0.13	0.72
W-H Culture	A	Positive HWI	0.10	0.04	0.03	1.72	0.19
W-H Culture	PA	Negative WHI	0.12	0.08	0.07	2.56	0.11
W-H Culture	PA	Negative HWI	-0.06	0.00	0.00	0.65	0.42
W-H Culture	PA	Positive WHI	-0.05	0.12	0.11	0.49	0.49
W-H Culture	PA	Positive HWI	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.36	0.55
W-H Culture	NA	Negative WHI	-0.06	0.07	0.07	0.64	0.42
W-H Culture	NA	Negative HWI	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.98
W-H Culture	NA	Positive WHI	0.00	0.11	0.11	0.00	0.98
W-H Culture	NA	Positive HWI	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.96

Hypothesis 6, 9 and 12 proposed conscientiousness, neuroticism and agreeableness respectively to moderate the relationship between work-home culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were found that would support the rejection of the null hypotheses. Hypothesis 15 and 18 proposed negative affectivity and positive affectivity to moderate the relationship between work-home culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were obtained that would support the rejection of the null hypotheses. Hypothesis 21 proposed emotional intelligence (EI) to moderate the relationship between work-home culture and the dimensions of work-life interaction. No statistically significant results were found that would support the rejection of the null hypothesis..

From the above moderated regression results, little evidence was found for the hypotheses that personalistic variables moderate the relationship between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work life interaction, with the exception of neuroticism on the relationship between work demand and positive WLI and agreeableness on the relationship between work demand and negative WHI. The results thus do not provide support to accept the alternative hypotheses for most of the personalistic variables. The null hypotheses of Hypotheses 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 could thus not be rejected.

It is thus clear that the researcher's contention that personalistic variables moderate the relationship between the organisational variables and the different forms of work-life interaction was not supported in the majority of the analyses. The body of knowledge does not, unfortunately, provide much guidance with respect to the role played by the personalistic variables. The hypothesis could be developed that the role played by the personalistic variables in the relationship between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction is that of a mediator.

#### **4.6 Results of Mediated Regression Analyses**

The failure of the moderated regression analyses to provide evidence regarding the role of the personalistic variables as moderators of the relationships between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interference, led to the hypothesis that its role could be more substantial, in that the personalistic variables

could in fact be mediators of these relationships. For these analyses the Sobel test was utilised in order to test the significance of a possible mediation effect. Mediation occurs when the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is assumed to be an indirect effect that exists as a result of the influence of a third variable (the mediator). When the mediator is utilised in a regression analysis model, the effect of the independent variable is minimised, whilst the effect of the mediator is emphasized in order to evaluate its significance. The Sobel test is a specialized t test that is utilised to determine whether the reduction in the effect of the independent variable, after the mediator has been included in the model, represents a significant reduction compared to its initial effect. In such a case one may conclude that the mediation effect is statistically significant (Sobel, 1982; 1986).

The information communicated by Table 4.12 indicates that the impact of role conflict and work-home culture on the various dimensions of work-life interference is significantly mediated by neuroticism, positive affectivity and emotional intelligence. This implies that the original conceptualisation of the theoretical model underpinning this study have to be reviewed substantially.

**Table 4.14**

***Personalistic variables as mediators of the relationship between the organisational variables and the dimensions of WLI***

IV	Mediator	DV	Indirect effect	z-value	p-value
Role Conflict	C	Negative WHI	0.02	1.09	0.28
Role Conflict	C	Negative HWI	0.02	1.38	0.17
Role Conflict	C	Positive WHI	-0.04	-1.70	0.09
Role Conflict	C	Positive HWI	-0.05	-1.58	0.11
Role Conflict	N	Negative WHI	0.04	1.27	0.20
Role Conflict	N	Negative HWI	0.04	1.94	0.05
Role Conflict	N	Positive WHI	-0.08	-2.31	0.02
Role Conflict	N	Positive HWI	0.00	0.02	0.99
Role Conflict	A	Negative WHI	0.03	1.58	0.11
Role Conflict	A	Negative HWI	-0.01	-0.73	0.46
Role Conflict	A	Positive WHI	-0.04	-1.72	0.09
Role Conflict	A	Positive HWI	-0.03	-1.35	0.18
Role Conflict	PA	Negative WHI	0.04	1.66	0.10
Role Conflict	PA	Negative HWI	0.03	1.74	0.08
Role Conflict	PA	Positive WHI	-0.12	-2.87	0.00
Role Conflict	PA	Positive HWI	-0.09	-2.27	0.02
Role Conflict	NA	Negative WHI	0.00	0.27	0.79
Role Conflict	NA	Negative HWI	0.01	0.99	0.32
Role Conflict	NA	Positive WHI	-0.01	-0.72	0.47
Role Conflict	NA	Positive HWI	-0.02	-0.92	0.36
Role Conflict	EI	Negative WHI	0.01	1.01	0.31
Role Conflict	EI	Negative HWI	0.00	0.29	0.77
Role Conflict	EI	Positive WHI	-0.05	-1.55	0.12
Role Conflict	EI	Positive HWI	-0.05	-1.50	0.13
Work Demand	C	Negative WHI	0.02	1.16	0.25
Work Demand	C	Negative HWI	0.03	1.46	0.14
Work Demand	C	Positive WHI	-0.04	-1.55	0.12
Work Demand	C	Positive HWI	-0.04	-1.43	0.15
Work Demand	N	Negative WHI	0.03	1.35	0.18
Work Demand	N	Negative HWI	0.03	1.63	0.10
Work Demand	N	Positive WHI	-0.06	-1.72	0.09
Work Demand	N	Positive HWI	-0.01	-0.51	0.61
Work Demand	A	Negative WHI	-0.03	-1.07	0.28
Work Demand	A	Negative HWI	0.00	-0.12	0.91
Work Demand	A	Positive WHI	0.04	1.09	0.28
Work Demand	A	Positive HWI	0.04	1.06	0.29
Work Demand	PA	Negative WHI	0.00	-0.06	0.96
Work Demand	PA	Negative HWI	0.00	-0.06	0.96
Work Demand	PA	Positive WHI	0.00	0.06	0.96
Work Demand	PA	Positive HWI	0.00	0.06	0.96

**Table 4.14 (Continued)**

<b>IV</b>	<b>Mediator</b>	<b>DV</b>	<b>Indirect effect</b>	<b>z-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Work Demand	NA	Negative WHI	0.01	0.59	0.56
Work Demand	NA	Negative HWI	0.02	1.19	0.23
Work Demand	NA	Positive WHI	-0.01	-0.72	0.47
Work Demand	NA	Positive HWI	-0.02	-1.03	0.30
Work Demand	EI	Negative WHI	0.00	0.07	0.95
Work Demand	EI	Negative HWI	0.00	0.07	0.95
Work Demand	EI	Positive WHI	0.00	-0.07	0.95
Work Demand	EI	Positive HWI	0.00	-0.07	0.95
W_H Culture	C	Negative WHI	0.00	-0.10	0.92
W_H Culture	C	Negative HWI	0.00	-0.10	0.92
W_H Culture	C	Positive WHI	0.00	0.10	0.92
W_H Culture	C	Positive HWI	0.00	0.10	0.92
W_H Culture	N	Negative WHI	-0.06	-1.62	0.11
W_H Culture	N	Negative HWI	-0.07	-2.34	0.02
W_H Culture	N	Positive WHI	0.09	2.19	0.03
W_H Culture	N	Positive HWI	0.00	-0.04	0.97
W_H Culture	A	Negative WHI	-0.05	-1.51	0.13
W_H Culture	A	Negative HWI	0.00	0.30	0.76
W_H Culture	A	Positive WHI	0.05	1.60	0.11
W_H Culture	A	Positive HWI	0.04	1.28	0.20
W_H Culture	PA	Negative WHI	-0.07	-1.81	0.07
W_H Culture	PA	Negative HWI	-0.07	-2.23	0.03
W_H Culture	PA	Positive WHI	0.17	3.11	0.00
W_H Culture	PA	Positive HWI	0.13	2.33	0.02
W_H Culture	NA	Negative WHI	-0.01	-0.38	0.71
W_H Culture	NA	Negative HWI	-0.03	-1.34	0.18
W_H Culture	NA	Positive WHI	0.01	0.54	0.59
W_H Culture	NA	Positive HWI	0.03	0.84	0.40
W_H Culture	EI	Negative WHI	-0.03	-1.05	0.29
W_H Culture	EI	Negative HWI	-0.01	-0.63	0.53
W_H Culture	EI	Positive WHI	0.10	2.26	0.02
W_H Culture	EI	Positive HWI	0.11	2.11	0.04

From Table 4.14 it is evident that personalistic variables significantly mediated the relationship between role conflict and the dimensions of work life interference. In particular, neuroticism had a positive and significant mediating effect on the relationship between role conflict and negative HWI and a negative significant mediating effect on the relationship between role conflict and positive WHI. Similarly positive affectivity had a negative and significant mediating effect on the relationship between role conflict and both positive WHI and HWI.

With regard to work-home culture, quite a few interesting and significant mediating effects of the personalistic variables on the relationship between work-home culture and work life interaction were found. As shown in Table 4.14, neuroticism played a negative mediating role in the relationship between work-home culture and negative HWI and a positive mediating role in the relationship between work-home culture and positive WHI respectively. Similarly positive affectivity had a negative mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and negative HWI and a positive mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and positive WHI and HWI respectively. For the first time emotional intelligence comes to play, in that EI had a positive and significant mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and positive WHI and HWI respectively. The positive effect of neuroticism on the relationship between work-home culture and positive WHI, however, needs to be investigated further.

These findings suggest that the role played by personalistic variables is actually much more pronounced, in that some of the relationships between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life balance are actually, at least partially, attributable to the personalistic variables.

The researcher subsequently decided to establish how much variance is actually additionally explained by the personalistic variables, over and above the variance in the dimensions of work-life interaction explained by the organisational variables.

#### **4.7 Results of the Multiple Regression Analyses**

The multiple regression analyses reported below are aimed at establishing how much variance in the dimensions of work-life is explained by the personalistic variables over and above the organisational variables. Table 4.15 to 4.22 provides an overview of the multiple regression analyses with the dimensions of work-life interference as the dependent variables and organisational variables as the independent variables during the first phase of the analysis, and thereafter the organisational variables plus the personalistic variables, in combination, as the independent variables during the second phase analyses. The difference in the amount of variance explained during

the two successive phases is regarded as indicative of the additional variance explained in the four types of work-life interference by the personalistic variables.

**Table 4.15**

***Regression Analysis with Negative WHI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational variables as Independent Variables***

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R = .54; R<sup>2</sup> = .29; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .28; F (3,16) = 21.47; p <.00;  
Std. Error of estimate = .56

Predictor	b*	t(157)	p-value
Role Conflict	.14	1.78	p>.05
Work Demand	.42	5.68	p<.00
Work Home Culture	-.16	-2.22	p<.05

The set of organisational variables explained 29% of variance in Negative WHI as the dependent variable, with work demand and work home culture as significant predictors. The standardised beta coefficient (b\*) indicated that work demand had a positive effect on negative WHI (b\* = .42, p < .00), which means that as work demand increases, negative WHI also increases, therefore the more employees experience increased work demand, the more prone they are to experience negative WHI. Work home culture on the other hand had a negative effect on negative WHI (b\* = -.16, p < .05), suggesting that as employees' experience of work home culture increase, their experience of negative WHI will decrease.

**Table 4.16*****Regression Analysis with Negative WHI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational and Personalistic Variables as Independent Variables***

R = .58; R<sup>2</sup> = .34; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .30; F (9,15) = 8.70; p <.00; Std. Error of estimate = .55

Predictor	b*	t(151)	p-value
Role Conflict	.07	0.88	p>.05
Work Demand	.47	6.24	p<.00
Work Home Culture	-.13	-1.82	p>.05
C	-.01	-0.19	p>.05
N	-.00	-0.03	p>.05
A	-.22	-2.58	p<.01
PA	-.14	-1.55	p>.05
NA	-.01	-0.11	p>.05
EI	.12	1.25	p>.05

The combination of organisational and personalistic variables explained 34% of the variance in Negative WHI as the dependent variable, with only work demand and agreeableness as significant predictors. The addition of the personalistic variables to the set of predictors increased the variance explained with 5%. The standardised beta coefficient (b\*) indicated that work demand had a positive effect on negative WHI (b\* = .47, p < .00), which means that as work demand increases, so does negative WHI, therefore the more employees experience increased work demand, the more prone they are to experience negative WHI. Agreeableness on the other hand had a negative effect on negative WHI (b\* = -.22, p < .01), suggesting that employees with higher levels of agreeableness might experience a decrease in the negative effect of WHI. The R<sup>2</sup> change (.05) was, however, not significant (p = .08).

**Table 4.17*****Regression Analysis with Negative HWI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational variables as Independent Variables***


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R = .25; R<sup>2</sup> = .06; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .05; F (3,157) = 3.57; p <.02;  
Std. Error of estimate = .43

Predictor	b*	t(157)	p-value
Role Conflict	.27	3.04	p<.00
Work Demand	-.00	-0.06	p>.05
Work Home Culture	.07	0.84	p>.05

The set of organisational variables explained 6% of variance in Negative HWI as the dependent variable, with only role conflict as a significant predictor. The standardised beta coefficient (b\*) indicated that role conflict had a positive effect on negative HWI (b\* = .27, p < .00), assuming that as role conflict increases, negative HWI also increases, therefore the more employees experience increased role conflict, the more prone they are to experience negative HWI.

**Table 4.18*****Regression Analysis with Negative HWI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational and Personalistic Variables as Independent Variables***


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R = .37; R<sup>2</sup> = .13; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .08; F (9,15) = 2.59; p <.00; Std. Error of estimate = .42

Predictor	b*	t(151)	p-value
Role Conflict	.20	2.16	p<.05
Work Demand	-.03	-0.30	p>.05
Work Home Culture	.11	1.33	p>.05
C	-.10	-1.18	p>.05
N	.12	1.18	p>.05
A	.11	1.15	p>.05
PA	-.18	-1.81	p>.05
NA	.08	0.93	p>.05
EI	.09	0.80	p>.05

The combination of organisational and personalistic variables explained 13% of the variance in Negative HWI as the dependent variable, with only role conflict as significant predictor. The addition of personality variables to the set of predictors

increased the variance explained with 7%, although no personalistic variable reached significance as a predictor. The standardised beta coefficient ( $b^*$ ) indicated that role conflict had a positive effect on negative HWI ( $b^* = .20$ ,  $p < .03$ ), which means that as role conflict increases, negative HWI increases as well, therefore the more employees experience increased role conflict, the more prone they are to experience negative HWI. The  $R^2$  change (.07) was, however, not significant ( $p = .06$ ).

**Table 4.19**

***Regression Analysis with Positive WHI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational Variables as Independent Variables***

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$R = .40$ ;  $R^2 = .16$ ; Adjusted  $R^2 = .15$ ;  $F (3,16) = 10.12$ ;  $p < .00$ ;  
Std. Error of estimate = .58

Predictor	$b^*$	t(157)	p-value
Role Conflict	-.16	-1.93	$p > .05$
Work Demand	-.10	-1.20	$p > .05$
Work Home Culture	.28	3.68	$p < .01$

The set of organisational variables explained 16% of the variance in Positive WHI as the dependent variable, with only work-home culture as a significant predictor. The standardised beta coefficient ( $b^*$ ) indicated that work home culture had a positive effect on positive WHI ( $b^* = .28$ ,  $p < .00$ ), which means that as work home culture increases, positive WHI increases likewise, therefore the more employees experience increased work home culture, the more prone they are to experience positive WHI.

**Table 4.20*****Regression Analysis with Positive WHI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational and Personalistic Variables as Independent Variables***

R = .58; R<sup>2</sup> = .34; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .30; F (9,15) = 8.66; p <.00; Std. Error of estimate = .53

Predictor	b*	t(151)	p-value
Role Conflict	-.06	-0.82	p>.05
Work Demand	-.16	-2.15	p<.05
Work Home Culture	.20	2.70	p<.01
C	-.00	-0.04	p>.05
N	-.01	-0.10	p>.05
A	.08	0.95	p>.05
PA	.30	3.40	p<.00
NA	.07	0.96	p>.05
EI	.15	1.53	p>.05

The combination of organisational and personalistic variables explained 34% of the variance in Positive WHI as the dependent variable, with work demand, work-home culture and positive affectivity as significant predictors. The addition of personality variables to the set of predictors increased the variance explained with 18%. The standardised beta coefficient (b\*) indicated that work demand had a negative effect on positive WHI (b\* = .16, p < .05), which means that as work demand increases, positive WHI decreases, therefore the more employees experience increased work demand, the more they are likely to experience a decrease in positive WHI. Work home culture had a positive effect on positive WHI (b\* = .20, p < .00), suggesting that as work home culture increases, positive WHI also increases, indicating that when employees experience a positive work home culture, they will also experience increased positive WHI. Similarly, positive affectivity had a positive effect on positive WHI (b\* = .30, p < .00), suggesting that as positive affectivity increases, positive WHI increases likewise, indicating that employees with a positive affectivity personality trait might experience increased positive WHI. The R<sup>2</sup> change (.18) was highly significant (p = .00).

**Table 4.21**

**Regression Analysis with Positive HWI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational Variables as Independent Variables**

R = .23; R<sup>2</sup> = .05; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .03; F (3,157) = 2.89; p <.04;  
Std. Error of estimate = .78

Predictor	b*	t(157)	p-value
Role Conflict	-.09	-0.97	p>.05
Work Demand	-.06	-0.69	p>.05
Work Home Culture	.16	1.2	p<.05

The set of organisational variables explained 5% of the variance in Positive HWI as the dependent variable, with only work home culture as a significant predictor. The standardised beta coefficient (b\*) indicated that work home culture had a positive effect on positive HWI (b\* = .16, p < .05), which means that as work home culture increases, positive HWI also increases, therefore the more employees experience increased work home culture, the more prone they are to experience positive HWI.

**Table 4.22**

**Regression Analysis with Positive HWI as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational and Personalistic Variables as Independent Variables**

R = .42; R<sup>2</sup> = .18; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .13; F (9,151) = 3.61; p <.00;  
Std. Error of estimate = .74

Predictor	b*	t(151)	p-value
Role Conflict	-.06	-0.67	p>.05
Work Demand	-.09	-1.13	p>.05
Work Home Culture	.12	1.43	p>.05
C	.06	0.67	p>.05
N	.25	2.53	p<.05
A	.06	0.62	p>.05
PA	.17	1.67	p>.05
NA	-.10	-1.17	p>.05
EI	.21	2	p<.05

The combination of organisational and personalistic variables explained 18% of the variance in Positive HWI as the dependent variable, with only neuroticism and

emotional intelligence as significant predictors. The addition of personality variables to the set of predictors increased the variance explained with 13%. The standardised beta coefficient ( $b^*$ ) indicated that neuroticism had a positive effect on positive HWI ( $b^* = .25$ ,  $p < .05$ ), which means that as neuroticism increases, positive HWI also increases, therefore the employees with a neuroticism personality trait are more likely to experience positive HWI. Similarly, emotional intelligence had a positive effect on positive HWI ( $b^* = .21$ ,  $p < .05$ ), suggesting that as emotional intelligence increases, positive HWI increases likewise, indicating that employees with high emotional intelligence traits might experience increased positive HWI. The  $R^2$  change (.12) was highly significant ( $p = .00$ ).

From the multiple regression analyses, it can be inferred that work demand and work-home culture are the strongest organisational predictors of negative WHI; whilst role conflict is the strongest organisational predictor of negative HWI; role conflict and work-home culture are the strongest organisational predictors of positive WHI; and work-home culture is the strongest organisational predictor of positive HWI. These results coincide with the correlation analyses results, providing support to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 1, 2 and 3.

In the case of the personalistic variables the moderating effect of personality on the relationship between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction could only be confirmed in two out of the 72 moderated multiple regression analyses performed. In the case of the Sobel analyses of the mediator effects, only nine of the 72 analyses found evidence of mediating effects. In contrast, the analyses of the amount of additional variance explained in the dimensions of work-life interaction by personalistic variables, over and above the variance explained by the organisational variables, indicates that the increase in variance explained was only significant in the case of positive work-home and positive home-work interaction.

#### **4.8 Results of the relationship between work-life interference dimensions and work engagement**

The correlations between the four dimensions of work-life interference and work engagement were investigated and reported in Table 4.23. Hypothesis 22 assumed a

direct positive relationship between work engagement and the positive forms of work-life interference and a negative relationship between work engagement and the negative forms of work-life interference.

The observed inter-correlations depicted in Table 4.23 demonstrate that the majority of the work-life interference dimensions were moderately correlated with work engagement.

**Table 4.23**

***Correlations between WLI and work engagement***

	Positive WLI	Negative WLI	Positive HWI	Negative HWI
Work Engagement	.56***	-.34***	.37***	-.06

\*p<.05    \*\*p<.01    \*\*\*p<.001

As seen in Table 4.23, the statistical results indicate that work engagement was significantly positively correlated with positive WLI, negatively correlated with negative WLI and positively correlated with positive HWI, all with a medium effect size; providing partial support to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 22.

#### **4.9 Further Statistical Analyses**

From the preceding statistical analyses it is evident that the researcher's conceptualisation of the theoretical model, originally developed to theoretically represent the roles played by organisational variables and personalistic variables in the experience of work-life interaction, was seriously flawed and rather superficial. The organisational variables could also have direct relationships with the dimensions of work-life interaction and with work engagement, and the relationship between the dimensions of work-life interaction and work engagement could be mediated or moderated by personalistic variables.

There is quite an array of previous studies that have studied the relationship between the organizational variables and engagement, especially studying job resources and personal resources in relation to burnout and employee work engagement. For example; Sardeshmukh, Sharma and Golden (2012) found that the impact of telework on job engagement and exhaustion is partially mediated by job

demands (time pressure, role ambiguity and role conflict) and job resources (job autonomy, feedback and job support). More specifically Sardeshmukh, Sharma and Golden (2012) found that role conflict and job demands were positively related to exhaustion, while resources were positively related to engagement and negatively related to exhaustion. Stadnyk, Hultell and Gustavsson (2011) also found that job demands, job resources, and spillover between private life and work accounted for the largest amount of explained variance in both burnout and work engagement. More specifically, Stadnyk, Hultell and Gustavsson (2011) found job demands were more strongly related to burnout, whereas job resources were more strongly related to work engagement. Mostert., Peeters, and Rost, (2011) achieved similar results in that they found job demands and job resources were partially related to burnout, both directly and indirectly through negative WHI and that job resources were partially related to work engagement, both directly and indirectly, through positive WHI. It could thus be inferred that role conflict and work demand will be negatively related to employee work engagement. Soemaryani and Rakhmadini (2013) found that work life balance programmes and organizational culture had a positive effect on employee engagement. It could thus be inferred that work home culture will be positively related to employee work engagement.

Personality or personal resources were also found to be related to employee work engagement in previous studies. In a study conducted by Woods and Sofat (2013) they found conscientiousness was positively correlated with engagement ( $r = .36$ ,  $p < .01$ ), neuroticism was negatively correlated with engagement ( $r = -.31$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and agreeableness ( $r = .24$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was positively correlated with engagement. Kim, Shin and Swanger (2009) also found conscientiousness was significantly correlated with engagement ( $r = .37$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Bledow, Schmitt, Frese and Kuhnel (2011) found a statistically positive relationship between both positive affectivity and negative affectivity (if the shared variance with positive affectivity was controlled for) respectively and work engagement. They indicated that when keeping the level of positive affectivity statistically constant, negative affectivity was positively related to work engagement. They interpreting this suppression effect as indicating that negative affectivity can be positively related to work engagement (Bledow, Schmitt, Frese & Kuhnel, 2011). Brunetto, Teo, Shacklock and Farr-Wharton (2012) found that emotional intelligence predicted police officers' perceptions of well-being and job

satisfaction, which positively influenced engagement and affective commitment and, subsequently, negatively affected turnover intentions, thus showing that emotional intelligence leads to job satisfaction and well-being, with positive path relationships leading to employee engagement and organisational commitment. It can thus be inferred that conscientiousness, agreeableness, positive affectivity and emotional intelligence will be positively related to employee work engagement and neuroticism and negative affectivity will be negatively related to employee work engagement.

Table 4.24 below displays the correlations between the organisational variables and the personalistic variables respectively and work engagement.

**Table 4.24**  
***Correlations between WLI, Personalistic Variables and Work Engagement***

	Work Engagement
Role Conflict	-.23**
Work Demand	-.14
Work Home Culture	.36***
Conscientiousness	.26***
Neuroticism	-.39***
Agreeableness	.19*
Positive Affectivity	.59***
Negative Affectivity	-.24**
EI	.39***

The statistical results indicated statistically significant relationships between role conflict and work-home culture respectively and work engagement, in that role conflict was significantly negatively correlated with work engagement with a small effect size and work-home culture was significantly positively correlated with work engagement with a medium effect size. The statistical results also indicated a statistically significant relationship between the personalistic variables and work engagement, in that conscientiousness, agreeableness, positive affectivity and emotional intelligence were significantly positively correlated with work engagement with small to medium effect sizes, with positive affectivity, as an exception, with a large effect size. Neuroticism and negative affectivity on the other hand had a significant negative correlation with work engagement with medium effect size.

When comparing the relationship between the personalistic variables and work-life interaction with the relationship between the personalistic variables and work engagement, it is interesting to note that only five out of the six personalistic variables significantly related to the different forms of work-life interaction, whereas all the six the personalistic variables significantly related to work engagement. It is thus evident that personalistic variables play a very important role in the experience of the dependent variables, work-life interaction, as well as work engagement.

In order to develop a better understanding of the interrelationships between the organizational variables, the dimensions of work-life interaction, the personalistic variables and work engagement, two further multiple regression analyses were performed.

**Table 4.25**

***Regression Analysis with Work Engagement as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational variables and the dimensions of WLI as the Independent Variables***

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R = .62; R<sup>2</sup> = .38; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .36; F (17,153) = 13.960; p <.00;  
Std. Error of estimate = .81

Predictor	t(153)	p-value
Role Conflict	-0.07	p>.05
Work Demand	0.81	p>.05
Work Home Culture	2.39	p<.05
Negative HWI	-0.12	p>.05
Negative WHI	-2.18	p<.05
Positive WHI	5.37	p<.00
Positive HWI	0.8	p>.05

---

The set of work descriptors and work-life interference variables explained 38% of variance in work engagement as the dependent variable, with work home culture, negative WHI and positive WHI as significant predictors. The standardised beta coefficient (b\*) indicated that work home culture had a positive effect on work engagement (b\* = .17, p < .05), which means that as work home culture increases, work engagement also increases, indicating that the more employees experience a positive work home culture, the more prone they are to experience work engagement. The standardised beta coefficient (b\*) of negative WHI indicates that it

had a negative effect on work engagement ( $b^* = -.17$ ,  $p < .05$ ), which means that as negative WHI increases, work engagement decreases, indicating that the more employees experience increased negative WHI, the less prone they are to experience work engagement. On the other hand, the standardised beta coefficient ( $b^*$ ) of positive WHI indicates that it had a positive effect on work engagement ( $b^* = .44$ ,  $p < .00$ ), which means that as positive WHI increases, work engagement also increases, indicating that the more employees experience increased positive WHI, the more they are to experience work engagement.

**Table 4.26**

***Regression Analysis with Work Engagement as the Dependent Variable and the Organisational variables, Dimensions of WLI and Personalistic Variables as Independent Variables***

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$R = .74$ ;  $R^2 = .55$ ; Adjusted  $R^2 = .51$ ;  $F (13,147) = 13.99$ ;  $p < .00$ ;  
Std. Error of estimate = .70

Predictor	$b^*$	t(147)	p-value
Role Conflict	.05	0.7	$p > .05$
Work Demand	.06	0.79	$p > .05$
Work Home Culture	.10	1.59	$p > .05$
Negative HWI	.11	1.88	$p > .05$
Negative WHI	-.18	-2.63	$p < .05$
Positive WHI	.27	3.57	$p < .01$
Positive HWI	.06	0.83	$p > .05$
C	.11	1.66	$p > .05$
N	-.05	-0.68	$p > .05$
A	-.17	-2.34	$p < .05$
PA	.40	5.1	$p < .01$
NA	-.16	-2.43	$p < .05$
EI	.02	0.24	$p > .05$

---

The combination of organisational variables, the dimensions of work-life interaction, and personalistic variables explained 55% of variance in work engagement as the dependent variable, with negative WHI, positive WHI, agreeableness, positive affectivity and negative affectivity as significant predictors. The addition of personality variables to the set of predictors increased the variance explained with 17%. This increase in  $R^2$  change (.17) is statistically highly significant ( $p = .00$ )

The standardised beta coefficient ( $b^*$ ) indicates that negative WHI had a negative effect on work engagement ( $b^* = -.18$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and positive WHI had a positive effect on work engagement ( $b^* = .27$ ,  $p < .01$ ), which means that as negative WHI increases, work engagement decreases and as positive WHI increases, work engagement also increases. This finding indicates that WHI had a direct effect on work engagement, as negative WHI increases, employees are more likely to experience less work engagement and as positive WHI increases, employees are more likely to experience more work engagement. The standardised beta coefficient ( $b^*$ ) of agreeableness and negative affectivity respectively indicates that agreeableness and negative affectivity had a negative effect on work engagement ( $b^* = -.17$ ,  $p < .05$ ;  $b^* = -.16$ ,  $p < .05$ ), which means that as agreeableness and negative affectivity increases, work engagement decreases, therefore employees with a higher level of agreeableness and a higher level of negative affectivity are more likely to experience lower work engagement. On the other hand, the standardised beta coefficient ( $b^*$ ) for positive affectivity indicates a positive effect on work engagement ( $b^* = .40$ ,  $p < .01$ ), which means that as positive affectivity increases, work engagement increases, therefore that employees with a positive affectivity personality trait are more likely to experience work engagement.

From the regression analyses above, it can be concluded that negative HWI, negative WHI, positive WHI, agreeableness, positive and negative affectivity are the strongest predictors of work engagement.

On the basis of these results it is clear that the original theoretical model developed was too simplistic and unsophisticated. The impact of personalistic variables on the relationship between the dimensions of work-life interaction and work engagement will have to be thoroughly theoretically explored in subsequent model building exercises.

#### **4.10 Summary**

The research results and data analysis of the current study were presented in this chapter. Interesting conclusions could be made on the basis of the statistical results, providing evidence with regard to the stated hypotheses, adding knowledge to the knowledge base with regard to work-life interaction. The study has confirmed the

effect that organisational variables have on the experience of work-life interaction, especially the positive role that work-home culture in the organisation plays in how employees experience and manage work-life balance. The conceptualisation of personalistic variables as moderators of the relationship between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction did not enjoy much empirical support. The alternative conceptualization of personalistic variables as mediators of the relationships between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction enjoyed slightly more empirical support. The impact of positive affectivity was especially noticeable in the observed relationships between the personalistic variables and work-life interaction. In the case of positive work-home interaction and positive home-work interaction the personalistic variables explained more additional variance in die dependent variable than the amount of variance explained by the organisational variables.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the research results, as presented in the previous chapter, will be discussed and interpreted. The chapter commences with a discussion of the demographic findings and the psychometric properties of the measuring instruments, followed by a discussion of the correlational results in the light of the existing literature. Furthermore a discussion of the moderating and mediating effects and the multiple regression analyses will be discussed. The demographic data is further utilized to elaborate on and to clarify the research findings, especially in the case of unexpected or contradictory findings.

### **5.2 Demographic findings**

Questionnaires were sent to a sample of more than 600 e-mail addresses, of which a response from 166 (N=166) employees were received. The response rate of 28% is however disappointing, as a response rate of at least 40% were expected.

As mentioned in Section 4.2, the demographic results indicated a sample mean age of 32 years, with a gender distribution of 54% males and 46% females. This represents overall fairly good representation of the population, as the general age of the workforce ranges between 26 and 44 years with a fairly balanced gender distribution. The race sample was however not a very good reflection of the actual population, as the majority (62%) of the respondents were white. The researcher assumes that the reason for the differential response rate may be associated with cultural differences related to interest in participating in research studies. A total of 76% of respondents indicated that they are either married or in a relationship, of which 68% indicated that their partners or spouses are employed. These demographics gave the researcher a fairly good indication of the relative exposure of the sample to family factors that may influence their experience of work-life balance. It should, however, be remembered that in the current study, single respondents were also portrayed as having to deal with work-life balance and not just respondents who are in relationships. Their experiences have, however, not been thoroughly

examined by the questionnaire and can be seen as a limitation in terms of the method of data collection and the possibility of gaining insight into the broader perspective on the work-life balance of single and non-single employees. The majority (78%) of the respondents indicated that they have between 5 and 8 dependents with an average of 6.6 dependents. This high frequency of both partners being employed and the high number of dependents seems exceptionally high, especially for a mostly white respondent sample. A larger number of dependents would have been anticipated in a largely African sample, since extended family care is part of their culture. The higher frequency might be due to many factors, but can be indicative of an increasing need for both partners in a marriage or relationship to be economically active, due to increasing economic privations and the ever rising unemployment rate, increasing the need for those that are economically active to care of a larger family, because their family members cannot find employment and financial resources needs to be shared among a bigger family.

The majority of employees (42%) that responded indicated that they were in the middle management level of the organisation. It could be hypothesised that these are the employees of the business that are experiencing the most challenges with regard to balancing roles and resources in order to balance their work and life commitments, as these are the positions that companies put the most pressure on to drive and achieve success in the business, however no empirical research could be found to substantiate this statement.

The majority of employees (41%) indicated that they do experience a friendly work-life balance culture in their organisations, even though their organisations do not provide substantial work-life balance initiatives. The indications of some provision of work-life balance initiatives by the companies are refreshing, signifying that Namibian companies are at least starting with an attempt towards recognising the phenomenon and launching efforts to ensure work-life balance, as signalled by the relative friendly work-life culture occurrences in the organisations. This leaves room for a lot of improvement and innovation pertaining to implementing work-life balance initiatives, as these initiatives in conjunction with a positive work-life balance culture has the potential to significantly increase work engagement and overall performance in the organisation.

### **5.3 Psychometric Properties of the Measuring Instruments**

After examining the internal consistency of the measuring instruments in Section 4.3, it was found that in all the instruments, except for the Agreeableness instrument and the Work Home Culture instrument, all the test items contributed significantly to the internal consistency of the respective scales. Item 13 in the Work Home Culture instrument was identified as a weak contributor to the internal consistency of the instrument, as the corrected item total correlation of .06 were significantly lower than the rest of the items and an increase in alpha would result if this item were to be removed (.85 from .82). Item 11 in the Agreeableness instrument were also identified as having a low item-total correlation and did not appear to reflect the same underlying latent variable as the majority of the items in the instrument, as the corrected item total correlation of .06 were significantly lower than the rest of the items and an increase in alpha would result if this item were to be removed (.76 from .71).

No items were, however, removed during the study, as the researcher used existing measuring instruments that were available in the public domain and that demonstrated fairly good internal consistency in previous studies. In the interest of maintaining the comparability of the established instruments, the affected items in both the Work Home Culture and the Agreeableness instruments were retained. Apart from these considerations the observed alpha coefficients in the current study were regarded as satisfactory.

### **5.4 Discussion of the Correlational Results**

Pearson product-moment correlation analyses were used to examine the significance of relations between the variables as depicted in the proposed theoretical model and literature review. The current study found statistical evidence for the notion that role conflict is associated with work-life interaction. In accordance with the literature review, the current study found a significant positive relationship between role conflict and negative WHI and HWI respectively, and a significant negative relationship between role conflict and positive WHI and HWI respectively. As explained in the literature review, role conflict arises when an individual has simultaneous role commitments, where the demands of one of the many roles make it difficult to fulfil the demands of the other roles. In many cases, role conflict is associated with work demands that make it difficult to fulfil the demands from home, thus resulting in

limited time and resources to be able to balance work and life roles. The current study suggested and provides evidence for the premise that employees with high work demands are those with the highest levels of role conflict (Scharlach, 2001). This state of affairs has been shown to impact on an employee's experience of work-life balance and subsequent work engagement.

In the current study work demands was measured by means of items relating to work load and working hours. As explained in the literature review, work demands are mainly caused by high levels of work load and excessive working hours, impacting a person's ability to balance work and life roles, causing negative load reactions to develop into negative spill over and work-life interference as a result of excessive effort expenditure and insufficient recovery opportunities. The current study found statistical evidence for the notion that work demand determines work-life interaction, in that a significant negative relationship was found between work demand and positive work-home interference and a significant positive relationship between work demand and negative work-life interference, indicating a negative effect on work-life balance. The current study provides evidence for the premise that high work load and long working hours (Dikkers et al., 2007), impact on an employee's experience of work-life interaction.

The literature review has argued that employees who perceive a positive work-home culture in their organisations are more likely to experience work-life balance. Work-home culture is defined by the literature review as an employee's perception of support and motivation from the organisation, superiors and colleagues to make use of work-life balance support initiatives to balance their work and private lives. The current study found moderate statistical evidence for the notion that a favourable work-home culture determines work-life balance, in that a significant positive relationship were found between work-home culture and the positive forms of work-home and home-work interaction respectively and a significant negative relationship between work-home culture and negative work-home interaction. This is in accordance with the findings of Dikkers et al. (2007) who found a positive work-home culture to be related to the experience of work-life balance.

The literature review defined work engagement as an employee's involvement in and connection with his/her work; in such a manner that it motivates him/her to exert more effort than what is expected from him/her, to perform optimally and to retain

their jobs. The literature review also suggested that the resources that are developed to facilitate work-life balance are also likely to facilitate employee work engagement and that employees that do achieve work-life balance are more likely to be engaged in their jobs (Gibbons, 2006; Mayer & Allen, 1991). The current study found a substantial significant positive relationship between the positive forms of work-home interaction and home-work interaction respectively and work engagement; and a significantly negative relationship between negative work-home interaction and work engagement, indicating that work-life balance will determine or increase employee work engagement.

The extant body of knowledge suggests that the supply of resources that reduce job demands and role conflict, facilitate work hour flexibility, promote work-life balance initiatives and a supportive work-home culture, will promote work-life balance, and as a result employee work engagement (Lu et al., 2011; Sui et al., 2010). Increased employee engagement has the potential to positively impact the entire organization in that highly engaged employees' assume higher accountability for performance, problem-solving and communication. They own the success of the business and exert extraordinary efforts to achieve success in their areas of work, contributing to the overall success of the business. Finally, highly engaged employees are likely to be happy and satisfied people who have a significant influence both inside and outside the workplace, as well-being at work directly correlates to happiness in one's life at home and vice versa. Engaged employees are also likely to motivate and inspire the achievement of work-life balance in the organisation, fostering further engagement and performance in the organisation. (Richman et al., 2008)

Even though personality variables were not hypothesised to be antecedents of work-life interaction, but rather to be moderators of the relationship between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction, interesting correlations were identified between the personalistic variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction. In particular, conscientiousness had a significant negative relationship with negative home-work interaction. This finding is in accordance with the traits described in the literature review, indicating that because conscientious people are so hard-working, responsible and reliable, when experiencing excessive work demands, this type of person might give preference to his work over his home or life roles and responsibilities, which might lead to stress at home and a negative

home to work conflict. Similarly, conscientiousness was found to have a significant positive relationship with positive work-home interaction and a significant negative relationship with negative work-home interaction. This finding is also in accordance with the characteristics of conscientiousness described in the literature review, indicating that because conscientious people have a high need for achieving success, when accomplishing success at work, this person will feel purposeful, satisfied and motivated, which might have a positive spill-over effect with respect to their personal lives, however when not accomplished, this person might feel frustrated, disappointed and demotivated at work, which might have a negative spill-over effect on their personal lives. (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Wayne et al., 2002)

Neuroticism showed a significantly positive relationship with negative home-work interaction, in that as neuroticism increase, negative home-work interaction will increase. This finding is consistent with the literature review, as highly neurotic people are prone to experiencing excessive amounts of stress, finding it difficult to manage stressful or challenging situations, which might occur at home and that may have a negative interference effect on work. Similarly, neuroticism was found to have a significant negative relationship with positive work-home interaction and a significant positive relationship with negative work-home interaction. This finding is also in accordance with the traits described in the literature review, since neurotic people are inclined to experience high levels of stress, anxiety or negativity as a natural tendency, making it difficult for them to handle or manage even minor stress factors that can cause interference between work and home. This tendency may cause neurotic people to spend so much time and energy on stressing about the situation that they are likely to just give up on trying to resolve the factors causing interference, impacting their experience of work-life balance in a highly negative way (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Wayne et al., 2002).

A significant positive relationship was found between agreeableness and positive home-work interaction and positive work-home interaction respectively. A significant negative relationship was found between agreeableness and negative work-home interaction. Agreeableness refers to people who have good interpersonal skills and can handle interpersonal conflict situations well and are thus likely to experience positive interference between work and home, since they are more capable of influencing and managing the effects of certain determinants on their experience of

work-life interaction, decreasing negative work-home interaction. People high in agreeableness are better able to control their emotions and use constructive tactics to handle conflict and stress, thus being highly likely to experience wellbeing at work and in their general lives, having a positive spill-over effect between the two areas in their lives, improving their experience of work-life balance. This result should however be interpreted with care, since the behaviour of people high in agreeableness can swing to both sides. Highly agreeable people can either manage work-life conflict situations very well, with positive spill-over effects or be too accommodating towards other people and find themselves in work-life balance compromising situations. This, however, could be neutralised by a positive organisational work-home culture, work-life balance initiatives provided by the company and effective training on how to use work-life balance initiatives in order to manage and achieve work-life balance. (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Wayne et al., 2002)

Positive affectivity had a significant positive relationship with the positive forms of work-life interaction and a significant negative relationship with the negative forms of work-life interaction. The literature review showed that people high in positive affectivity acts and experience work and life in a consistently positive and enthusiastic way, resulting in a high likelihood of them being successful in both these areas of their lives, experiencing feelings of satisfaction and motivation, decreasing any forms of negative interference and increasing positive interference between work and home and vice versa. Similarly people high in positive affectivity have a positive orientation towards life and will thus use positive and constructive techniques to manage the determinants of work-life interaction and have a high likelihood of experiencing work-life balance. (Karatepe & Uludag, 2008)

Finally, emotional intelligence had a significant positive relationship with both positive forms of work-life interaction. This phenomenon is in accordance with the literature review, indicating that employees high in emotional intelligence should experience lower levels of work-family conflict and higher levels of positive spill-over between work and home; and home and work respectively. An employee high in emotional intelligence has a high probability of being able to manage conflict situations more effectively due to their mature self-perception, their effective interpersonal skills, their ability to manage emotions excellently and their wise perceptions of the benefits of work-life balance, resulting in a positive interference effect between work and home;

and home and work respectively when experiencing positive emotions. People with a high level of emotional intelligence are likely to have the skills and capacity to manage conflict between work and life relatively well, as they are capable of effectively identifying and managing the emotions that go along with it, reducing the degree to which role conflict and work demands affect the experience of work-life balance. (Carmeli, 2003)

These findings indicate that personalistic variables definitely play a significant role in how employees experience and manage work-life interaction and should be taken into consideration when attempting to promote work-life balance in an organisation.

### **5.5 Discussion of the Moderated and Mediated Regression Analyses**

The initial objective of this study was to test the moderating effect of personality on the relationship between the determinants of work-life interaction and the experience of work-life interaction. As previously mentioned, the effect of a moderating variable is characterised statistically as an interaction variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relationship between the determinants of work-life interaction and the experience of work-life balance (Cohen et al., 2003). The current study's results showed that only two of the moderating effects of the personalistic variables reported were significant and they were rather small in magnitude. The direction in which it influences the organisational variable/WLI relationship is to be inferred from the sign of the interaction coefficient. Limited evidence could be found to substantiate the hypothesis that personality has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between role conflict and work-home culture respectively and work-life interaction. Only neuroticism and agreeableness were found to have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between work demand and work life interaction.

Neuroticism was found to have a significant negative moderating effect on the relationship between work demand and positive work-home interaction, indicating that when neuroticism is high, the relationship between work demands and positive work-life interaction becomes increasingly negative. This phenomenon is in accordance with the literature review and correlational results where neuroticism was found to have a significant negative relationship with positive work-home interaction. As mentioned before, neurotic people are inclined to experience high levels of stress, anxiety or negativity as a natural tendency when faced with high work demands,

making it difficult for them to handle or manage the influence that work demands can have on the interference effect between work and home, debilitating their ability to experience of work-life balance.

Similarly agreeableness was found to have a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between work demand and negative work-life interaction, assuming that when agreeableness is high, the positive relationship between work demands and negative work-life interaction becomes even worse. This finding is in conflict with the literature review and correlation results, and provides support for the notion mentioned earlier, that agreeableness can have a negative influence on the effect that work demand have on the experience of work-life interference, since agreeableness can affect a person's ability to process a certain situation. People high in agreeableness have the ability to effectively manage interpersonal conflict, but do not necessarily assertively manage role conflict or challenging situations related to work demands successfully, impacting their ability to manage the effect that work demand has on negative work-home interaction. It might therefore be that people high in agreeableness are too accommodating with respect to requests and instructions that increase their work demand and thus impact their ability to manage work-life interference negatively.

At this point in time the researcher questioned the assumptions about the mediating role of the personalistic variables and developed the hypothesis that the personalistic variables probably played a mediating role in the relationship between the determinants of work-life interaction and the experience of work-life interaction. As previously mentioned, mediation occurs when the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is assumed to be an indirect effect that exists as a result of the influence of a third variable (the mediator). When the mediator is utilised in a regression analysis model, the effect of the independent variable is minimised whilst the effect of the mediator is emphasized in order to evaluate its significance (Sobel, 1982; 1986). Interesting results were found in the current study's results indicating that more personalistic variables have a mediating effect on the relationship between the determinants of work-life interaction and the experience of work-life interaction. The results indicated that the impact of role

conflict and work-home culture on some of the dimensions of work-life interaction is significantly mediated by neuroticism, positive affectivity and emotional intelligence.

These results are in accordance with the correlation results, as both role conflict and neuroticism were found to have significant negative correlations with positive work-home interaction and a significant positive correlation with both forms of negative work-home interaction. Neuroticism was found to have a positive and significant mediating effect on the relationship between role conflict and negative home-work interaction and a negative significant mediating effect on the relationship between role conflict and positive work-home interaction. These results indicate that when a neurotic person experiences role conflict, the person's neurotic inclinations will worsen the situation, as the person will perceive and experience excessive stress in situations of role conflict, not being able to manage too many role demands and not finding the time or resources to resolve them, resulting in increased negative work-home interaction and decreased positive work-home interaction. In this case, neuroticism is presumed to play a strong influencing role in the relationship between role conflict and interference, impacting it in a negative way. (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Wayne et al., 2002)

Similarly both role conflict and positive affectivity were found to have significant correlations with both forms of work-home interaction and home-work interaction, but with opposite effects. In the mediation analyses, positive affectivity was found to have a negative and significant mediating effect on the relationship between role conflict and both positive work-home interaction and home-work interaction. This means that positive affectivity will decrease the negative effect that role conflict has on positive work-home interaction and home-work interaction. This finding is in accordance with the literature review and the current correlational results, in that people high in positive affectivity have a positive orientation towards life and will thus use positive and constructive techniques to cope with conflicting role demands, finding innovative resources to manage role conflict and the negative effect that it has on positive work-life interaction (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Karatepe & Uludag, 2008); having a high likelihood of increasing positive work-home interaction and home-work interaction, and experiencing work-life balance.

Neuroticism was found to have a negative mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and negative home-work interaction and a positive mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and positive work-home interaction respectively. This finding indicates that neuroticism will decrease the negative relationship between work-home culture and negative home-work interaction and increase the positive relationship between work-home culture and positive HWI. This is in contrast to the literature review (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Wayne et al., 2002) and the current correlation results and the positive effect of neuroticism on the relationship between work-home culture and positive WHI consequently needs to be investigated further. It is possible that a highly neurotic person may be dependent upon a positive work home culture to experience satisfaction with work-home interference.

Conversely, positive affectivity had a negative and significant mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and negative HWI and a positive mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and positive WHI and HWI respectively.

It was also found that EI has a positive and significant mediating effect on the relationship between work-home culture and positive WHI and HWI respectively. This means that emotional intelligence will increase the positive relationship between work-home culture and both positive forms of interference. This finding is once more in accordance with the literature review and correlation results, in that people high in positive affectivity and emotional intelligence will make better use of the positive effects of work-home culture, appreciating the benefits of work-life balance, probably feeling comfortable to make use of work-life balance initiatives if available or if not available creating their own balancing efforts to achieve work-life balance (Bruck & Allen, 2003; Carmeli, 2003).

It is interesting to note that neuroticism had both moderating and mediating effects on the negative determinants of work-life interference, as well as highly negative correlations with the positive interference factors and highly positive correlations with the negative interference factors, increasing the negative effect that role conflict and work demands have on work-life balance. This finding might create an opportunity for an intervention aimed at work-life balance facilitation, as it is indicative that neurotic people are not desired in roles where work demand and role conflict is high and that

training might be necessary to teach neurotic people how to handle work demand and role conflict in the work place, in order to better manage its interference effect and improve their likelihood of experiencing work-life balance.

Positive affectivity and emotional intelligence are, however, desired traits in the work place, as both these personalistic variables have shown large and significant correlations with both positive WHI and HWI, as well as have positive mediating effects on the positive WHI and HWI and a negative mediating effect on negative HWI. This finding on the other hand provides support for the facilitation of a positive work-home culture and the provision of work-life balance initiatives, as people with a positive affectivity trait and high emotional intelligence will make use of these benefits, achieving work-life balance and consequently be highly engaged in their work, contributing to the success of the company.

Agreeableness has shown contradicting results, in that it significantly and positively correlates with the positive forms of work-life interference; and significantly and negatively correlates with negative WHI, but when added as a moderator to the relationship between work demands and negative WHI, the contributing effect was negative, as negative WHI increases when a person with a high agreeableness level experience work demands. This provides another opportunity for intervention in the form of work-life balance facilitation, by training people with high agreeableness to use the same tactics that they use to handle interpersonal conflict when experiencing situational conflict, in order to enable them to better perceive and manage work demands and its effect on their experience of work-life balance.

## 5.6 Discussion of the Multiple Regression Analyses

From the multiple regression analyses it was evident that personalistic variables added to the variance explained in two of the four types of work-life interaction with 12 to 18% additional variance explained. Positive affectivity, neuroticism and emotional intelligence stood out as significant predictors in explaining additional variance in their respective relationships with the dependent and independent variables. The results from the multiple regression analyses have also confirmed many of the hypotheses suggesting a relationship between the work descriptors and the four types of work-life interference.

Positive affectivity should be highlighted as a desired trait in the work place, as it is evident that it adds additional variance explained in the relationships with work-life interaction. People with a positive affectivity trait have an increased likelihood of experiencing and achieving work-life balance and work engagement, as this trait positively influences their ability to process and manage the determinants of work-life interaction and its effect on the experience of work-life interaction. The current results confirmed that positive affectivity is fairly strongly correlated with work engagement.

## 5.7 Discussion on the Further Statistical Analysis

Guided by the desire to replace the proposed theoretical model with a more sophisticated theoretical model, an intercorrelational analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between the organisational variables and personalistic variables respectively and work engagement. Interesting findings were made, as the results indicated that role conflict and work-home culture respectively were significantly correlated with work engagement and that all the personalistic variables investigated in the current study were significantly correlated with work engagement. Conscientiousness, neuroticism, positive affectivity and emotional intelligence actually had highly significant correlations with work engagement, with medium to large effect sizes. These findings confirm that the same resources utilised to decrease role conflict and increase work-home culture, in order to achieve positive work-life interaction, are likely to enable work engagement; and that personalistic variables definitely play a role in the achievement of work engagement. These findings also confirm that neuroticism is an undesirable personality trait and positive

affectivity and emotional intelligence are desirable personality traits in the work place in the pursuit of work-life balance and work engagement.

### **5.8 Revisiting the Research Hypotheses**

The following support was found for the research hypotheses. Each hypothesis is reported, as well as the supporting findings.

**Hypothesis 1: Role conflict has a negative effect on the positive forms of work-life balance (+WHI, +HWI) and a positive effect on the negative forms of work-life balance (-WHI, -HWI).** The Pearson product-moment correlation analyses confirmed statistically significant relationships pertaining to hypothesis one, in that role conflict significantly correlates with both negative forms of work-home and home-work interaction.

**Hypothesis 2: Work demand has a negative effect on the positive forms of work-life balance (+WHI, +HWI) and a positive effect on the negative forms of work-life balance (-WHI, -HWI).** The Pearson product-moment correlation analyses confirmed statistically significant relationships pertaining to hypothesis two, in that work demand significantly correlates with both positive and negative work-home interaction. The multiple regression analyses supported these findings; work demand had a positive effect on negative work-home interaction with a significant predictive power.

**Hypothesis 3: Work-home culture has a positive effect on the positive forms of work-life balance (+WHI, +HWI) and a negative effect on the negative forms of work-life balance (-WHI, -HWI).** The Pearson product-moment correlation analyses confirmed statistically significant relationships pertaining to hypothesis three, in that work-home culture significantly and negatively correlates with both negative forms of work-home and home-work interaction. The multiple regression analyses supported these findings; work-home culture had a negative effect on negative work-home interaction with significant predictive power and positive effect on positive work-home interaction with significant predictive power.

Thus, the propositions regarding the organisational variables as determinants of work-life interactions were found to be accurate, in that substantial support was found in the statistical results to reject the null hypotheses of Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3. Work

demands, role conflict and work-home culture were found to be significant determinants of work-life interaction. Based on the moderating regression analyses , little evidence was found for the hypotheses that personality moderates the relationship between the organisational variables and work-life interaction, with the exception of neuroticism on the relationship between work demand and positive work-home interaction and agreeableness on the relationship between work demand and negative work-home interaction.

**Hypothesis 4, 5, 6: Conscientiousness moderates the relationship between role conflict /work demand/work-home culture respectively and the dimensions of work-life interaction.** No significant statistical results could be found to reject the null hypotheses; the null hypothesis of Hypotheses 4, 5, 6 will thus not be rejected.

**Hypothesis 7 & 9: Neuroticism moderates the relationship between role conflict/work-home culture respectively and the dimensions of work-life interaction.** No significant statistical results could be found to reject the null hypotheses - the null hypothesis of Hypotheses 7 and 9 will thus not be rejected.

**Hypothesis 8: Neuroticism moderates the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction.** The moderated multiple regression analyses partially confirmed statistically significant moderating effects pertaining to hypothesis eight, in that neuroticism had a significant negative moderating effect on the relationship between work demand and positive work-home interference.

**Hypothesis 10 & 12: Agreeableness moderates the relationship between role conflict/work-home culture respectively and the dimensions of work-life interaction.** No significant statistical results could be found to reject the null hypotheses; the null hypothesis of Hypotheses 10 and 12 will thus not be rejected.

**Hypothesis 11: Agreeableness moderates the relationship between work demand and the dimensions of work-life interaction.** The moderated multiple regression analyses partially confirmed statistically significant moderating effects pertaining to hypothesis eleven, in that agreeableness had a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between work demand and negative work-home interference.

**Hypothesis 13, 14, 15: Negative affectivity moderates the relationship between role conflict/work demand/work-home culture respectively and the dimensions of work-life interaction.** No significant statistical results could be found to reject the null hypotheses; the null hypothesis of Hypotheses 13, 14 and 15 will thus not be rejected.

**Hypothesis 16, 17, 18: Positive affectivity moderates the relationship between role conflict/work demand/work-home culture respectively and the dimensions of WLB.** No significant statistical results could be found to reject the null hypotheses; the null hypothesis of Hypotheses 16, 17 and 18 will thus not be rejected.

**Hypothesis 19, 20, 21: Emotional Intelligence moderates the relationship between role conflict/work demand/work-home culture respectively and the dimensions of WLB.** No significant statistical results could be found to reject the null hypotheses; the null hypothesis of Hypotheses 19, 20 and 21 will thus not be rejected.

The statistical results thus did not provide enough support to reject the hypotheses that personality has a moderating effect on the relationship between the work descriptors and the dimensions of work-life balance for most of the personality variables. The null hypothesis of Hypotheses 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 will thus not be rejected, with the exception of Hypotheses 8 and 11 where the null hypotheses are rejected.

**Hypothesis 22: The dimensions of work-life balance have a significant effect on employee work engagement.** The Pearson product-moment correlation analyses confirmed statistically significant relationships pertaining to hypothesis twenty two, in that positive work-home and home-work interference respectively significantly and positively correlates with work engagement and negative work-home and home-work interference respectively significantly and negatively correlates with work engagement. The multiple regression analyses supported these findings; negative work-home interaction had a negative effect on work engagement with significant predictive power; positive work-home interaction had a positive effect on work engagement with significant predictive power.

## 5.9 Limitations of this Study and Recommendations for Future Research

The following section aims to discuss several limitations that this study contains, as well as some recommendations to improve or prevent these restrictions in the future. The first limitation pertains to the widely utilised method in social sciences of obtaining data through a self-report measurement instrument (Babbie & Mouton, 2002). This method is generally criticised as it includes the risk of being influenced by social desirability. Social desirability refers to the tendency among respondents to attempt to create a more favourable impression of themselves when completing such questionnaires, by over-reporting admirable perceptions and behaviours that they feel are socially acceptable, and under-reporting perceptions and behaviours that they feel are not socially tolerable or respected (Zammuner & Galli, 2005). This limitation should be acknowledged and understood when the results are interpreted, as the data are likely to be influenced by response biases, thus not being a true reflection of the actual perceptions of the respondents and hence the results may have been affected by this possible limitation. A recommendation to future research studies will be to consider supplementary forms of gathering supportive data or information in conjunction with a self-report measurement study, like focus groups, interviews or observations to confirm the statistical results.

A second limitation relates to the sample size and representation of the sample. The size of the sample that responded to this study consisted only of 166 respondents, which is considered a relatively small sample when compared to other related social science research studies. The sample is also not a good representation of the actual population where it pertains to ethnic groups. The majority of the actual population consists of black and coloured employees, while the majority of the sample respondents were white. The findings concluded from the data can thus not be generalised to the overall total population, as only 28% of the available population responded to the questionnaire, while the majority of them are not representative of the actual population in terms of ethnic representation. A bigger sample size will contribute to the greater generalizability of the findings and should be an important aspect to consider in future research.

The third limitation of the current research study relates to the design of the data gathering tool. The self-compiled tool, although using valid, reliable and established items that were available on the public domain, was too lengthy, as the questionnaire

consisted of 138 questions. The respondents might have experienced the exercise too strenuous and time consuming to complete and thus might have answered some questions without spending enough time and concentration to consider each answer carefully. To prevent this reaction in the future, alternative methods of collecting data should be considered or the possibility of a shorter questionnaire should be investigated.

Another limitation pertains to the selection of the organisational variables as determinants of work-life interaction and the personalistic factors as possible moderators and predictors of work-life balance. The current selection of organisational variables might exclude a variety of other variables that could influence work-life interaction. Similarly, the selection of personalistic variables might be expanded to include a variety of other variables that might also be predictors of work-life interaction. To broaden the selection of variables in the future, unconventional determining variables should be explored, other than what is already studied in the literature review. Exploring real time challenges in the work place might be a good source of inspiration and investigation.

A final limitation relates to the restrictions and boundaries associated with the current exploratory model. The current study's exploratory model can be expanded to include a range of antecedents for work engagement, as well as a broader range of moderating and mediating effects of personality on the various relationships between antecedents and dependent variables, especially work engagement as a dependent variable. A broader and more comprehensive model could include numerous additional variables and interaction effects, but might be exceptionally challenging in defining the moderating and mediating effects of personalistic variables on the various relationships between antecedents and dependent variables. The current model did however produce interesting results with respect to the relationships proposed and it is evident that the determinants of work-life interaction, with the inclusion of personality, play a meaningful role in both the achievement of work-life balance and work engagement. The inclusion of the organisational variables, together with the personalistic variables playing a moderating and mediating role in an exploratory work engagement model, could add additional value to the current body of knowledge. A much broader exploratory model could thus be investigated in future research studies.

This study will hopefully stimulate additional and supplementary research which will explore the proposed additional variables and interactions further, using alternative or supporting measurement tools and models to validate or reject these findings, as well as broaden the current body of knowledge with respect to the influence of personalistic variables on the experience of work-life interaction and work engagement.

### **5.10 Practical Implications of the Present Study**

The current study's findings and results provide valuable insights and practical implications for individuals and the workplace. These findings can be used as support to facilitate work-life balance in organisations, as well as manage the determinants that cause work-life interaction and the personalistic traits that influence it, in an attempt to achieve employee work engagement as a final result.

The current study found significant support for the propositions that work demands, role conflict and work-family culture determine the work-life interaction experienced by employees in the workplace. The results indicated that role conflict is significantly related to negative work-home and home-work interaction respectively, and work demand is significantly related to negative work-home interaction, with work-home culture playing the biggest role as it is highly and significantly related to positive and negative work-home interaction. These findings suggest that the main contributory factor associated with work-life interaction is organisational support. Organisational support in the form of work-life balance initiatives, a positive work-life culture, flexibility and supportive management has a direct positive effect on an employee's perceived control over work and life roles and their experience of work-life balance or conflict (Richman et al., 2008). Organisations should thus ensure they firstly establish a supportive work-life balance culture in the workplace, and secondly provide work-life balance initiatives, policies and procedures that employees can utilise to ease their attempts and to assist them in achieving work-life balance. The current study's literature review indicated that a supportive work-life balance culture in the workplace is essential, as employees will only make use of work-life balance support initiatives when they perceive it to be supported in the organisation. It will furthermore be beneficial for an organisation to ensure that work load, demand and hours are kept reasonable and to clarify work roles for employees, as that will significantly decrease the interference effect that these work related factors have on their experience of

work-life balance. For the organisations that were part of the study, it is important to thus implement support and the suggested initiatives if they wish to promote work-life balance in their organisations.

This study furthermore found support for the proposition that personalistic variables play an influencing role in the relationship between the organisational variables and the dimensions of work-life interaction, as well as correlate significantly with work engagement. The results, as discussed in Chapter 4 clearly demonstrate that personality adds to the variance explained in the respective independent variables with 12 to 18% additional variance explained. In two of the four analyses the personalistic variables explained more additional variance than the variance explained by the organisational variables. The literature review discussed and proposed that emotional intelligence and certain personality traits have been shown to influence behavioural patterns and interpretations of objective situations in a variety of life domains (Wayne et al., 2004). Fride and Ryan (as cited in Beauregard, 2006) proposed a model in which dispositional variables can influence the work-home interaction in three different ways. They argue that personality may affect the type and amount of work and home role requirements that an individual experiences, it may influence an individual's perceptions of work and home requirements; and it may influence the coping styles and strategies that individuals use to manage the interference between home and work, and in turn affect their experience of work-life balance or work-life imbalance (Beauregard, 2005). The current study established similar findings, which may be useful knowledge in organisations that are attempting to facilitate work-life balance, as these findings can assist organisations in effectively supporting and helping their employees to achieve work-life balance.

Neuroticism delivered interesting findings in the current study, as it had both moderating and mediating effects on the negative determinants of work-life interference, as well as highly negative correlations with the positive interference factors and a highly positive correlation with the negative interference factors, increasing the negative effect that role conflict and work demands have on work-life balance. This finding might create an opportunity of intervention for work-life balance facilitation, as it is indicative that highly neurotic people are not desired in roles where work demand and role conflict is high and that training might be necessary to teach neurotic people how to handle work demand and role conflict in the work place, in

order to better manage its interference effect and improving their likelihood of experiencing work-life balance.

Positive affectivity and emotional intelligence have been found to be desired personality traits in the work place, as both these personality variables have been shown to have strong and significant correlations with both positive WHI and HWI, as well as have a mediating effect on the relationships between the organisational variables and positive and negative work-life interaction. These findings provide some support for the facilitation of a positive work-home culture and the provision of work-life balance initiatives, as people with the trait of positive affectivity and high emotional intelligence will make use of these benefits, achieving work-life balance and consequently be highly engaged in their work, contributing to the success of the company. Positive affectivity was also highlighted as a desired personality trait because it is evident that it explains additional variance in the relationships between work-life interaction and work engagement. People with the trait of positive affectivity have an increased likelihood of experiencing and achieving work-life balance and work engagement, as this trait positively influences people's ability to process and manage the determinants of work-life interference and its effect on work-life balance.

The current study attempted to indicate that personalistic variables play an important role in employees' experience of work-life balance and work engagement; and through its findings suggest that conscientiousness, positive affectivity, low neuroticism and emotional intelligence are all traits that are desired in the workplace, as people with these traits are likely to successfully achieve work-life balance and work engagement and consequently contribute to the productivity and success of the company. The agreeableness and neuroticism personality traits are suggested to be handled with caution in the workplace and that awareness should be developed in the workplace amongst both employees and managers with respect to how employees with these personality traits are likely to respond to and manage work demand, role conflict and work-life balance interference. The literature review suggests that trait emotional intelligence and positive affectivity are trainable to people and that by teaching employees some of these qualities in the workplace, might provide them with valuable techniques to better perceive, react to, feel about, and manage work-life interaction and possibly achieve work-life balance.

The implications suggested in this section are supported by the current study's findings and provide support for the proposition that the supply of resources that will reduce job demands and role conflict, facilitate working hour flexibility, work-life balance initiatives and a supportive work-life culture will promote work-life balance and as a result employee work engagement. Increased employee engagement has the potential to positively impact the entire organization in that highly engaged employees take higher accountability for performance, problem solving and communication, they own the success of the business and exert extraordinary efforts to achieve success in their areas of work, contributing to the overall success of the business (Lu et al., 2011 & Sui et al., 2010). Finally, highly engaged employees are likely to be happy and satisfied people who have a significant influence both inside and outside the workplace, as well-being at work directly correlates with happiness in one's life at home and vice versa (Lu et al., 2010). Engaged employees are also likely to motivate and inspire the achievement of work-life balance in the organisation, fostering further engagement and performance in the organisation (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

There are several benefits to successfully achieving work-life balance and employee work engagement for both individual and organisations that makes its attainment notable, which will be mentioned briefly below:

- Being able to effectively manage multiple responsibilities at home, work and in the community without guilt or regret, reducing work-life interference.
- Being able to work in flexible ways so that earning an income and managing family/other life commitments become easier, enabling work and life satisfaction.
- Being part of a supportive workplace that values and trusts employees, facilitating commitment to the organisation.
- Improved personal health and well-being due to reduced stress levels caused by work-life conflict.
- Recruiting and retaining the right skills and talent
- Receiving the best from employees in terms of commitment and effort

- Being an 'employer of choice'
- Improving productivity, performance, profitability and organisational success.

(Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Labour Information, 2013; Lero et al., 2009; Taris et al., 2006; Van der Hulst & Geurts, 2001)

In conclusion, organisations and individuals should strive to identify the work-related factors associated with work demand and role conflict that affect employees' experience of work-life balance; it should then recognise the personality traits that either impede or enhance the employee's ability to effectively manage interaction in their work and life situations; and then identify and implement the support and initiatives that will be applicable and effective and that is needed by the employees in their organisation, to successfully implement work-life balance in the organisation.

### **5.11 Impact and Value of the Research as Concluding Remarks**

The study has confirmed the role of organisational variables in the experience of work-life interaction and the positive role of the work-home culture of the organisation has been highlighted. The results further provided some support for the role of personality variables as moderators and mediators of work-life interference. The impact of positive affectivity was especially noticeable. In some instances personalistic variables explained more additional variance in die dependent variable than the amount of variance explained by the organisational variables.

These findings provide additional motivation to include selected personality variables in the selection process so that employee well-being, the likelihood of positive job attitudes and performance could be optimised through increased work-live balance. It further suggests focusing the attention of employees suffering from negative work-life interaction on their personal processing of the challenges experienced and their coping strategies.

The findings of this study are anticipated to guide initiatives aimed at the development of work engagement, as it is expected that managing the work demands and working hours of employees by means of work-life balance initiatives, together with the development of a positive work-family culture in the organisation, will assist employees in achieving work-life balance. It is further anticipated that certain personalistic traits will be associated with differences in the experience of

work-life balance and that managing the work-life balance domain in accordance with the personality of an employee, will result in an optimal level of work-life balance and in increased employee work engagement. The results should motivate human capital practices to provide and manage work-life balance initiatives for employees, as it is expected to be a significant predictor of work engagement.

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## **APPENDIX A: Engagement, WLB and Personality Questionnaire Distributed To Employees**

### **STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

#### **THE MODERATING EFFECT OF PERSONALITY ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE AND ITS EFFECT ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Amanda Lambrechts (Hons BComm (Psych), from the Department of Industrial Psychology at Stellenbosch University. Results of this research will be reported in a thesis to be submitted for the degree MComm (Psych). You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have volunteered to participate in this study and because you are working within a Namibian company for more than 1 year.

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to establish the extent to which personality variables moderate the relationship between various antecedents and the level of work-life balance experienced; and its effect on employee work engagement.

#### **2. PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following things:

1. Open the questionnaires link/attached and complete it as truthfully as possible
2. Once you have completed the survey, submit it through the electronic survey site, , or, if you prefer, place it in the unmarked envelope provided by your facilitator and hand it in to him/her; or post it back anonymously to Amanda Lambrechts, P.O. Box 3669, Windhoek, Namibia.

#### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The questions will ask you to indicate to what extent you experience certain aspects while working. There are NO foreseeable risks and inconveniences associated with

answering these questions, although some of you may experience slight discomfort as a result of the personal questions being asked. There is no right or wrong answers; it is YOUR OWN perception/opinion/experience that is required.

#### **4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

No direct benefits exist for the participants, although an indirect benefit can be the improvement of working conditions, as the results of this study will be shared with the management of your organisation.

#### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participants will not receive payment for participation, although two participants stand the chance to win a shopping voucher to the value of N\$500 in the very famous Wernill Group Shopping malls in Windhoek.

#### **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of an independent online survey website or electronic database where all responses will be stored and only the researcher will have access to it. This electronic database is password protected and data will be stored on the researchers personal computer which is also password protected and kept in her personal safe.

The results of the study will be published in a master's thesis; however, no names or any other information of participants or the organisation will be made available/public.

#### **7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to take part in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

#### **8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

The researcher is Amanda Lambrechts

P.O. Box 3669

Windhoek Namibia

Tel: 081 206 5975

E-mail: [Amanda.lambrechts@gmail.com](mailto:Amanda.lambrechts@gmail.com)

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher's direct supervisor:

Prof DJ (Johan) Malan

Room 1040 Department of Industrial Psychology,

Industrial Psychology Building,

University of Stellenbosch

Merriman Ave, Stellenbosch

Tel: 021 808 3001

Fax: 021 808 3007

E-mail: [djmalan@sun.ac.za](mailto:djmalan@sun.ac.za)

## **9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms. Maléne Fouche ([mfouche@sun.ac.za](mailto:mfouche@sun.ac.za) ; 021 808 4622) at the Division for Research Development; Stellenbosch University.

If you are satisfied with the explanation provided above and you accept the conditions described, you are welcome to continue with the completion of the questionnaire. Your participation and support is highly appreciated.

**Thank you**

**Amanda Lambrechts**

## Engagement, WLB and Personality Questionnaire

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please answer the following 138 very SHORT questions as truthfully as possible (it will only take about 20min).
2. Once you have completed the survey, submit it through the electronic survey site, or, if you prefer, place it in the unmarked envelope provided by your facilitator and hand it in to him/her; or post it back anonymously to Amanda Lambrechts, P.O. Box 3669, Windhoek, Namibia.
3. This is NOT an evaluation of you as employee or how well you perform your job. Questions are about how you perceive yourself in certain situations within your work and life balance domain.

Thank you for your willingness to assist, your time and effort is truly appreciated!

**THE INFORMATION THAT YOU PROVIDE IS COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS AND WILL BE HANDLED AS CONFIDENTIAL AT ALL TIMES!**

### Section 1: Demographical Information

Marital Status	Married	Single	No of Dependents	
Gender	M	F	Is spouse employed	Yes / No
Age			Ethnic group	

**Answer the following questions by responding to the statements based on your personal experience. Example: My job inspires me (if you feel that is does so "very often", mark the appropriate block with an X)**

Never	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	X	6

## Section 2: Work Engagement

Source: Schaufeli and Bakker (2003). Note: VI = Vigor scale; DE = Dedication scale; AB = Absorption scale. Shortened version (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9 [UWES-9]).

<b>How often does it happen that</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Very Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
At my work, I feel that I am bursting with energy.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
At my job I feel strong and vigorous.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am enthusiastic about my job.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
My job inspires me.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am proud of the work that I do.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am immersed (absorbed) in my work.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I get carried away when I am working.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Section 3: Work Home Interaction (WHI) / Home Work Interaction (HWI)

Source: GEURTS, S. A. E., TARIS, W., KOMPIER, DIKKERS, J. S. E., VAN HOOF, M. L. M. & KINNUNEN, U. M. (2005). Work-home interaction from a work psychological perspective: Development and validation of a new questionnaire, the SWING. *Work & Stress, October-December 2005; 19(4): 319 /339*

### How often does it happen that

#### Negative WHI

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
Your work schedule makes it difficult for you to fulfil your domestic/home obligations?	0	1	2	3
You have to work so hard that you do not have time for any of your hobbies?	0	1	2	3
Your work obligations make it difficult for you to feel relaxed at home?	0	1	2	3
Your work takes up time that you would have liked to spend with your spouse/family/friends.	0	1	2	3

**Negative  
HWI**

You do not fully enjoy your work because you worry about your home situation?	0	1	2	3
You have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic/home matters?	0	1	2	3
Problems with your spouse/family/friends affect your job performance?	0	1	2	3
You arrive late at work because of domestic/home obligations?	0	1	2	3

**Positive WHI**

You come home cheerfully after a successful day at work, positively affecting the atmosphere at home.	0	1	2	3
You fulfil your domestic/home obligations better because of the things you have learned on your job?	0	1	2	3
You manage your time at home more efficiently as a result of the way you do your job?	0	1	2	3
After a pleasant working day/working week, you feel more in the mood to engage in activities with your spouse/family/friends?	0	1	2	3

**Positive HWI**

You take your responsibilities at work more seriously because you are required to do the same at home?	0	1	2	3
You are better able to keep appointments at work because you are required to do the same at home?	0	1	2	3
You manage your time at work more efficiently because at home you have to do that as well?	0	1	2	3
You have greater self-confidence at work because you have your home life well organized?	0	1	2	3

**Section 4: Role Conflict**

Source: Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman's (1970) Role Ambiguity Scale and Role Conflict Scales

**Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

I receive an assignment without adequate resources and materials to execute it.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.	1	2	3	4
I have to buck (violate) a rule or policy to carry out an assignment.	1	2	3	4
I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	1	2	3	4
I do things that are apt (appropriate) to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.	1	2	3	4
I work on unnecessary things.	1	2	3	4
I have to do things that should be done differently.	1	2	3	4

### Section 5: Work Demand

Sources: Karasek RA, Gordon G, Pietrokovsky C, Frese M, Pieper C, Schwartz J, Fry L, Schirer D. *Job Content Instrument: Questionnaire and User's Guide*. Los Angeles, CA: University of Southern California, 1985. Karasek R, Brisson C, Kawakami N, Houtman I, Bongers P, Amick B. *The Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ): An instrument for internationally comparative assessments of psychosocial job characteristics*. *J Occup Health Psychology* 1998;3:322-355.(Plus unpublished update, Robert Karasek, November 2000)

**Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My job requires working very fast	1	2	3	4
My job requires working very hard	1	2	3	4
I am not asked to do an excessive amount of work	1	2	3	4
I have enough time to get the job done	1	2	3	4
I am free from conflicting demands others make	1	2	3	4

	0h	1-5h	6-10h	11-20h
On average, how many hours a week do you work overtime?	0	1	2	3

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often does your direct supervisor expect you to work overtime?	0	1	2	3

<b>Section 6: Work Home Culture</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<i>Source: DIKKERS, J. S. E., GEURTS, S. A. E., DEN DULK, L., TOON, B. P., TARIS, W. &amp; KOMPIER, M. A. J., (2007) Dimensions of work home culture and their relations with the use of work home arrangements and work home interaction. Work &amp; Stress, April June 2007; 21(2): 155-172.</i>					
<b>Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:</b>					
Managers in this organization are generally considerate towards the private life of employees.	1	2	3	4	
In this organization, people are sympathetic towards care responsibilities of employees.	1	2	3	4	
In this organization it is considered important that, beyond their work, employees have sufficient time left for their private life.	1	2	3	4	
This organization is supportive of employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for private reasons.	1	2	3	4	
My colleagues support employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for private reasons.	1	2	3	4	
My colleagues support employees who (temporarily) want to reduce their working hours for private reasons.	1	2	3	4	
I am comfortable in discussing aspects of my private life with my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	
My colleagues help me out when I am (temporarily) preoccupied with my care responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	
My superior supports employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for private reasons.	1	2	3	4	
My superior supports employees who (temporarily) want to reduce their working hours for private reasons.	1	2	3	4	
I am comfortable in discussing my private life with my superior.	1	2	3	4	
Employees who (temporarily) reduce their working hours for private reasons are considered less ambitious in this organization.	1	2	3	4	
To turn down a promotion for private reasons will harm one's career progress in this organization.	1	2	3	4	

Employees who (temporarily) reduce their working hours for private reasons are less likely to advance their career in this organization.	1	2	3	4
In this organization, it is more acceptable for women to (temporarily) reduce their working hours for private reasons than for men.	1	2	3	4

<b>Section 7: Personality (N, A &amp; C)</b>					
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<i>Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about yourself:</i>					
Am always prepared.	1	2	3	4	
Often feel blue/down/sad/depressed.	1	2	3	4	
Am interested in people.	1	2	3	4	
Pay attention to details.	1	2	3	4	
Seldom feel blue/down/sad/depressed.	1	2	3	4	
Sympathize with others' feelings.	1	2	3	4	
Dislike myself.	1	2	3	4	
Have a soft heart.	1	2	3	4	
Get chores/duties done right away.	1	2	3	4	
Am often down in the dumps (depressed).	1	2	3	4	
Take time out (taking a break/rest) from others.	1	2	3	4	
Like order.	1	2	3	4	
Have frequent mood swings.	1	2	3	4	
Feel others' emotions.	1	2	3	4	
Follow a schedule.	1	2	3	4	
Panic easily.	1	2	3	4	
Make people feel at ease	1	2	3	4	
Am exacting (thorough) in my work	1	2	3	4	
Rarely get irritated.	1	2	3	4	
Am not really interested in others.	1	2	3	4	
Leave my belongings around.	1	2	3	4	
Feel comfortable with myself.	1	2	3	4	
Insult people.	1	2	3	4	
Make a mess of things.	1	2	3	4	
Am not easily bothered by things.	1	2	3	4	
Am not interested in other people's problems.	1	2	3	4	
Often forget to put things back in their proper place.	1	2	3	4	
Am very pleased with myself.	1	2	3	4	
Feel little concern for others.	1	2	3	4	
Shirk (avoid/neglect) my duties.	1	2	3	4	

### Section 8: Affectivity (NA & PA)

Source: Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*(6), 1063–1070.

**The list below consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Indicate the extent to which you feel this way right now, OR indicate the extent to which you have felt this way over the past week**

	Very slightly or not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Extremely
Interested	1	2	3	4
Distressed (feeling of anxiety)	1	2	3	4
Excited	1	2	3	4
Upset	1	2	3	4
Strong	1	2	3	4
Guilty	1	2	3	4
Scared	1	2	3	4
Hostile	1	2	3	4
Enthusiastic	1	2	3	4
Proud	1	2	3	4
Irritable	1	2	3	4
Alert	1	2	3	4
Ashamed	1	2	3	4
Inspired	1	2	3	4
Nervous	1	2	3	4
Determined	1	2	3	4
Attentive	1	2	3	4
Jittery (Nervous)	1	2	3	4
Active	1	2	3	4
Afraid	1	2	3	4

### Section 9: Emotional Intelligence

Source: Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., Hall, L. E., Haggerty, D. J., Cooper, J. T., Golden, C. J., & Dornheim, L. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences, 25*, 167–177.

**Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about yourself:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.	1	2	3	4
When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.	1	2	3	4
I expect that I will do well on most things I try.	1	2	3	4
Other people find it easy to confide in me.	1	2	3	4

I find it hard to understand the nonverbal messages of other people.	1	2	3	4
Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.	1	2	3	4
When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.	1	2	3	4
Emotions are some of the things that make my life worth living.	1	2	3	4
I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.	1	2	3	4
I expect good things to happen.	1	2	3	4
I like to share my emotions with others.	1	2	3	4
When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.	1	2	3	4
I arrange events others enjoy.	1	2	3	4
I seek out activities that make me happy.	1	2	3	4
I am aware of the nonverbal messages I send to others.	1	2	3	4
I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.	1	2	3	4
When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.	1	2	3	4
By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.	1	2	3	4
I know why my emotions change.	1	2	3	4
When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.	1	2	3	4
I have control over my emotions.	1	2	3	4
I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.	1	2	3	4
I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.	1	2	3	4
I compliment others when they have done something well.	1	2	3	4
I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.	1	2	3	4
When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.	1	2	3	4
When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.	1	2	3	4
I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.	1	2	3	4
I help other people feel better when they are down.	1	2	3	4
I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.	1	2	3	4
I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.	1	2	3	4
It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	1	2	3	4