

Henry, H., & Desmette, D. (2018). Work-family enrichment and well-being: the role of occupational future time perspective. *Career Development International*, 23, 6/7, 542-556, <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-02-2018-0043>

Abstract

Purpose: In the context of workforce aging, this paper seeks to investigate the mediating role of occupational future time perspective (OFTP) in the relationship between work-family enrichment (WF-E) and two well-being outcomes (i.e., work engagement and emotional exhaustion). In addition, the moderating role of age on the relationship between WF-E and OFTP, and consequently, on the indirect effects of WF-E on work engagement and emotional exhaustion through OFTP, will be examined.

Design/methodology/approach: Cross-sectional survey research ($n = 263$) was conducted in a public sector company in Belgium. Structural equation modelling and bootstrap analyses were performed to investigate the hypothesized relationships.

Findings: The dimension “remaining opportunities” of OFTP mediated the positive relationship between WFE and work engagement, and the negative relationship between WFE and emotional exhaustion. Chronological age moderated the positive relationship between WFE and the dimension “remaining time” of OFTP, with stronger effects among older workers.

Research limitations/implications: This research has confirmed that OFTP is influenced by WFE and that WFE matters, especially for older workers. Future

research should continue to study the effects of the work-family interface on older workers.

Practical implications: Age management practices should take WFE into consideration when managing an aging workforce. In particular, older workers may benefit from WFE to increase their perception of remaining opportunities at work, which in turn increase well-being.

Originality/value: This study contributes evidence for the role of personal resources (i.e., remaining opportunities) in the relationship between WF-E and well-being at work.

Keywords: work-family enrichment, age, occupational future time perspective, well-being

Paper type: Research paper

Recent demographic trends, characterized by increasing life expectancy and birth rate reduction, present multiple challenges for aging at work. Governments have to ensure the future sustainability of the social security system for all generations, for example in encouraging an extension of working life policies. Older individuals, who may feel more insecure about their future as retirees, could plan a more protracted career (Desmette and Fraccaroli, 2015). Consequently, organizations must manage an increasingly age diverse workforce. In particular, organizations play an important role in supporting individuals' motivations across their career, through the provision of different work experiences (Van der Heijden and De Vos, 2015).

A sustainable career across the lifespan refers to a career path that meets a person's needs and aspirations and fits well with the individual's opportunities and the constraints of her/his environment (Zaniboni *et al.*, 2015). Since motivational processes that apply to younger employees may differ from those that apply to older ones, socioemotional selectivity theory (SST, Carstensen, 1991) can be helpful in understanding these age-related changes in needs and preferences across the lifespan. SST suggests that younger individuals prioritize different social goals from older people. Thus, older individuals prefer emotionally meaningful goals and close social relationships (e.g., with family members), while younger individuals prioritize instrumental goals. Future time perspective (i.e., the amount of time people perceive they have left ahead of them), a core construct in SST, would explain some of these changes.

Applying future time perspective to the work context, Zacher and Frese (2009) defined occupational future time perspective (OFTP) as workers' perceptions of remaining time and remaining opportunities in their careers. Research showed that OFTP is positively associated with well-being outcomes, such as work engagement (e.g., Schmitt *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, it is important to identify variables that predict OFTP as a means of enhancing/explaining levels of OFTP and, therefore, revealing how to enhance beneficial outcomes. For example, age is negatively associated with OFTP (e.g., Zacher and Frese, 2009), such that older workers perceive less remaining time and fewer remaining opportunities at work, implying that older workers tend to have less work engagement. This suggests that ways of appealing to

older workers might incorporate strategies that either address OFTP and/or overcome this tendency. In this context, OFTP has been found to partially mediate the relationship between work characteristics (e.g. job complexity) and work outcomes (e.g. work performance) (Zacher *et al.*, 2010), therefore serving to offer some explanation of why these variables are related.

Up to now, contextual antecedents of OFTP related to the work-family interface, such as work-family enrichment, have not been studied (Henry *et al.*, 2017). Work-family enrichment (WF-E) is defined as “the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role” (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006, p. 73). Individuals who perceive WF-E will see their work/family as providing them resources to make family/work life more manageable, and such perceptions may increase workers’ well-being (McNall *et al.*, 2015). However, more research is needed to better understand the relationship between WF-E and outcome variables (McNall *et al.*, 2010b). The first goal of this study is to investigate the mediating role of OFTP in the relationship between WF-E and two well-being outcomes (i.e., work engagement and emotional exhaustion). On the basis of COR theory (Hobfoll, 2002) and the work-home resources model (Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012), we expect that WF-E will lead to the development of OFTP that will be negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion and positively related to work engagement.

Regarding age, some studies have investigated it as a moderator of the relationship between WF-E and its consequences (e.g., Zhang *et al.*, 2018). Because SST suggests that younger workers would prefer the work sphere while older

workers would rather spend more time with their family, the second goal of this study is to investigate how age moderates the relationship between WF-E and OFTP, and consequently, how age moderates the indirect effects of WF-E on work engagement and emotional exhaustion through OFTP.

Work-family enrichment

During their entire career, employees are faced with the challenge of managing work and family roles. Recently, research has started to analyze the benefits of multiple role memberships (e.g., McNall *et al.*, 2015). Such research highlights the importance for HR managers of developing employees' work-family enrichment (WF-E). In what follows, "WF-E" will refer to both WFE and FWE (i.e., bidirectional work–family enrichment).

Work-to-family enrichment (WFE) occurs when work experiences improve the quality of family life, either through instrumental benefits or through the arousal of positive affects (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). For instance, an achievement at work may increase one's positive mood in the form of enthusiasm and energy. In turn, this positive affect may result in higher marital satisfaction (McNall *et al.*, 2015). Thus, WFE influences family-related variables. Family-to-work enrichment (FWE) occurs when family experiences improve the quality of work life. As an example, if an employee gains multitasking skills from his parenting role, these skills may directly improve his job performance (i.e., instrumental path) (McNall *et al.*, 2010b). Thus,

FWE influences work-related variables. For instance, FWE was positively related to work engagement and negatively related to job burnout (Cinamon and Rich, 2010). However, empirical evidence has shown that WFE is also associated with work-related variables. For instance, WFE is positively related to work engagement (e.g., Timms *et al.*, 2015), and negatively to emotional exhaustion at work (McNall *et al.*, 2015). COR theory helps us to understand the extended benefits of WFE in the work role (i.e., beyond the family role). First, COR theory supposes that people seek to obtain, retain and protect resources (Hobfoll, 2002). Second COR theory proposes that resources can generate new resources, a phenomenon described as "resource caravans" (Hobfoll, 2002). Once obtained, people can utilize the resources they already possess to gain more resources, creating a "gain spiral" in which resources accumulate. When people accumulate resources in the family role due to WFE, these resources consequently are likely to contribute to enhancing the work role (e.g., work engagement) (Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012). Likewise, due to accumulated resources in the work role, FWE may also predict family-related variables, such as family satisfaction (Crain and Hammer, 2013).

Antecedents of WF-E can be grouped into nonwork-related variables (e.g., family involvement, and family support) (Aryee *et al.*, 2005), work-related variables (e.g., schedule flexibility, and supportive work-family culture) (McNall *et al.*, 2010a; and Mauno and Rantanen, 2013) and personal characteristics (e.g., positive affectivity) (McNall *et al.*, 2015).

OFTP: a core construct in socioemotional selectivity theory

Zacher and Frese (2009) distinguished two dimensions of OFTP. On the one hand, *remaining opportunities* at work refer to an individual's perceptions of remaining opportunities in his/her occupational future. On the other hand, *remaining time* at work refers to an individual's perceptions of remaining time in his/her occupational future. Studies have differed in their analysis of OFTP. For instance, some researchers choose to investigate merely one dimension of OFTP, such as only remaining opportunities, while others examine the two dimensions together (for a review, see Henry *et al.*, 2017.).

Over the past decade, several studies have examined antecedents and outcomes of OFTP.

Regarding individual antecedents, age is strongly and negatively associated with OFTP (e.g., Zacher and Frese, 2009), meaning that, as they grow older, individuals perceive less remaining time and/or fewer remaining opportunities in their career. Mental health, general optimism and the use of Selection, Optimization and Compensation strategies (i.e., SOC, action regulation strategies that help individuals invest their resources in an optimal way) are positively associated with OFTP (Gielnik *et al.*, 2012; and Schmitt *et al.*, 2013), such that those variables are likely to extend workers' perception of remaining opportunities and/or remaining time. Among contextual variables, job complexity and job control (Zacher and Frese, 2009; and Zacher *et al.*, 2010), as well as an organizational climate for successful aging (Zacher

and Yang, 2016), are positively related to OFTP, while negative age-metastereotypes are negatively related to OFTP (Bal *et al.*, 2015).

Regarding the consequences of OFTP, research has shown positive relationships with occupational well-being (e.g., work engagement, Schmitt *et al.*, 2013) and negative relationships with psychological distress and emotional exhaustion (Barbieri *et al.*, 2015; Ho and Yeung, 2016). OFTP also has positive consequences for motivation and attitudes and behaviors at work (e.g., intention to retire, Bal *et al.*, 2015). A few studies have shown that OFTP mediated relationships between work characteristics and work outcomes. For instance, OFTP mediated the positive relationship between job complexity and work performance (Zacher *et al.*, 2010). Such results suggest that OFTP may be seen as a personal resource that mediates relationships between work characteristics and work outcomes (Henry *et al.*, 2017).

The mediating role of OFTP between WF-E and work outcomes

According to COR theory, WF-E may be understood as the process whereby contextual resources from the work and home domains constitute the “gain spiral” that leads to the development of personal resources. Thus, the personal resources developed in each domain subsequently facilitate performance in the other domain (Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012).

In this study, we expect that individuals who perceive WFE/FWE will develop personal resources, such as an increased OFTP, by being more self-confident and

more optimistic about their professional future. In other words, we suppose that those "enriched" employees will likely see more remaining opportunities and more remaining time in their career (i.e., OFTP). In turn, this personal resource will decrease emotional exhaustion and increase engagement at work.

H1. There are positive indirect effects of WFE on work engagement through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time.

H2. There are negative indirect effects of WFE on emotional exhaustion through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time.

H3. There are positive indirect effects of FWE on work engagement through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time.

H4. There are negative indirect effects of FWE on emotional exhaustion through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time.

Socioemotional selectivity theory: the growing importance of close relationships when aging.

According to SST (Carstensen, 1991), social goals change with age, such that people increasingly emphasize emotionally meaningful goals (e.g., generativity motives) and relationships with close social partners (e.g., family members) when they grow older, while they tend to prioritize instrumental goals when they are younger.

Applying SST's predictions to the work context, some studies have shown that effects of different work characteristics vary depending on age. For instance,

generativity opportunities at work (i.e., job features that pertain to teaching, training, and sharing skills with younger generations) were more positively related to intergenerational contact quality among older workers, while development opportunities at work were more positively related to intergenerational contact quality among younger workers (Henry, Zacher, and Desmette, 2015). In the same way, increased task variety (i.e., increased work-related knowledge for future career development), was related to lower turnover intentions for young workers, whereas increased skill variety (i.e., increased work-related emotional-regulation goals), was related to lower turnover intentions among older workers (Zaniboni *et al.*, 2013). Finally, recent meta-analytic results from Zhang *et al.* (2018) show that FWE has stronger positive effects on organizational commitment among younger workers. These findings suggest that job characteristics that allow workers to develop themselves at work have more positive effects among younger workers, while job characteristics that fulfill emotional and social-related needs are more beneficial for older workers.

Based on SST and on this empirical evidence, we propose that when work helps workers fulfill their family role (i.e., WFE), effects will be more positive among older workers, resulting in increased OFTP and, in turn, greater well-being at work.

H5. The positive indirect effects of WFE on work engagement through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time are moderated by age, such that the indirect effects are stronger for older workers

H6. The negative indirect effects of WFE on emotional exhaustion through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time are moderated by age, such that the indirect effects are stronger for older workers

Conversely, we expect that when family helps workers fulfill a work role (i.e., FWE), effects will be more positive among younger workers, resulting in increased OFTP and, in turn, greater well-being at work.

H7. The positive indirect effects of FWE on work engagement through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time are moderated by age, such that the indirect effects are stronger for younger workers

H8. The negative indirect effects of FWE on emotional exhaustion through (a) remaining opportunities and (b) remaining time are moderated by age, such that the indirect effects are stronger for younger workers

Method

Data collection and participants

Data were collected through a survey in a public sector company in Belgium. An email inviting participants to complete our online questionnaire was sent out by the communication officer to 749 “government employees” resulting in 243 respondents (response rate=32.4 %). In addition, the link was also sent to the school directors from this public sector, who were free to decide whether or not to forward the email invitation to teachers working in their schools. 53 teachers filled in the questionnaire. Because we were not informed as to whether the invitation to

participate in the study had actually been sent out by the school directors, it was impossible to calculate an exact response rate to the questionnaire for teachers. We controlled for the potential effect of professional function in the analyses. Our total sample included 302 respondents.

After removing participants who replied only to questions on variables at the beginning of the questionnaire (i.e., sociodemographic variables) (39), the final sample consisted of 263 respondents. The majority were “government employees,” working in administration (e.g., as secretaries or accountants), as technical employees (e.g., helpdesk ICT, or electrician) or as paramedical staff (82%). The rest of the sample consisted of teachers (18%). Most participants were female (70%), in a relationship (70%), with at least one dependent (58%), working full time (88%), and with at least a bachelor’s degree (76%). The average age was 47 ($SD = 9.2$, range = 18-64), and the average company tenure was 15.2 years ($SD = 10.1$).

Measures

Chronological age. Chronological age was measured as calendar age, ranging from 18 to 64 in our sample.

WFE and FWE. WFE (e.g. “You are better able to interact with your spouse/family/friends as a result of the things you have learned at work;”) and FWE (e.g., “You have greater self-confidence at work because you have your home life well organized;”), were each measured on a response scale from 1 (*very rarely*) to 7 (*very often*) with six items (SWING, Geurts *et al.*, 2005). After conducting a

confirmatory factor analysis (see details below), we removed one item from each scale, leading to a final number of five items for WFE ($\alpha = 0.88$) and five items for FWE ($\alpha = 0.85$).

OFTP. OFTP was measured with six items translated from Zacher and Frese (2009), with answer alternatives ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The subscales “remaining opportunities” (e.g., “Many opportunities await me in my occupational future;” $\alpha = 0.92$) and “remaining time” (e.g., “My occupational future seems infinite to me;” $\alpha = 0.74$) were each measured with 3 items.

Work outcomes. *Work engagement* was measured with 9 items from Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) (e.g., “At my work, I feel bursting with energy;” $\alpha = 0.95$). The response scale ranged from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). *Emotional exhaustion* was measured with 8 items from Maslach and Jackson (1981) [1] (e.g., “I feel emotionally drained from my work;” $\alpha = 0.89$) ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*).

In order to assess discriminant validity, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis. We compared the fit of the hypothesized six-factor measurement model with five alternative models. The hypothesized six-factor measurement model was the best model (CFI = .90, SRMR = .10, RMSEA = .11). However, inspection of the fit indices and factor loadings suggested that the six-factor model could be improved. Like Geurts *et al.* (2005), we found that two pairs of items of the WF-E scale (i.e., items 1 and 2; 7 and 8) had highly correlated error terms, which suggests that these pairs of items constituted empirically separate factors. Therefore, we assumed that removing one item for each pair (i.e. item 1 and 7) would improve the fit of the six-

factor model. The hypothesized model was modified accordingly (i.e., these two items were omitted stepwise), resulting in a six-factor model (final). This final model ($\chi^2_{(480)} = 1372.12$) fitted better than the hypothesized model (final versus hypothesized: $\Delta\chi^2 = 1010.42$ (N=263), $df = 65$, $p < .001$; CFI = .94, SRMR = .07, RMSEA = .08). The table with the results of the confirmatory factor analysis is available on demand.

Covariates. As in previous studies on OFTP (e.g., Schmitt *et al.*, 2013), we checked the correlations between potential control variables, such as age, gender, education, and employment status (i.e., part-time vs full-time employment), and our dependent variables. We also checked for the potential effects of function, since our sample includes different types of functions (government employees, teachers and paramedical staff). Following Becker's (2005) recommendations, we only kept significant control variables in our models.

Analyses

We used structural equation modeling with Lisrel (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 2008) to estimate principal and interaction effects. We included paths from the control variables to the endogenous variables with which they correlated, and allowed the two dimensions of OFTP to correlate. We created interaction terms following the approach of Marsh *et al.* (2004): the centered indicators of WFE and FWE were multiplied by the centered score for age to form indicators of the latent interaction term (for a similar procedure, see Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2015.). The moderation

analysis tested whether the paths from WFE/FWE to remaining time and to remaining opportunities were moderated by age. Because the literature suggests that the importance of job versus family characteristics varies depending on age (Henry *et al.*, 2015; Zhang *et al.*, 2018), we have controlled for the moderated effect of age on the direct relationships between WFE/FWE and work outcomes.

Consistent with Kline's (2011) recommendations, model fit was assessed by examining the χ^2 goodness-of-fit, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).

We used the bootstrapping method (Model 4, Preacher and Hayes, 2004) to test the significance of the indirect effect and the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) to test the indirect effect of WFE and FWE on work engagement and emotional exhaustion through OFTP at +/- 1 standard deviation of the moderator (i.e., age).

Results

Descriptive results

Table I indicates that workers' age correlated negatively with remaining opportunities and remaining time, and positively with work engagement. Function and education were also significantly related to outcomes, such that education was positively related to emotional exhaustion, while function was positively related to work engagement. In particular, post-hoc analyses showed that work engagement

among government employees ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.05$) was significantly lower than among teachers ($M = 5.41$, $SD = .94$) ($p < .05$). The correlations between our central research variables were in the expected direction.

[Insert table 1 about here]

Model fit

Except for the SRMR index ($= .11$), the other fit indices were acceptable (RMSEA of .08 and CFI of .94). Although the chi-square test was significant χ^2 (573, $n = 263$) = 1522.10, $p < .001$, the ratio of the chi-square value to its degree of freedom (Maruyama, 1998) was quite acceptable ($\chi^2 / df = 2.66$). However, based on the chi-square difference test (Bentler and Bonett, 1980), some chi-square changes were significant and showed that the alternative model 2, which adds paths between WFE and the two outcomes (i.e., work engagement and emotional exhaustion), was superior to the hypothesized model and the alternative models 1, 3 and 4. Therefore, this alternative model 2 was retained as the best fitting model (χ^2 (571) = 1505.31, CFI = .94, SRMR = .09 and RMSEA = .08). Standardized parameter estimates of this alternative model 2 are presented in Figure 1. The table with the results of the comparison between hypothesized model and alternative models is available on demand.

Hypotheses testing

Consistent with previous studies (e.g., McNall *et al.*, 2015; Timms *et al.*, 2015), results showed that WFE is positively related to work engagement ($\gamma = .19, p < .01$) and negatively related to emotional exhaustion ($\gamma = -.20, p < .01$). In line with Hypothesis 1(a), we found that WFE was positively related to remaining opportunities ($\gamma = .28, p < .01$), and remaining opportunities were positively related to work engagement ($\beta = .39, p < .001$). Bootstrap analysis showed that WFE had a positive indirect effect on work engagement through remaining opportunities (indirect effect = .07, BCa 95% CI = [.02; .13]). Furthermore, results indicated that remaining opportunities were negatively related to emotional exhaustion ($\beta = -.36, p < .001$). The negative indirect effect of WFE on emotional exhaustion through remaining opportunities was also shown (indirect effect = -.07, BCa 95% CI = [-.13; -.03]). Thus, Hypotheses 1(a) and 2(a) were supported: remaining opportunities partially mediate the effects of WFE on work engagement and emotional exhaustion. However, we did not find support for Hypotheses 1(b) and 2(b), since WFE was not related to remaining time, and since remaining time was not related to either work engagement, or emotional exhaustion.

FWE was not related either to remaining opportunities, or to remaining time. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 and 4 were not supported. Finally, regarding the hypothesized moderation effect of age, we tested differences in relationship strength between younger and older workers. Age interacted with WFE to predict remaining time (γ (age * WFE) = .25, $p < .01$; see Figure 2). No other interaction effect was significant. To test whether the interaction effect of age with WFE was consistent with

the hypothesized pattern, a simple slope analysis was performed in which remaining time was regressed on WFE at low (i.e. one SD below the mean, thus participants aged 38 years and lower) and high (i.e. one SD above the mean, thus participants aged 56 years and over) values of age. The relationship between WFE and remaining time was small and non-significant for younger participants ($B = -0.07$, $t = -0.61$, $p = \text{n.s.}$) and positive and significant for older participants ($B = 0.39$, $t = 3.59$, $p < 0.001$). This interaction effect is shown in Figure 2. However, since remaining time was significantly related neither to work engagement nor to emotional exhaustion, we did not find support for hypotheses 5 to 8.

Discussion

This study referred to COR theory (Hobfoll, 2002) and the work-home resources model (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006; Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012), to explore how OFTP mediates the relationship between WF-E and well-being outcomes. Moreover, on the basis of SST (Carstensen, 1991), we also investigated whether these effects vary depending on age.

Our results reveal that WFE has positive effects on work engagement and negative effects on emotional exhaustion through increased perceptions of remaining opportunities, supporting Hypotheses 1a and 2a. These findings are consistent with the work-home resources model, since we show that the process of work-to-family enrichment may lead to the development of personal resources (i.e., increased remaining opportunities at work) which in turn, increases well-being at work.

However, we did not find that remaining time mediates the relationship between WFE and well-being outcomes. Thus, Hypotheses 1b and 2b were not supported. Similarly to findings from a recent meta-analysis on OFTP (Rudolph *et al.*, 2018), these results suggest that remaining opportunities are more strongly related to well-being outcomes than remaining time. As suggested by Henry *et al.* (2017), remaining time might predict behavioral tendencies at work rather than well-being. For instance, Akkermans *et al.* (2016) showed that remaining time in life was positively related to motivation to continue working in one's current organization.

FWE was not related to remaining opportunities and remaining time, or to our well-being outcomes. Thus, our third and fourth hypotheses were not supported. Our findings support McNall *et al.* (2010b), who found that WFE was more closely related to work outcomes, while FWE was more strongly related to non-work related variables. Such results may be explained by social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). When employees perceive that work helps them to manage family lives, they are likely to feel that their organization cares for them (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). In turn, due to the norm of reciprocity, employees feel obligated to reciprocate toward the organization in the form of more favorable attitudes, such as more work engagement. The norm of reciprocity would imply for FWE that workers could reciprocate toward the family role. Since OFTP refers to perceived remaining time and opportunities at work and since well-being outcomes refer to engagement and emotional exhaustion at work, it is less surprising that FWE was not related to these variables.

Finally, we did not find that age moderates the relationship between WFE and remaining opportunities. Thus, Hypotheses 5a and 6a were not supported. These findings suggest that WFE is an important resource to extend perceptions of remaining opportunities among all workers. In fact, age played a moderating role only in the relationship between WFE and remaining time, such that a positive effect of WFE on remaining time was shown among older workers. These findings support studies suggesting that when work interferes with family life, older workers are likely to perceive less remaining time at work (e.g., Raymo and Sweeney, 2006). Applying this reasoning to WFE, our study showed that when work enriches family life, older workers perceive more remaining time at work. Future studies should investigate the role of remaining time in explaining attitudes toward retirement in relation to older individuals' work-family enrichment.

Since remaining time at work was not related to work engagement nor to emotional exhaustion, we did not find moderated indirect effects of WFE on well-being outcomes. Thus, Hypotheses 5b and 6b were not supported.

Finally, contrary to Hypotheses 7 and 8, effects of FWE on OFTP were not stronger among younger workers. This null effect might be explained by the characteristics of our sample which is mainly composed of women (70%). In their meta-analysis, McNall *et al.* (2010b) found that the relationship between FWE and job satisfaction was stronger for samples with a majority of women, which seems to indicate that FWE is particularly important for them. In other words, in our sample,

age effects could have been blurred by gender in the relationship between FWE and OFTP.

Theoretical contributions

Some scholars (e.g. McNall *et al.*, 2010b) have argued that we need a better understanding of the relationship between WF-E and outcome variables, and that the role of personal resources should be considered to explain such relationships (Moazami-Goodarzi *et al.*, 2015). This study contributes to the literature on work-family enrichment and is consistent with COR theory (Hobfoll, 2002) and the work-home resources model (Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker, 2012), by showing that focus on opportunities mediates the relationship between WFE and both work engagement and emotional exhaustion. In doing so, our results indicate that WFE may contribute to the development of personal resources (e.g., OFTP), thus facilitating well-being at work. In addition, we found direct relationships between WFE and work outcomes. Similarly to McNall *et al.* (2010b), our findings showed that the role from which enrichment originated (e.g., work in WFE) may be more strongly related to outcomes in this role (e.g., work) than the role from which the enrichment was received (i.e., family). Following this reasoning, and based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), FWE would be more strongly related to non-work variables (Crain and Hammer, 2013). From this perspective, future studies should investigate effects of FWE on family variables, such as family satisfaction or family commitment.

Our study also contributes to the literature on age at work. As highlighted by Hill *et al.* (2014), more research is needed on comparing how older and younger workers experience work and family life. Since we found that WFE was positively related to remaining time among older workers, our findings indicate that family is particularly important for them. Thus, our study supports SST predictions that people increasingly emphasize emotionally meaningful goals and close social relationships as they grow older.

Finally, our findings contribute to the literature on FTP at work. Recently, Henry *et al.* (2017) called for a better understanding of specific antecedents and outcomes of focusing on opportunities and remaining time. We found that WFE was positively related to focusing on opportunities and that focusing on opportunities was positively related to well-being outcomes, while remaining time was not related to these variables. In addition, our study extends previous findings about the mediating role of OFTP in the relationships between job characteristics and work outcomes (e.g., Bal *et al.*, 2015; Zacher *et al.*, 2010).

Limitations and future research

Despite the contributions of this study, we have to acknowledge several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design of the study prevents us drawing any conclusions about causality. For instance, because health may be a predictor of OFTP (Zacher and Frese, 2009), we cannot exclude the possibility that emotional exhaustion might negatively predict OFTP, while work engagement might positively

predict it. Longitudinal studies are needed to assess the potential reciprocal effects between OFTP, work engagement and emotional exhaustion.

Second, the test of the measurement model led us to remove two items that measured the affective dimension of the WFE and FWE scales. Thus, our measure of WF-E is biased toward the instrumental side, while our outcome variables tend to reflect emotional responses, possibly understating our results. Despite this limitation, our findings reveal positive relationships between WFE, focus on opportunities and our outcomes. However, to further investigate the relationships between WF-E and outcomes in the aging context, future studies should use a scale that assesses the affective dimension of WF-E to a greater extent (e.g., Carlson *et al.*, 2006).

Third, our sample was comprised of workers from the public sector, with somewhat diverse professional profiles. In particular, because our sample of teachers was small, future research should replicate our study in investigating whether WF-E fosters OFTP among this specific population. Indeed, understanding which factors affect teachers' perceptions of their career future has been shown to be important (Van Beurden *et al.*, 2017).

Fourth, our independent (i.e., WFE and FWE) and dependent variables (i.e., OFTP, work engagement and emotional exhaustion) may be positively influenced by work resources. However, we did not include these variables in our study and consequently, we cannot explain how much variations in our work outcomes are explained by work resources and by WFE, respectively. To take into account this

confounding effect, future studies should include measures of work resources when studying effects of WFE on work outcomes.

Finally, the self-reported nature of our scales might raise concerns about the common method bias (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Nevertheless, we performed Harman's single-factor test and the results suggest that the common method bias is not a major problem in our research.

Practical implications

This study has important implications for organizations. First, our findings show that WFE has direct positive effects on both work engagement and emotional exhaustion. Thus, HR managers should develop practices that help employees to experience greater enrichment throughout their careers. For instance, organizations could offer the availability of a flextime schedule (i.e., flexibility as to when employees start or end their workday) and of a compressed workweek (i.e., the possibility to work four longer days per week instead of 5 regular days) to increase WFE (McNall *et al.*, 2010a). In addition, creating a supportive work-family culture at work, where employees feel free to discuss their family situation and needs (Mauno and Rantanen, 2013), would also be beneficial for WFE. Furthermore, these accommodations can be particularly useful in increasing workers' personal resources, such as remaining opportunities.

Second, since remaining opportunities mediated the positive effects of WFE on outcomes, organizations may seek to demonstrate how WFE activities (that

contribute to family harmony) relate to increasing or taking advantage of work opportunities (greater energy, and less stress). Such direct job-related initiatives include increasing job control (e.g., possibilities of scheduling tasks, and choosing the methods of doing the job, Zacher and Frese, 2009), or creating an organizational climate for successful aging (e.g., HR strategies that signal to employees that the company is concerned about their successful aging and their development at work, Zacher and Yang, 2016).

Furthermore, our study shows that enriched close relationships (i.e., family role) may be related to extended occupational remaining time for older workers. Though our study did not find effects of remaining time on work outcomes, research suggests that time might be an antecedent of opportunities (Kooij *et al.*, 2014a), and our findings show that the two are related. In other words, extending time perspective may help to increase remaining opportunities. In light of this, HR policies that extend working time in the late career, such as those supporting older workers' employability (Zappalà *et al.*, 2008), could be implemented.

Finally, our study showed that WFE was associated with remaining time only among older workers, which suggests that older workers may benefit from different aspects of work-family balance policies. For instance, older workers enjoying flexibility can better reconcile work and family life (Erickson *et al.*, 2010). In addition, older workers are more likely to have the responsibility of caring for aging relatives (Baltes and Young, 2007), which may imply different work schedules than when taking care of young children. Therefore, HR policy makers should consider the

scope of work-family needs for people as they age. By taking into account the diversity in age-related needs, such policies would support a sustainable career across the lifespan.

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Footnotes

[1] Due to a mistake when encoding the questionnaire, the 9th item used in this study was an item assessing Personal Accomplishment (MBI, Maslach and Jackson, 1981) rather than Emotional Exhaustion. For this reason, we deleted this item from the analyses.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations (SD), and correlations of key variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Age	47.05	9.20	—										
2. Gender ^a	-	-	.07	—									
3. Education ^b	-	-	-.05	.08	—								
4. Employ. status ^c	-	-	-.08	.15*	-.02	—							
5. Function ^d	-	-	-.02	-0.04	.24***	0.02	—						
6. WFE	3.55	1.27	.09	.02	.01	-.06	.04	(.88)					
7. FWE	3.97	1.29	.01	-.06	-.02	-.01	-.08	.64***	(.85)				
8. Remaining opp.	3.72	1.55	-.25***	.03	.03	.06	.07	.32***	.31***	(.92)			
9. Remaining time	3.44	1.43	-.51***	-.06	-.05	.08	.10	.17**	.20**	.60***	(.74)		
10. Engagement	4.95	1.04	.12*	-.02	.01	.05	.19**	.35***	.30***	.43***	.24***	(.95)	
11. Exhaustion	3.05	1.03	-.03	-.01	.17**	.01	.03	-.30***	-.21**	-.35**	-.25***	-.48***	(.89)

Note. $N = 263$. WFE = work-family enrichment; FWE = family-work enrichment. Reliability estimates (α), where available, are shown in parentheses along the diagonal.

^aGender coded 0 = female, 1 = male; ^b Education was coded 1 = lower than upper secondary, 2 = upper secondary, 3 = high school and higher; ^c Employment status was coded 1 = half time and lower, 2 = part time, 3 = full time; ^d function was coded 1 = State officials, 2 = teachers and 3 = paramedical staff and others. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Figure 1. Completely standardized path coefficients for the alternative model 2

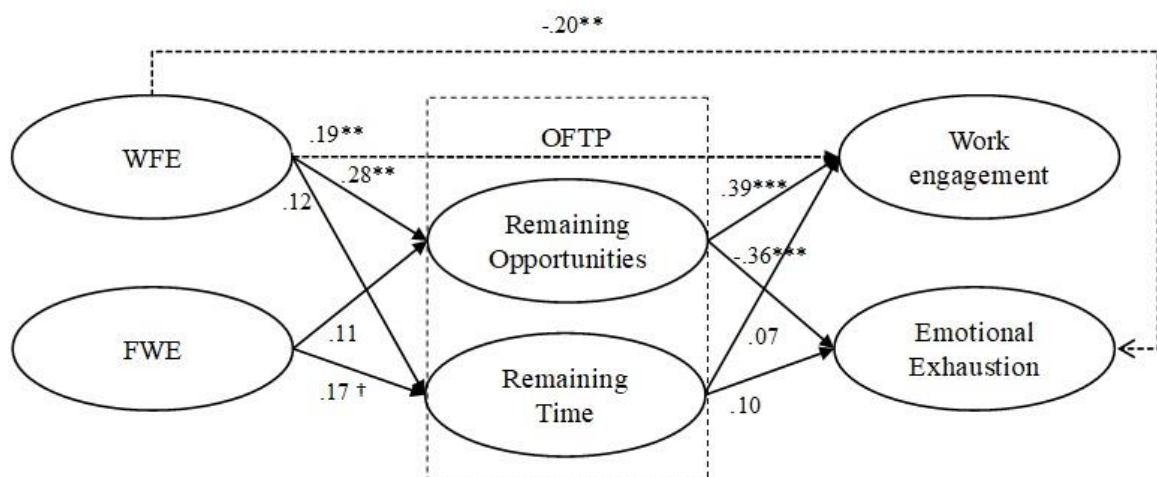


Figure 2. Interaction effect of age and WFE on remaining time

