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Behaviour-based Work-Family Conflict among
Hungarian Manager Fathers¹

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Abstract

The paper focuses on a special type of conflict that emerges from the contradictory demands of work and family life, assuming that the gap between the ideal manager and the involved father might serve as significant conflict source in men's life. In order to test the assumption an interview-based case study was made at the Hungarian subsidiary of a Scandinavian multinational service sector company, where 43 face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with manager fathers. The interviews were analysed with the use of NVivo10 on the principle of qualitative content analysis. According to the findings behaviour-based work-family conflict is not the major source of conflict between work and family responsibilities, rather the contrary, managerial and father roles often enhance each other. In those cases when manager fathers have experienced conflict it appeared in two forms: as a double pressure that fathers are expected to be both traditional breadwinners and available involved fathers and as the difficulty to switch from managerial role into father role. The low level of behaviour-based conflict can be explained by the traditional division of labour and gender attitude in Hungary that conforms to the workplace's expectations about ideal employees.

Keywords: work-family conflict; behaviour-based conflict; involved fatherhood; ideal employee; managers; work-life balance.

1. Introduction

Empirical results from the United States (Ladge et al., 2014) as well as Sweden (Allard et al., 2011) showed that those men who are more family oriented and those living in dual-earner couples were more likely to experience work-family conflict than men in traditional male breadwinner families. Similarly, according to international comparative studies (Van der Lippe et al., 2006; Geszler, 2014), male employees in Northern- and Western-European countries face more work-family conflict than working men in post-socialist nations although the former ones put considerable emphasis on the issue of work-life balance.

This paradox can be understood as emancipation in Western and especially Northern countries expects both parents to be active in the labour force as well as at home resulting in conflict between the work and family domains (Ladge et al., 2014; Allard et al., 2007). On the other hand, in post-socialist countries, since female participation in the labour market was primarily economically driven, traditional views about the division of paid and unpaid labour (meaning that the man is the breadwinner of the family, while the woman is responsible for care and household tasks) were not influenced (Van der Lippe et al., 2006). The traditional male breadwinner model is also completely in accordance with the employer's expectations, the ideal employee model, which considers work as the main element of men's lives. In this interpretation being a good father, unlike being a good mother, is not seen as culturally incompatible with being a good employee. It is rather the contrary, where being a good provider is seen as an integral part of being a good father (Williams et al., 2013).

This is not the case however, in those situations where not the traditional breadwinner model is followed. The man as the breadwinner ideal is contested by the ideal of the *involved father*, who is committed to care and family responsibilities (Williams et al., 2013). The rise of the nurturing father ideal is not something to be understood in the frame of the ideal employee, since the expectations towards men are different. While the ideal employee expects men to focus primarily on their work neglecting the care responsibilities, the ideal of involved fathering expects fathers to take an active role in their child's nurturing and care. These contrary expectations might help us to understand why men now report greater levels of work-family conflict than before (Williams et al., 2013; Kvande, 2009).

Moreover, men in managerial and professional positions are found to face even higher levels of conflict (Allard et al., 2007). Ford and Collinson (2011) conclude that the ideal employee model, the taken for granted, uninterrupted, long working hours career model is even stronger in these positions (Burke, 2000). Even Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), whose conflict term is the most widely used one in the literature of work and family interactions, offer the example of male managers to demonstrate incompatible expectations regarding behaviour in different roles. According to these authors, the male, managerial stereotype emphasizes self-reliance, emotional stability, aggressiveness, and objectivity. Family members, on the other hand, may expect a person to be warm, caring, open and emotional. They define work-family conflict in general as 'a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in

the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role' (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985: 77). Within this term they differentiate three major forms: time-, strain-², and behaviour-based conflict. The last type, studied in this paper, refers to the different behavioural expectations attached to work and family domains and the inability to adjust one's behaviour to these expectations within each life sphere. Most of the empirical studies that use Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) conflict definition focus on the time- and strain-based items and the findings for behaviour-based conflict are scarce, thus somewhat vague in comparison to the other two types (Rantanen, 2008).

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the behaviour-based conflict in life of Hungarian fathers in manager positions assuming that the gap between the ideal manager and the involved father might serve as a significant conflict source. Hungarian fathers in general are found (Takács, 2008; Pongrácz, 2001; Harcsa, 2014) to stand far from the involved father ideal experienced primarily in Nordic countries, since the division of labour between genders is unequal³ and fathers' assistance in parental leave is remarkably low along with a weak ability to secure and use parental rights (Hobson et al., 2011). On the other hand, Pongrácz and Molnár (2011) highlight the fact that Hungarian society cannot be categorized as either completely 'traditional' or completely 'modern' but may be located between the two poles, with mixed and ambivalent elements. In line with this research, based on 2009 Family Values data of Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Spéder (2011) found that 24.5 per cent of the Hungarian public expected the man to be the breadwinner, without needing to sacrifice their time working on care tasks, while 18.5 per cent identified with a family-centric man, ready to cut back on work in favour of the family. The majority (48 per cent), however, raise contradictory expectations towards men by desiring them to be the family breadwinners but also expecting them to prioritize family over work.

The combination of modern and family-centric expectations can be assumed to create double pressure on Hungarian fathers that might lead to perceived behaviour-based conflict. Therefore, the research questions of this paper are focusing on whether manager fathers face any conflict arising from double expectations of work and family domain; and if so, how they experience this behaviour-based conflict; and how the discourses of ideal employee and involved father affect their work-family balance. To answer these questions a case study was undertaken at the Hungarian subsidiary of a Scandinavian multinational service sector company, where 43 face-to-face semi-structured interviews were made with manager fathers. The Scandinavian origin of the company is important since Nordic societies are well-known of their long policy legacy of promoting gender equality and work-family balance in the workplace (O'Brien et al., 2007). Organizational culture has been found to have a direct

² Time-based conflict refers to overlapping schedules and pressures between work and family roles, due to which it may be impossible to be both physically as well as psychologically present within both roles. Strain-based conflict occurs when work- and family-related stressors arise that produce mental and emotional strain, due to which the demands of other life spheres are difficult to fulfil (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985).

³ Even if a couple follows Western patterns of sharing housework responsibilities before they have a child, after the birth of the baby the traditional division of labour tends to re-emerge (Takács, 2013).

relationship with work-family balance since claims for work-family balance are made and granted or denied at the workplace. A workplace organizational culture that reflects sensitivity to employees' work-family balance can be seen as a site for converting policies into work-family balance claims. At the same time, organizational culture can also affect how and to what extent employees face potential penalties and risks to work-family balance claims, including job loss and discriminatory treatment in pay and promotion (Hobson et al., 2011). Hobson and her co-authors (2011) found that in Hungary men's work-life balance claims at the workplace entailed a greater risk for them than for women, who can expect more tolerance towards their desire to prioritize family needs. But in general there is only a weak potential for maintaining a work-life balance and for taking advantage of family-friendly initiatives. The main reasons for these agency inequalities are the structural features of the economy and labour markets, including the prevalence of insecure employment, long working time regimes, and low wages that force mothers and fathers to take on extra jobs.

The next chapter approaches the question of behaviour-based conflict by introducing the concepts of ideal employee and involved fatherhood along with some important changes in the domains of both working life and home. This is followed by an overview of the applied method, the demographic summary of the sample and a brief presentation of interview results. The paper is closed with a discussion chapter that interprets and concludes the results.

2. Ideal Employee versus Involved Father

2.1 Manager Men in Organizations

Among all the changes in organizations most recently there is a special attention on the moves from the nationally based, single organizations to transnational, post-bureaucratic multi-organizations with looser structures, dynamic networks and project organization (Broadbridge and Hearn 2008; Kvande, 2009). The high performance organizations in globalized working life are increasing their expectations towards employees regarding time, energy and commitment (Lewis et al., 2007). Companies functioning in this high-paced environment are often labelled *greedy organizations* (Coser, 1974) that seek exclusive and undivided loyalty from their employees. Greedy organizations are able to generate commitment from employees in three ways: firstly they make significant demands on their members' time and energy. Secondly, they offer a position of status by creating an aura of exclusivity around the institution and by putting pressure on individual members to weaken their ties outside the organization. Thirdly, they build close links with the social identity of their members through the elements of this exclusivity (Burchielli et al., 2008). The pull of economic, social and symbolic power associated with male management reinforces an individual's commitment to, and engagement in business (Bowman, 2007). This is in accordance with the *ideal employee* definition of Joan Acker (2006; 2011). The ideal employee is a worker who exists only for work and has no other claims. As Acker (2011: 67) says 'He is expected to be at work at set times, focused only on the tasks at hand, responsive only to demands of supervisors, available for long working hours, and unhampered by other responsibilities, such as for children and housework. This

is the ideal, unencumbered worker. The encumbered worker, most often a woman, does not fit the ideal assumptions very well.' Consequently, work is organized on the image of a white middle-class man (Acker, 2006). This means organizations and management are gendered and bear masculine values, although it is difficult to see when the masculine character of management is being taken for granted, neglected and thereby reproduced and reinforced (Collinson and Hearn, 1996). In this sense the hegemonic forms of masculinity⁴ are still associated with work that entails long hours and behaviours to demonstrate prioritization of the work (Thompson, 2010), especially in managerial positions, which requires men to be irreplaceable at work (Kvande 2009; Halrynjo and Lyng 2013). Working long hours is seen as a 'heroic activity', as a manly test of physical endurance. The successful enactment of this masculinity involves displaying one's exhaustion, physically and verbally, in order to convey the depth of one's commitment, stamina and virility (Williams et al., 2013).

However, it would be simplifying to talk about only one dominant form of masculinity in organizations. Collinson and Hearn (1994) argue that hegemonic masculinity may appear in a number of different ways. They call these forms 'masculinities' and propose that different men and different organizations adopt different masculinities as normative behaviours, instead of there being just one kind of man. In accordance, Hearn (1992) considers bureaucracies mixtures of patriarchal and fraternal organizations. In these so-called organizational hybrids, men may meet with each other in fraternalities, yet relate to each other through the processes of patriarchal and hierarchical authority. Organizational forms are still characterized as selective, competition-oriented and hierarchical, reinforcing the dominant models of masculinity that are readily associated with men of power. But the phenomenon of fraternity shows that the assumption that men act only in order to differentiate themselves from others by showing superiority and obtaining control over others is misleading. While they are encouraged to be self-reliant, innovative, and make their own career choices, at the same time they are expected to be good team players and to conform to company norms (Wajcman and Edwards, 2005). There is also a shift from authoritarian management styles toward more consultative and inclusive styles of management. The move towards more flexible corporate structures places more emphasis on attitudinal, behavioural and personality factors. Leadership is now concerned with fostering shared visions, shared values, shared directions, and shared responsibility, requiring a softer edge and more empathy (Wajcman and Edwards, 2005).

2.2 Involved Fatherhood, Changing Masculinities

In the past few decades some significant changes have occurred regarding fatherhood primarily in the Western and Nordic countries. The issue of the necessity of making men responsible for housework and childcare as well emerged as early as the 1950s. This approach was regarded as an appropriate way of promoting gender equity and

⁴ Hegemonic masculinity is the term of Connell (2009) describing the pattern of practice (i.e. things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women as well as subordinated masculinities to continue.

create family solidarity (Nagy, 2008). This new idea of fatherhood is very different compared to that which existed about fathers in the 1950s to 1970s, who were presented as occupying a more distant breadwinning role. According to this approach, today it is no longer enough to be rational, goal/means oriented, career oriented, and disciplined: neither 'earning as caring', or having a family photo on the office desk is sufficient to validate being a good father. The 'new' father is more emotionally involved, more nurturing, and more committed to spend time with his children as well as willing to share the joys and work of caregiving with mothers (Wall and Arnold, 2007). Several supranational initiatives can be observed in the European Union, such as the European Committee's Gender Roadmap that was designed to invite men with the help of social policies to more actively participate in family responsibilities, and to support the notion that men and women should be able to engage in both employment and care-giving (Nagy, 2008).

In encouraging the norm of involved fatherhood Nordic societies are regarded as pioneers. From the 1990s in particular, there has been a rapid expansion in Nordic countries of both parental leave⁵ and flexible working provision targeted at fathers (O'Brien et al., 2007). This can be regarded as a development towards a father-friendly welfare state (Kvande, 2009). Father's involvement affects children's development positively, since they can feel that both parents are available and able to take care of them. In addition involved fathering has positive consequences not only from the child's viewpoint but regarding fathers' well-being as well (Eräranta and Moisander, 2011).

Fatherhood, however, might have undergone more changes in culture than in practice (Wall and Arnold, 2007). Empirical results from Norway (Rudberg and Nielsen, 2012) show that men can be both traditionally masculine and involved fathers. Some research (Forsberg, 2007; Johansson and Klinth, 2008) claims that there is a conflict between the discourse that connects the father's involvement with gender-equality and that which connects it with child-centeredness. Paternal involvement does not necessarily imply gender equality. In fact, the tendency may be for fathers to spend more time playing and talking with their children than engaging in childcare and housework. According to these findings men's orientation towards children may be more a question of their 'picking out the good bits' than of a radical transformation of masculinity (Johansson and Klinth, 2008).

Rehel (2013) offers the typology of Lamb and colleagues (Lamb et al., 1987), which classifies the ways a parent might be involved in childcare: specifically *interaction*, *availability*, and *responsibility* (or as Rehel (2013) refers to them: engagement, accessibility and responsibility). This model captures various forms of involvement, from shared activities like reading and playing (interaction/engagement), to being present or accessible to the child whether or not direct interaction is occurring, for example preparing a meal while the child does homework (availability/accessibility), to planning and scheduling around the child, for example making an appointment with the baby-sitter or determining when the child needs new

⁵ Especially with the so-called daddy quota, which is an individualized, non-transferable entitlement to parental leave that was first made available to fathers in 1993, when Norway became the first nation in the world to offer fathers four weeks (Haas and Rostgaard, 2011).

clothes (responsibility). Rehel's (2013) interview results show that fathers in the United States and Canada have significantly increased their levels of engagement and accessibility but have changed little in terms of responsibility. Responsibility for children is consistently understood as one of the most fundamental elements of good mothering, often invisible, that adds to women's share of labour in significant ways (Rehel, 2013).

In comparison Hungarian empirical results also confirm the unequal division of labour within families. Slow changes however are being recorded: according to time-diary research (Harcza, 2014) time spent on childrearing has doubled in the past 25 years among Hungarian couples. The father's time spent with children has significantly increased, although, as expected, there is still a huge gap between the genders. Similarly, using data from time-diaries Sebők (2015) found that the time spent on paid work and leisure has decreased, while the amount of hours devoted to child care increased between 1999-2000 and 2009-2010 in the Hungarian population. Takács (2013) draws attention to the fact that among Hungarian parents, quality parenting (namely, being a good enough parent who spends 'quality time' with a child) is becoming an important element of being a father or mother. According to another qualitative research study by Judit Takács (2015), the majority of interviewed men, who considered themselves as actively caring fathers, expressed their desire to spend more time with their children, but found that the time constraints of work did not allow this. In the meantime, above all, presence in itself was mentioned as a core element of an actively caring fatherhood. The men in the research were critical towards their own fathers' parenting: their presence was precisely the thing which they now missed the most. Compared to their own fathers' behaviour, they regarded their own parenting as more caring and emotional, emphasizing the importance of quality parenting and the need to 'slow down' and to prioritise being part of a child's life more than chasing after success at work after reaching a certain satisfying point in a career.

3. Methodology

The Hungarian subsidiary of a Scandinavian service sector company was chosen as the case of analysis. Within this company the sample consists of managers of Hungarian nationality, from group manager level to C level positions, who have at least one child younger than 10 years old⁶. The method of exhaustive sampling was used, therefore all the potential interviewees who met these parameters were approached⁷.

In the current research an *interview-based case study* was conducted. According to Bryman (1989) in this type of case study the chief emphasis is on undertaking unstructured or semi-structured interviews in 1-5 organizations.

⁶ In order to have a more complete picture of the case, female managers were also included into the sample as a control group. Due to limited space the findings of the female sample are not presented in this article.

⁷ The response rate was 86 percent. The main reason for rejection was that floor managers were working abroad or in another part of the country.

Observation may occur, but in a non-participant way with the researcher being very much on the periphery of interaction, carried out in the periods between interviews or at meal-times. As Bryman (1989) argues, however, the aim of case studies is not to draw conclusions from a sample to a population, but to reveal patterns and linkages of theoretical importance.

The semi-structured interviews of research were analysed with the use of NVivo10 software. The interview analysis was undertaken according to qualitative content analysis. The creation of coding categories happened in both deductive and inductive ways: most of the categories were created based on the literature and primary research, while other categories were formulated after reading responses to questions asked in the interview⁸. Categories constitute a tree structure, having narrower categories embedded in broader categories. Through this the advantages of both broader, more generalized categories and the narrower, detailed categories can be used and seen in a structured way.

4. Results

4.1 Description of Sample

At the very beginning of March 2015 I obtained access to the company by receiving a company account, access to the building, a company phone, a laptop and remote access to the Outlook e-mail system. As a next step the Human Resources Department compiled and gave me a list with the potential interviewees based on my selection criteria. Since I had access to the e-mail system I was able to get into contact with everyone directly. The fieldwork lasted from 3rd of March 2015 until the 13th of April 2015.

According to their position, the group contains 22 group managers, 13 heads of department, 6 directors and 2 C level leaders. The average age of respondents is 39 years, the youngest man in the sample is 29 years old, while the oldest is 49. The average and modus of number of children is 2, while the maximum number of children is 4. Some men in the sample had very young children: a 3-months-old baby was the newest family member. Only seven men in the sample had only children of school age, while all the other fathers had at least one child younger than 7 years old. Regarding marital status, with one exception all the respondents are married. The only divorced man in the sample is cohabiting with a new partner.

Regarding level of education the sample is unsurprisingly very homogenous. Almost all respondents have a higher education, college or university degree. The educational level of the respondents' partner shows a similar picture: one-third of male manager's wives were on maternity leave at the time of the research. No men from the sample have taken any parental leave beyond 5-day paternity leave. Another third of interviewees are part of dual-earner couples and their wives are also working full time, while 6 of the wives have a part-time job resulting in one-and-a-half earner

⁸ This mixed version of structuring is labelled by Mayring (2014) as *content structuring or theme analysis*.

couples. There are 6 male managers whose wives are self-employed, such as being a manicurist, a tattoo artist or a dance teacher.

4.2 Becoming a Father

Before the analysis of the relation between managerial and father expectations it is important to briefly summarize how interviewees understand the two domains and to what extent they see involved fathering and ideal employee as ideals. Regarding fatherhood men in the sample were asked about the elements they found the most important in fathering and the tasks connected to childcare they were responsible for.

Two types of answers emerged connected to the question what managers consider the most crucial as a father: *materialist* and *post-materialist values*. Under materialist values I include the financial maintenance of the household, as well as the provision of safety and security to the family while under post-materialist values ideas about being a role-model to children, being present, and giving love are filed. These are, of course, not mutually exclusive categories; references to materialist and post-materialist values appeared simultaneously. As can be seen, materialist duties are closer to more traditional ideas about fatherhood since they assume that men will be the main breadwinners and are expected to provide their families with financial, existential and physical safety.

The post-materialist values are more complex; moral considerations such as providing a good example, giving guidance and being a role-model for a child can also be regarded as a characteristic of the traditional father model, making the father the head of the family. Other elements, however, such as loving the child, being available, giving care, attention, and unconditional acceptance are clearly typical of a more care-oriented, involved father. Post-materialist values were more frequently mentioned than materialist tasks; being a role model, teaching values and morals were particularly popular answers. Materialist values rarely appeared alone, but were usually accompanied by ideas about the importance of being a role-model. It is important to highlight that these comments only relate to ideas about ideal fatherhood. The lengths of the interviews did not allow me to ask the respondent fathers in detail about their everyday practices and routines. It is well-known that what is revealed through interviews is not necessarily equivalent to actual behaviour. Consequently when an interviewee is hypothesized to be a more involved father, this refers only to his discourse about fatherhood.

It was common that fathers expressed a desire to spend more time with their children. It seemed, however, that they were more or less satisfied with their performance as fathers, or they only had slight doubts about whether their parenting would prove successful in retrospect. Only few seemed to be suffering from not being able to represent the father ideal that they wanted to: *'Now we are living as a classic family, an orthodox one. I put the bread on the table and that's where my father responsibilities end. But obviously it's not good. I would like more than this. I don't know, I would like to raise happy people and I want to take my share of that.'* (head of department, 40).

The tasks fathers undertake in parenting may be classified as interaction and availability according to the typology of Lamb (et al., 1987). Most fathers are engaged

in the evening routine during the weekdays which includes helping with dinner, bathing and putting the children to bed. Reading bedtime tales is an important part of the evening routine for many families. As if the interviewees felt a need to explain the lack of family time during weekdays, they often emphasized the importance of weekends as compensation. The term 'quality time' was used at such moments in the context that children do not need to play with much, but this requires complete concentration. The weekends are the time when fathers can pay undivided attention to their children that includes playing, watching cartoons, doing sport together, or checking homework.

Not much was said about chores but the interviews gave the impression that manager fathers did not play a big role in doing household duties. Most interviewees either hire a cleaner or leave a partner to do chores, especially when she is on maternity leave. The tasks they mentioned that they did do were rather administrative in nature, such as paying bills and going to the council, or undertaking more gender neutral housework, such as shopping or cooking. Some interviewees admitted that their wife managed household tasks and played the greater part in parenting, especially in the first years. In these first periods most of the fathers stay alone with their children for only a few hours while their wife goes to the gym or asks for some rest. Later, however, when the child is older, the bond strengthens as time is spent alone with a child more frequently.

The responsibility tasks are equal to taking the child to kindergarten or school and bring him or her home from extra classes or sport activities. It often happens that an upcoming meeting at work in the last moment ruins the planned schedule and the other parent has to solve the situation. According to the interviews there are precedents when manager fathers use the option of flexible working hours to manage these cases. The flexible use of working hours and the home office were seen as the number one work-family balance tool that employees benefit from. In addition to flexibility, organizational culture, what the interviewees labelled as Scandinavian, was another important factor in employees' work-family balance. By Scandinavian working culture they understand the supervisors' people-oriented and supportive approach, the informal communication and the company's democratic style of decision making (everyone's idea is listened to and taken into account based on the concept of equality). The evaluation of the Scandinavian management approach is unambiguously positive and is seen as an example to follow. Critiques are therefore not aimed at Scandinavian culture but rather at the inadequate adaption of Hungarians to this foreign culture. Interviewees do not see the Hungarian subsidiary as a Scandinavian company but rather as a mixture of Hungarian and Scandinavian cultures where the Hungarian employees still have a lot to do to catch up to Scandinavian standards.

4.3 The Role of Work

In order to see that what forms of managerial masculinity the interviewed men identify with and whether the ideal employee model serves as an example, manager fathers were asked about what they enjoyed the most in their work. It would be an exaggeration to narrow the picture to the two extremes of working only for the salary,

or having work as the core of masculinity, especially since almost all interviewees expressed a certain feeling of engagement with the company. There are some managers who obviously consider their work to be more than just a job. These are the managers who usually do not mind answering e-mails at night, who want to be up-to-date about every project, who are perfectionist and are proud of their results and of the company as well. As one of the directors put it, some people need to do extreme sports for adrenalin; for him, that purpose is served by work.

Those who see their work as less determinant rather highlight the importance of family: *'You have to decide what's important in life. And that this is only a workplace in fact, it isn't worth falling ill or sacrificing your marriage for.'* (group manager, 36) These managers prefer to separate their work and family life and can stop themselves from constantly checking their e-mails. This does not mean that they do not like their jobs or do not try to do their best. But they do not chase work success at all costs, or do so no longer since they have had children.

When interviewees were asked about the parts of their work they enjoyed the most, creativity and diversity of the work were mentioned in first place. Managers like innovative, interesting tasks and the fact that there is always something new to learn, which prevents them from getting bored by routine duties. The often challenging projects make them think and focus hard, creating a busy and exciting pace for the day that many enjoy. The second most frequently mentioned element was the influence and responsibility they have in their jobs. They enjoy the autonomy and freedom they have in decision making. They do not consider the responsibility their work entails to be a pressure but rather a form of power which allows them to influence outcomes. What managers like the most in their work in the third place is the team and teamwork. This includes the everyday interactions with their colleagues, the good atmosphere, being able to work well together and create results as a team. This perspective is very similar to the next point interviewees talked about, which was leadership. Similarly to the previous, one also has a focus on human interactions but is rather connected to coordination than cooperation. Some explain in detail how they enjoy seeing their team members progress and develop with their help. Consequently, leadership requires coaching skills as well, since a good leader has to find ways to motivate. The leader picture the interviewees described is far from autocratic in style and is close to the cooperative alternative of leadership. This includes power and influence in the same way, but builds it on trust and cooperation.

4.4 The Relationship between Work and Fatherhood

The most important part relates to the relationship between and the reconciliation of managerial and father roles. In order to map this aspect, the interviewees were asked how managerial and parental roles were compatible with each other, what were the similarities and differences between the two roles, and whether they faced any contradictory expectations or difficulty with switching between them. As can be seen, the question focuses rather on potential conflicts, although interviewees did not seem to be diverted in this direction.

The majority of interviewees identify a relationship between the two roles and find them very similar to each other. According to them being a parent and a manager

includes plenty of parallel expectations such as being a role model, showing a good example, and being able to encourage and motivate others. Consequently, a manager does not necessarily need to be cold or strict neither with his subordinates nor with his child just because he is a leader. Subordinates require teaching and help, just as children do, just in different aspects and on different levels. *'Emotions have a place at work just as much. A leader can become a good leader only if he is able to notice every flutter of his colleagues and can react with empathy and attention. Only in this way do relationships become good and stable. So there is no such distinction that the work is the place for rationality, while private life and home are about emotions.'* (group manager, 37) Some men even described themselves as the father of their team, emphasizing the coaching side of leadership and referring to their subordinates as their children at work. However, they drew attention to an interesting phenomenon: that subordinates tend to lose their independence and act like children when someone is standing above them. A director stressed that in order to avoid this, he has to treat his subordinates as equals, not directing them, only delegating tasks.

In addition, those interviewees who see a connection between the roles also emphasize that one cannot behave completely different in one role than in the other. This does not mean that they behave completely the same way in the workplace with their colleagues as they do at home with their partner and children, but on the whole they see themselves as complete, integrated individuals with certain personalities and habits. Consequently, these interviewees feel that they represent very similar values and attitude as managers as they do as parents. Accordingly, they have no problem with changing from one role to the other. *'Thanks to managerial self-knowledge training I just had the opportunity to experience how others see me from outside, and the two roles were amazingly overlapping. (...) When they described me here as a good old grandpa, then I thought yes, this is a projection of my home role.'* (group manager, 39)

Many manager fathers went beyond talking simply about similarities between fatherhood and management and highlighted the positive influence of one role on the other. According to this perspective, the two roles are not simply parallel in many regards, but some of the skills learnt in one domain can be used in the other. By becoming a father the managers had to be more patient, attentive, emphatic, and to use more care and emotions in their communication which they later found useful in their role as team leader as well. Similarly, many of them started to apply management techniques in terms of their communication at home to achieve consistency and order. *'I often say that you have to talk with a CXO the same way as you do with a child. Sometimes you learn from a better storybook how to make a presentation. I think they [the two roles] rather support each other, since they bring rationality to the private life and empathy to the world of work.'* (group manager, 35)

Only a small group of interviewees experienced any negative relationship between the behaviour expectations towards fatherhood and towards work. Based on the answers, two forms of behaviour-based conflict can be distinguished: the first one emerges from the pressure of simultaneous expectations of work and family domains, while the other is derived from the difficulty switching between roles. According to contrasting expectations, fathers can face the double pressure of being a 'super dad', as one of the directors put it, and a successful manager at the same time. Very often

exhaustion makes them unable to perform their roles as fathers or husbands. One of the directors had conflicts with his wife because after his exhausting work he did not appreciate the housework and care tasks his wife accomplished at home. One of the heads of department perceived external pressure from his wife which he experienced as a paradox between the traditional breadwinner and the involved father role: *'It's a strange paradox, many of my male companions face it, that we should "earn much more but also be home a lot!" Well, it's not possible. (...) I feel very schizophrenic about this. (...) I think the role model role is even more important. (...) But the whole story does not work if I can't provide the financial security besides this. And it's difficult, because for financial security you need intense work, which takes time.'* (head of department, 35) One of the group managers and a director added that they would find it useful to receive the help or guidance in fatherhood that they got during their work. A director identified the difficulty around the birth of the first child by highlighting the changed status within the family fathers have to adapt to: *'Fathers are in a special situation, like mothers are, only in a different way. They [fathers] actually become a service crew in the first three months, losing their previous stronger position. It is very difficult to come to grips emotionally with this, and there is not much help with it.'* (director, 40)

The other form of behaviour-based conflict emerged in relation to the difficulty of switching between roles. This was not a core problem; it concerned only some manager fathers and appeared only occasionally. Sometimes these interviewees realized that they remained in their manager role and used a commanding style of communication not with their children, but with their wives: *'The leader role is a leader role. And yes, my wife used to tell me, that she was not my subordinate because I tend to communicate that way.'* (group manager, man, 33). One of the group managers has a wife who also occupies a leader position. According to him, they had to learn to communicate with each other since both of them are problem-solving driven due to their management positions. Sometimes, however, they do not tell their problems to each other to receive advice and a solution, but only to be listened to. They both had to learn when their partner needs only to be listened to and when she or he needs advice.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to analyse the behaviour-based conflict among Hungarian manager fathers enriching the Hungarian literature on the work-family interface and to fill the gap in research about men. The novelty of this research is that it focuses on the type of work-family conflict least studied and most difficult to grasp (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). Since the traditional division of labour fits the ideal employee model (Van der Lippe et al., 2006), those living in traditional families might expect less work-family conflict (Ladge et al., 2014; Allard et al., 2007). Since the Hungarian gender context includes many traditional elements (Takács, 2008; Pongrácz, 2001; Harcsa, 2014), it could have been expected that manager fathers in the sample would not face many contradictions between their work and parent responsibilities. According to the results, however, behaviour-based work-family conflict can be a source of problems in fathers' lives, although its frequency and severity is far from the level of time-based

and strain-based conflict that was experienced. Just as Spéder (2011) and Pongrácz and Molnár (2011) describe in their research, expectations towards fathers are neither clearly traditional nor clearly modern: they are responsible for both providing financial security for the family and taking care of children. Interviewed fathers found emotions, presence (Takács, 2015) and showing a good example to the child to be as important as financial security. These are not only external expectations and demands, but the discrepancy also appears at the level of their own contradictory desires as well. Similarly to the findings of Takács (2015) some fathers 'slowed down' after reaching a certain satisfying point in their career and becoming a father and learnt how to prioritise. It is not insignificant that despite the low level of freedom fathers in the sample have to claim a better work-family balance, few manager fathers undertook any concrete activity to change their situations: cutting back on work after becoming a father, or rescheduling days to be able to take children to school or bring them home. According to Lambs' et al. (1987) typology these are involvement in interaction and availability but rarely in responsibility. The types of involvement in childcare is closer to the child-oriented understanding of masculinity than to a more gender-equal attitude (Johansson and Klinth, 2008): household tasks and the less visible, routine components of child care are still the wife's responsibilities (Johansson and Klinth, 2008), although some men in the sample admit that this is not a gender-equal way of dividing up tasks. Many men feel guilty that they do not spend enough quality time with their children, like Takács (2013) found in her research, but similar to other studies (Rehel, 2013; Hobson et al., 2011) they legitimized their absence by referring primarily to economic rationality.

Those fathers perceived the highest level of conflict, who realized their absence as fathers but could not give up on their career dreams at the same time. Fathers' role as breadwinner is even more strongly highlighted in insecure situations, when 'pragmatic realism' (Ladge et al., 2014) can dominate the desire to be caring and nurturing fathers. Thus, a sense of risk and economic insecurity affect agency to make a claim for a better work-life balance (Hobson et al., 2011) and can still legitimize the absence of the father from the family domain, which explains why behaviour-based conflict is the least frequent among the conflict types. This also confirms the finding (Williams et al., 2013; Ladge et al., 2014) that fathers are seen as more trustworthy employees than men without children, since due to their responsibilities as breadwinners they will not risk losing their jobs.

Managers in the sample seemed to be engaged with the company having work as a crucial part of their lives. On the one hand the mechanisms of greedy organizations (Coser, 1974) and the demands for the ideal employee (Acker, 2006; 2011) function well with managers' identities. Such a feeling of commitment and engagement with work can both justify, and fuel very long working hours (Williams et al., 2013). On the other hand, this engagement might rather be understood as a paternalistic approach of leadership (Collinson and Hearn, 1994) in terms of informal relations between colleagues, rather than commitment to the company as an abstract entity. The sense of responsibility for their families is strong; like that for the colleagues and teams they lead, since they can also behave as 'greedy children'. This finding might be in accordance with Connell's (2006) and Acker's (2006) observation that the distance between managerial and non-managerial staff is short and

management has been brought closer to employees socially. This means that not only the power-related attributes are valued in leading positions, but solidarity, cooperation, fraternity (Hearn, 1992), and diversity constitute managerial identity as well. As Collinson and Hearn (1994) highlight, managerial masculinities take several forms. What seemed sure from the interviews is that most of the managers avoid using an authoritarian style of management since requiring unquestioned obedience and rejecting debate would run contrary to the Scandinavian understanding of democratic corporate culture. This is consistent with the idea of Wajzman and Edwards (2005) about being a good team player and Connell's (2006) observation about the shift from authoritarian management styles toward more consultative and inclusive ways of leadership.

Besides examples of conflict, most interviewees found similarities between the managerial and parental roles. In addition, the harmonization of work and family can even include positive interactions: fatherhood can bring emotions, care and attention into leadership; a finding that confirms that involved fathering is beneficial to organizations (Ladge et al., 2014; Allard et al., 2007), while managing and organizing skills are also useful in parenting. This phenomenon of positive interaction is called *enhancement*⁹. This result draws attention to the importance of including positive approaches into the understanding of relations between work and family life. The lack of conflict can be explained by the fact that Hungarian fathers in this research did not perceive these roles very differently and in contrast, since their style of managing involves more cooperation and emotion, while their fathering is less involved than that common in Nordic or Western societies.

To sum up all this information, the sense of entitlement to make claims for a better work-family balance among manager fathers in the sample was not too high, taking into consideration the fact that taking advantage of parental leave or part-time work in order to spend more time with children did not even cross the minds of such managers, similarly to what Hobson and her co-authors (2011) found using a Hungarian sample. Therefore we cannot really talk about a clash between traditional organizational culture and the growing family needs of involved fathers, as for example O'Brien (2007) does, since fathers do not really challenge organizational culture. This can be explained primarily by the fact that according to gender norms men are still expected to be the main breadwinners (Takács, 2008, 2013; Pongrácz, 2001; Nagy, 2008). Consequently, even if some modern elements of fatherhood exist and fathers feel the need to spend more time (or 'quality time') with their child, the traditional separation between paid and caring roles is still strong. On the other hand, workplace organizational culture gives some room for manoeuvre in the form of the home office and flexibility, which are used by manager fathers to partly satisfy their need to devote more time to their families. This might be explained by the influence of having a Scandinavian leadership and parent company, a situation that was strongly praised by the interviewees due to its human-centeredness, informal ways of communicating, and democratic values. Optional, non-standard flexibility and leave solutions, however, do

⁹ Enhancement is a positive work-family interaction where 'aspects of the work or family role provide resources that facilitate the performance of the other role' (Voydanoff, 2002:149).

not challenge the ideal employee idea (Williams et al., 2013; Kvande, 2009; Lewis et al., 2007), since when deadlines are tight and projects are important, work can easily be over-prioritized. The Scandinavian ownership of the company might be influencing the corporate culture of subsidiaries, although in the Hungarian case exactly its gender equality values could not be transmitted.

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