

Literature Review

Theoretical Concepts and Methodological Approaches of Quality of Life and Work

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Quality is an innovative, quantitative and qualitative research project that aims to examine how, in an era of major change, European citizens living in different national welfare state regimes evaluate the quality of their lives. The project will analyse international-comparative data on the social well-being of citizens and collect new data on social quality in European workplaces in eight strategically selected partner countries: UK, Finland, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Hungary and a candidate country for EU enlargement, Bulgaria.

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Introduction

Quality of life (QOL) has been recognized as an important construct in a number of social and medical sciences such as sociology, political science, economics, psychology, philosophy, marketing, environmental sciences, medicine, and others. However, each academic field has developed somewhat different approaches to investigate the construct of quality of life. For example, sociologists and political scientists are often interested in the quality of life at the societal or population level (“state of the state”), psychologists and medical scientists are interested in measurable aspects of individual and subjective experiences of a good life (“state of the person”) (Rapley 2003). In each case, the construct is conceived and measured differently. To give a few examples, Erikson (1993), interested in the standard of living in a society, defines quality of life in terms of control over resources. Lane (1996) understood high quality of life in terms of subjective well-being, human development, and justice. The World Health Organization, concerned with health related quality of life, defined QOL as “an individual’s perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value system in which they live and in relations to their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns” (WHOQOL-Group 1998: p. 551). Consequently, there is no single, agreed-upon definition of the construct or a single, widely accepted measurement instrument to assess quality of life exist in contemporary academic research (Mickel, Dallimore, and Nelson 2004). The objectives of a research project, and the level of analysis necessary to accomplish these objectives, determine the definition and the measures applied. However, despite various definitions and inconsistencies, the majority of scholars at least seem to agree that the construct of quality of life is multidimensional, and has subjective as well as objective components (e.g. Rapley 2003; Sirgy 2001).

The objective of this report is to provide a structured, state-of-the-art review of quality of life and quality of work literature and research. As specified in the research proposal of the QUALITY project, this review will serve as a basis for the subsequent work packages, and will provide important input for the survey on quality of work and life and the qualitative study on “healthy” organizations in the participating countries. Chapter 1 provides a review of the main theoretical approaches to *quality of life*. In addition, measurement issues are discussed, and an overview of empirical results in the field is provided, including an overview of national research in the participating countries. In Chapter 2 we focus on the concept of *quality of work*. A brief discussion on the impact of work on the quality of life is followed by a review of the main theoretical concepts, measurement issues, and the outcomes of empirical studies. Chapter 3 presents research on quality of work and two major life domains, namely *health/well-being* and *family*. The choice of these two domains is justified by the salience of health and family as major constituents of life satisfaction and happiness life for the majority of people in the participating countries (EU 2004). These two domains also nicely complement the objectives of the current research project. A complete review of the literature across all life domains and academic fields would be outside the scope of this project.

1. Quality of Life

History of Quality of Life Research

Quality of life research at the societal level has its roots in research on welfare provision and distribution. According to Noll (2004), two rather contrary approaches to quality of life have evolved in the past: the Scandinavian level of living approach (Erikson 1974) and the American quality of life approach (Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers 1976). While the Scandinavian approach focuses entirely on resources and objective living conditions, the American approach emphasizes the subjective well-being as perceived and experienced by the individuals. These two approaches emerged within different scientific disciplines. While it was mainly sociologists and economists, interested in assessing living conditions in a society, who developed the level of living concept, research on subjective well-being in the US was mainly driven by social and organizational psychologists interested in QOL at the individual level. Today, there is a consensus among scholars that welfare assessment should be based on both objective and subjective indicators. Objectively similar living conditions may be perceived and evaluated quite differently by individuals. Accordingly, Allardt (1993) incorporated both objective measures of external conditions and personal subjective evaluations by the citizens themselves in his concept of “having, loving, being” which is based on the basic needs approach. Lane (1996) defined quality of life not only as a “state”, but also as a “process” that includes subjective and objective elements. In the following paragraphs, the major theoretical approaches to quality of life are briefly reviewed.

Theoretical Approaches to Quality of Life

Level of Living

The most prominent example of early research on the welfare state emerged in Sweden in the 1960s. The level of living approach defined quality of life in terms of control over resources such as money, property, knowledge, mental and physical energy, social relations and security. The focus was on objective living conditions, life chances and their determinants. The individual is perceived as an active human being that uses his/her resources to pursue and satisfy basic interests and needs (Erikson 1974; Erikson 1993; Erikson, Aberg, and Goldthorpe 1987). Several problems are associated with this concept, such as the choice of indicators involved and the emphasis on objective resources, which in practice has led to an one-sided focus on objective material conditions (“having”). Scholars have particularly criticized the choice of indicators employed in the study. They argue that the indicators chosen reflect the concerns and interests of the contractor, the Swedish government. Consequently, the set of indicators consists of mainly detailed descriptive and objective indicators instead of general evaluative indicators (Ysander 1993). In addition, the concept does not take into account variations in life style (Bliss 1993) and personality (Lane 1996). Individuals, for example, who do not value acquisitiveness and monetary wealth, may be more content and feel more personal fulfilment than people driven by work ethic and who have accumulated wealth. Longitudinal studies on life satisfaction and happiness, indeed, have demonstrated that people’s happiness does not increase with increasing GDP and/or income (e.g. Diener 2000; Myers 2000).

Capability Approach

In a more recent - but in some aspects similar - concept of welfare and quality of life, Sen (1993), Nobel laureate in economics, defined quality of life in terms of the capability of a person to achieve valuable

functioning. Capability is defined as the ability or potential of a person to do or be something; in more technical terms, to achieve a certain functioning. While some functionings are very basic (e.g. being in good health), others are more complex (e.g. achieving self-respect or being socially integrated). Contrary to the level of living approach which almost entirely focuses on “having”, Sen believes that quality of life derives from states of “being” and opportunities of “doing” (Cobb 2000). A person’s freedom to choose among functionings is a central feature of this approach. Sen’s capability approach provided the theoretical framework for the Human Development Index and the report series published by the United Nations Development Program.

Difficulties with this approach arise in terms of measurement. While some elementary functionings, such as life expectancy or adult literacy, are relatively easy to measure, more complex functionings, such as self-respect or taking part in social and political life, are more difficult to capture. In addition, capabilities may not be so easily evaluated if one considers that they are not given, but vary over time due to cultural, economic, political, sociological, and technological changes (Gaertner 1993). Another problem that has been articulated in the scholarly dialogue refers to the concept of human being in Sen’s approach. Although he stresses the active, agency perspective of personality, his concept does not include attitudinal, emotional, and integrative aspects of the person as a whole (Lane 1996).

Having, Loving, Being

In response to the Swedish level of living, Allardt (1993) proposed a richer and more inclusive theoretical approach to quality of life based on meeting certain basic needs of individuals. According to his approach, a person can achieve quality of life by meeting three basic sets of needs: (1) “having” which refers to material conditions that are necessary for survival and for avoidance of misery (e.g. income, housing, employment, working conditions, health, education); (2) “loving”, defined as needs which relate to other people and to form social identities (e.g. contacts in a local community, family, friendships, memberships in associations and organizations); and (3) “being” which stands for the need for integration into society and to live in harmony with nature (e.g. involvement in political activities, leisure activities, engaging in meaningful work, opportunities to enjoy nature, participation in decisions making). Allardt (1993) specifically highlighted the importance of including both subjective evaluations of people and objective measures of external conditions to assess the quality of life. He suggests both types of indicators for each of the three needs categories (Table 1) (for more details on subjective and objective indicators see the section on Measurement).

Table 1 – Indicators to Assess Quality of Life as Proposed by Allardt (1993)

	Objective indicators	Subjective indicators
Having (material and impersonal needs)	1. Objective measures of the level of living and environmental conditions	4. Subjective feelings of dissatisfaction/satisfaction with living conditions
Loving (social needs)	2. Objective measures of relationships to other people	5. Unhappiness/happiness – subjective feelings about social relations
Being (needs for personal growth)	3. Objective measures of people’s relation to society and nature	6. Subjective feelings of alienation/personal growth

Quality of Life and Persons

In a more recent approach, Lane (1996) defined quality of life as the relation between a set of objective conditions and two subjective or person-based elements. The subjective elements are comprised of (a) a sense of subjective well-being and personal development, and (b) learning and growth. This approach emphasizes the active role of the person and highlights the importance of integrating personality concepts such as skills or capacities, beliefs and knowledge, emotions and evaluations, and states of being into the measurement of quality of life. Lane (1996) argues that a person - in order to convert available welfare into well-being - needs certain cognitive and personal abilities, a requirement which has not been taken into account in previous quality of life approaches. Although Sen's capability approach stresses the importance of capabilities, it does not incorporate the concept of the whole person. Lane (1996) views people as much more than their abilities and capabilities.

Subjective Well-being

Quality of life research in the United States has been predominantly concerned with the measurement of subjective indicators: "The quality of life must be in the eye of the beholder" (Campbell 1972: p. 442). Welfare and quality of life are considered to be subjectively perceived and experienced by the individual. Accordingly, the individual him/herself is the best expert to evaluate his/her quality of life in terms of subjective well-being (Noll 2004).

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to people's evaluations of lives that are both affective and cognitive (Diener 2000). The construct is comprised of four separable components: life satisfaction (global judgements of one's life), satisfaction with important life domains (e.g. work, family, health), positive affect (experiencing many pleasant emotions and moods), and low levels of negative affect (experiencing few unpleasant emotions and moods) (see Table 2).

Table 2 – Components of Subjective Well-being as Proposed by Diener (1999)

Pleasant affect	Unpleasant affect	Life satisfaction	Domain satisfaction
Joy	Guilt & shame	Desire to change life	Work
Elation	Sadness	Satisfaction with current life	Family
Contentment	Anxiety & worry		Leisure
Pride	Anger	Satisfaction with past	Health
Affection	Stress	Satisfaction with future	Finances
Happiness	Depression	Significant other's views of one's life	Self
Ecstasy	Envy		One's group

Dolan and White (2006) consider these components of subjective well-being as separable elements. A person, for example, who experiences high levels of positive affect following a particular life event may still feel dissatisfaction because she has failed to reach personal goals or acted inconsistent to own moral beliefs. On the other hand, a person experiencing negative affect may still feel satisfied because she compares herself with people in a less favourable situation (e.g. "It could have been much worse").

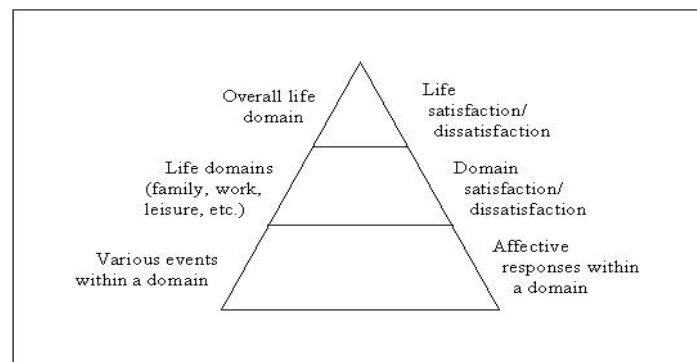
SWB researchers, mainly social and organizational psychologists, delineate their research from the social indicator approach. People react differently to the same circumstances in life, and they evaluate conditions based on unique expectations, values, and previous experiences. Although indicators such as crime statistics, life expectancy and income provide important information about countries and societies,

the subjective element is important, not only for research designed on the individual level but also on the group/organizational and societal level (see also section on Measurement). For example, in a cross-national study, Diener and Oishi (2000) found that for the majority of college students in 42 countries happiness and life satisfaction was more important than income. Longitudinal studies on income and subjective well-being over the past five decades revealed that although income has risen dramatically in the United States and other developed countries, subjective well-being levels have been rather stable (Myers 2000). The mechanism behind this observation is referred to as the “hedonic treadmill” in literature (Brickman and Campbell 1971). As people rise in their accomplishments and possessions, they also raise their expectations. They adapt to the new level very quickly, and the current level of achievements no longer makes them happy, but not all individuals habituate completely to all conditions, and people adapt differently to varying situations. Personality (e.g. extraversion, neuroticism), personal goals, comparison processes (e.g. with other people, past conditions, aspirations, ideal levels of satisfaction, needs and goals), and culture (e.g. individualism-collectivism) have an important impact on subjective well-being (Diener 2000) (see also section on Correlates for more details).

Concept of Life Domains

Affective experiences of people are segmented in life spheres, facets or life domains (Sirgy 2002). A person may have distinct affective experiences in relation to education, family, health, work, friends, etc. Lance et al. (1995) identified 11 different life domains: Health, finances, family, paid employment, friendship, housing, living partner, recreation activity (leisure), religion, transportation, and education. Each life domain is further subdivided in major life events. Individuals segment affective experiences regarding these life events in each domain. In a person’s memory the various life domains are organized in terms of an overall hierarchy in which the subordinate domain is life overall.

Figure 1 – Domain Hierarchy as Proposed by Sirgy 2002



The individual hierarchy of life domains that an individual holds in his/her memory reflects the salience of the different domains to this person. While for some individuals the job life domain may be the most important domain relative to other domains, for other people, family may be the most important domain (Sirgy 2002). The concept of domain salience is well known among industrial/organizational psychologists and is important to understand how people seek to enhance their subjective well-being or life-satisfaction.

Theory distinguishes three different types of mechanisms across a variety of life domains: spillover, segmentation, and compensation (Staines 1980; Wilensky 1960). Spillover refers to the process and outcome by which affective experiences in one life domain (e.g. stress at work) influence experiences in another domain (e.g. family) and overall life. Compensation describes a mechanism by which individuals try to balance their affect across domains. For example, an individual may seek to compensate for a lack of satisfaction in one domain by trying to find more satisfaction in another one (e.g. employees become more involved in their work when experiencing family problems at home) (Lambert 1990). Segmentation refers to a mechanism by which individuals strictly separate life domains in order to prevent experiences to be transferred between life domains (e.g. trying to leave work related troubles in the office and not bring those home) (Sirgy 2002).

Measurement

The assessment of quality of life is inevitably a challenge because the construct reflects macro/societal and socio-demographic influences, as well as micro level concerns such as individuals' experiences, values, perceptions, and psychology (Mroczek and Kolarz 1998). In the past, scholars of different academic schools have developed a number of measurement instruments for the assessment of the quality of life. While some capture global QOL, others measure domain specific aspects. Some are aimed at assessing the quality of life of individuals, while others intent to capture QOL of groups, communities, or countries. Thus historically, early measures of quality of life have their roots in the social indicator movement, which started in the late 60's. Social indicators are societal measures that reflect people's objective circumstances in a given cultural or geographical unit. They are mainly based on objective, quantitative statistics (e.g. infant mortality, life expectancy, doctors per capita, etc.) rather than on individuals' subjective perceptions of their social environment (Diener and Suh 1997). Social indicators were developed analogous to economic measures, and to complement economic reporting in order to get a fuller and richer understanding of welfare in a society (Johansson 1976). Social indicator research is aimed at monitoring social change and trends, and to measure societal welfare at an aggregated level (Noll 2004). The most prominent applications of social indicators at the international level are the OECD's Social Indicator System ("Society at a Glance") and the United Nations Human Development Reports. We would like to point out clearly that social indicator research is distinct from quality of life research as understood in our research project, which will examine quality of life and work at the individual level, rather than on the aggregated, societal level.

Objective and Subjective Indicators

Only recently, have scholars from various disciplines called for the complementary use of objective and subjective indicators in assessing QOL (e.g. Allardt 1993; Diener and Suh 1997; Noll 2004). Doubts on the exclusive use of objective indicators have emerged from the observation of a phenomenon termed the "paradox of well-being", which refers to the presence of subjective well-being in the face of difficulties which would be expected to predict unhappiness (Mroczek and Kolarz 1998). According to Allardt (1993), objective indicators refer to reports of factual conditions and overt behavior (e.g. standard of living, physical health status, personal income), whereas subjective indicators stand for measurement of attitudes (e.g. satisfaction, happiness). When objective indicators are used in research, individuals are asked to give a plain description of circumstances, not an evaluation of conditions (e.g. good/bad, satisfactory/unsatisfactory). With subjective indicators, scholars often intend to study people's wants while objective indicators sometimes refer to needs and sometimes to wants. Diener and Suh (1997) provide an

excellent review of the strengths and weaknesses of objective and subjective measurement instruments. Table 3 presents an overview of the main advantages and disadvantages of objective and subjective indicators.

Diener and Suh (1997) argue that because of distinct measurement weaknesses, the joint use of objective and subjective indicators may provide alternative views and additional information not only about the quality of life of an individual, but also about the societal quality. Policy makers in the past have mainly relied on objective indicators provided by national reporting systems. However, there are substantial arguments that subjective assessments of quality of life are also of high value to policy makers (EU 2004). Assessing people’s perceptions and opinions on quality of life provides policy maker in an easy-to-accomplish way with information about what people really want. Measures of satisfaction with overall life or certain life domains present good indicators of the extent to which true needs are met in society. Finally, only by including subjective indicators onto the measurement system a truly comprehensive assessment of quality of life can be accomplished.

Table 3 – Strengths and Weaknesses of Objective and Subjective Indicators

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to define and quality without relying too heavily on individual perceptions • Convenient for comparisons across nations, regions and time • Often reflect normative ideals of a society • Capture qualities of society that are not adequately assessed by subjective well-being measures and economic indices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of being fallible due to underreporting (e.g., crime statistics) • Although thought to be objective contaminated by measurement problems • Subjective decision in selecting measuring and weighing variables • May not accurately reflect well-being of individuals (“economistic fallacy”)
Subjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture experiences that are important to people • Available measurement instruments have adequate validity • Often easy to modify in later studies • More easily comparable across domains than objective measures of different units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not very individual’s responses are totally valid and accurate • Do not reflect objective quality of community life in a locale and thus, are not sufficient by themselves to evaluate a society • Subjective well-being varies in importance across individuals and nations

Level of Analysis

In addition to the distinction between objective and subjective indicators, measures can also be classified in terms of level of analysis (Sirgy 2002). Quality of life can be conceived and assessed at three different levels: Individual level, meso/group level (e.g. family, community), and macro level (e.g. country, society). Within each level, QOL can be assessed with objective and subjective indicators. Scholars from distinct disciplines may conceive quality of life at different levels of analysis and apply different measures. Psychologists, for example, may use measures at the individual or group level when studying individual or

family phenomena, while policy makers, for example, who are interested to improve the QOL of a whole country may focus on quality of life assessment at the macro level (see Sirgy 2001, Chapter 3 for an overview on available quality of life measures). Furthermore, scholars may apply different types of measurement instruments depending on the level of analysis. While single-items measure (e.g. “How do you feel about your life as a whole?”) may perfectly serve the purpose of comparing subjective well-being across a large number of nations, multiple items tapping the different components of SWB (e.g. 5-item Satisfaction with Life Scale (Pavot and Diener 1993)) may best serve an analysis on the individual level.

Composite Indices and Multiple Indicators

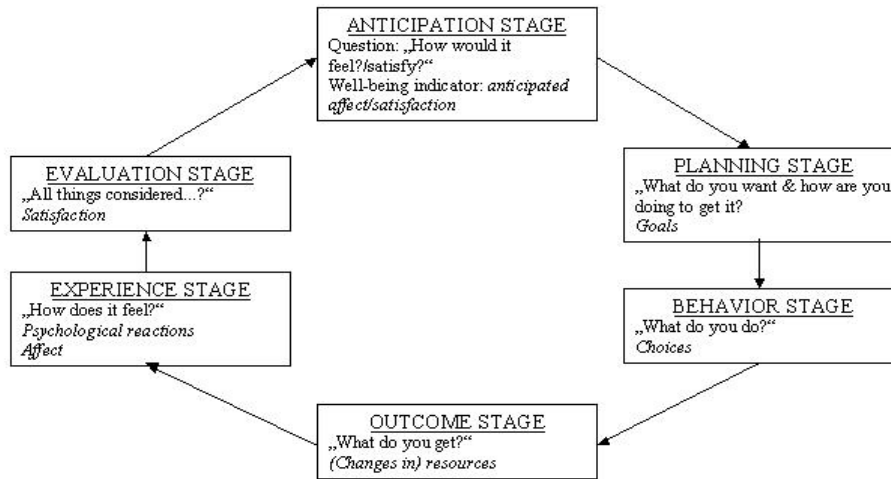
Another measurement issue in quality of life research is whether to use a general index (combination of indicators) for QOL (e.g. Human Development Index), or to use individual indicators separately. The interest in constructing composite measures has grown considerable, mainly because of increasing richness of social data available today. Various approaches of how to aggregate data correctly have been proposed in numerous publications (Noll 2004). While a general index is simple to handle and allows easy comparison and understanding, valuable and detailed information may get lost. The use of multiple indicators allows for the observation of the research object of interest from multiple perspectives (Diener and Suh 1997). Again, the choice of the right measurement instrument will be determined primarily by the theoretical assumptions, the objectives of the study, and the level of analysis.

Dynamic Measurement

Scholars have criticized traditional social indicator research and measurement as being purely descriptive, overall static, unhistorical, and mainly based on discrete aggregate measures designed to follow trends (Cobb 2000; Esping-Andersen 2000). Monitoring trends in society based on aggregated measures will for surely continue to play an important role, but the incorporation of new methods such as the use of micro-level data bases, longitudinal data provided by household panels, or life history studies is becoming more important (Noll 2004).

The field of subjective well-being has relied heavily on cross-sectional correlational designs based on self-reports and inadequate tests of causal hypotheses in early years. Only recently, have causal modelling and longitudinal studies become more common, but more sophisticated methods (e.g. experience sampling, recording memories, qualitative methods) are still needed in the field (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999). The need for alternative methods is further emphasized by an increasing awareness among scholars that achieving a high quality of life is not a linear, but on-going developmental and recursive process through a person's life where the individual actively negotiates tensions among the various life domains. Certain life events in one domain, or simultaneously in several domains, which either may reflect proactive action (e.g. career change) or externally influenced events (e.g. job loss, declining health), can create a disequilibrium. Such imbalance may require a person to take action in order to resolve these tensions and to restore balance (Mickel, Dallimore, and Nelson 2004). Assessment of past experiences as well as estimations of future experiences should be included in an overall judgement of one's quality of life (Veenhoven 1991). Only very recently, Dolan and White (2006) proposed a dynamic approach to the assessment of well-being as a process. They suggested relating various indicators of well-being (which are currently used in research) to one another in a dynamic way (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Stages and Indicators of a Dynamic Well-being Approach (Dolan and White 2006)



Correlates

Early research on quality of life was focused mainly on identifying the bottom-up factors, hence external events, situations, and demographics that influence the quality of life or subjective well-being of a person. Later research aimed to distinguish between causes and consequences, and establish the causal directions of the relations. However, due to prevailing cross-sectional study designs, especially in the field of subjective well-being, the direction of the causal relationship remained unclear in many cases (e.g. job morale may follow from life satisfaction rather than cause it) (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999). In the following paragraphs, we will provide a brief review of the main correlates of quality of life and subjective well-being, and the relationships between subjective well-being and objective indicators.

Subjective Well-being and Objective Indices

Income. The relationship between SWB and objective indicators, income has received a great deal of attention by scholars from different fields, and has been studied in four lines of research:

Within-country correlations. In studies within one country, modest but significant correlations were found between subjective well-being and income level (Diener, Sandvik, Seidlitz, and Diener 1993; Veenhoven 1994), thus indicating that wealthier people are slightly happier than poorer people.

Changes in SWB among individuals who experience an increase or decrease of income. Within countries, changes in income are not inevitably associated with increase in subjective well-being (e.g. Diener, Sandvik, Seidlitz, and Diener 1993). Research provides evidence that changes in income temporarily increase or decrease subjective well-being, especially if these changes influence a person's ability to pursue personal goals or to meet basic needs. However, over time people adapt to the new level of income (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999).

Trends in SWB during periods of national economic growth. Data from various longitudinal studies investigating long term trends of subjective well-being revealed that although disposable income rose

dramatically in the observed periods in countries such as Japan, United States, France, and other European countries, levels of well-being remained stable (e.g. Diener and Suh 1997; Oswald 1997).

Between country correlations of average SWB and national wealth. The Gross National Product (GNP) per capita was found to correlate positively at approximately $r = .50$ with life satisfaction across 39 nations (Diener, Sandvik, Seidlitz, and Diener 1993). However, wealthier nations often differ significantly from poorer countries: they are often more democratic, allow greater political freedom, are more egalitarian, and these differences inflate the income-SWB correlation (Inglehart and Klingeman 2000).

Health. Subjective well-being was found to be related to self-reported health measures but the correlations were weakened when objective health ratings by physicians were investigated (e.g. Watten, Vassend, Myhrer, and Syversen 1997). A longitudinal study conducted by Brief, Butcher, George, and Link (1993) failed to confirm a direct effect of objective health (e.g. doctor visits, hospitalisation) on global life satisfaction, but life satisfaction was found to be predicted by subjectively interpreted health. A positive association between self-reported psychological well-being and life satisfaction was also reported by other studies (e.g. Aycan and Eskin 2005).

When investigating global life satisfaction of severely ill people (e.g. cancer patients) and non-patients, it was found that they differ only slightly in satisfaction levels (e.g. Breetvelt and van Dam 1991). Individuals in bad health seem to be very efficient in applying coping strategies such as downward comparisons (comparing oneself with somebody in a worse situation), or downplaying the importance of health, although health is ranked constantly as one of the most important components of a good life (e.g. EU 2004). On the other hand, they may exaggerate their positive reports because of pressure of the caregivers to be optimistic. Diener et al. (1999) concluded that the impact of subjective well-being on one's health depends very much on the individual's perception of the situation, which is in turn influenced by personality and current emotional adjustment.

Employment. Being employed is an important factor of one's quality of life (see also Chapter 2 and 3 for more information). Several aspects of quality of life may be affected by one's employment status such as positive affect, overall life satisfaction, self-esteem, health, and satisfaction with specific life domains (Argyle 1999). In a longitudinal panel study, Clark (1998) found unemployment to cause lower levels of subjective well-being, and this was not only because of a greater proportion of less happy people selected into unemployment. Results of the European Survey on Working Conditions confirm Clark's findings. Participants stated that having a job, although it may be a bad one, was better than having no job (EU 2005). Interestingly, Clark found that the negative effect of unemployment on SWB was buffered when there was another unemployed person in the same household, which provides evidence for social comparison processes.

Effects of unemployment on happiness were found to differ by the length of unemployment, gender (stronger for men), family status (stronger for singles), and social class (stronger for members of the working-class) (Argyle 1999). Retired people, on the other hand - though not working - were found to be on average happier than those at work, and their happiness was even stronger if retirement was voluntary, if they were in good health, had not suffered much reduction in income, and were engaged in regular activities (Argyle 1996).

Demographic Differences

Gender. Empirical results of gender differences in the experience of subjective well-being are not clear-cut. While some studies reported men to be slightly happier than women (although the magnitude

was very small; $r = .04$), some found women to express more unpleasant affect. Subsequent studies observed that women usually reported higher SWB, but the differences often disappeared when other demographic variables were controlled (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999). When considering that depression is more prevalent in women than in men, and that women report higher levels of unpleasant affect, the recent findings on approximately equal levels in global happiness seem somewhat paradox. An explanation for this phenomenon offered by Nolen-Hoeksema and Rusting (1999) is that women on average experience both positive and negative emotions more strongly and more frequently than men. These differences result mainly from socially prescribed gender roles. The traditional female gender role includes care-giving responsibilities (which are not part of the traditional male gender role), and thus may encourage women to respond more emotionally than men.

Age. The separate components of subjective well-being are affected differently by age. While pleasant affect was found to decline with age, life satisfaction increased slightly over the life course (Diener and Suh 1998). The sources of well-being may also be different: elder people may be richer and have family support, but are often in worse health conditions (Argyle 1996).

Marital status and family. A positive relationship between marriage or co-habiting with a partner was consistently confirmed by several national and international studies, even when variables such as age and income were controlled (e.g. Gohm, Oishi, Darlington, and Diener 1998). Living together with a partner and/or having a family was found to be an important source of material help and emotional support. In addition, tight relations (also with friends) prevent distress and illness. This is known in the literature as the “buffering effect” of social support (Argyle 1996).

Religion. A number of studies have revealed a positive relationship between religion and subjective well-being (e.g. Ellison 1991). Religion (usually practiced in community) may provide social support, and a sense of meaning in daily life and/or in major life crises (Myers 2000). The benefits of religion to a person’s quality of life may vary according to the actual needs of the individual (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999)

Culture. Culture was found to influence one’s quality of life itself, as well as one’s assessment of quality of life. Diener and Diener (1995), for example, found the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction to be moderated by individualism of a society. Individualistic cultures stress the importance of the individual, his/her thoughts, choices and feelings, while in collectivistic cultures people are more willing to sacrifice their desires to the will of the group (Diener 2000). Suh et al. (1998) reported differences across cultures in whether people consult their feelings in making life satisfaction judgements. While it was natural to people in individualistic cultures to consult their affect and feelings of pleasant emotions, people in collectivistic cultures more often tend to consult norms of whether they should be satisfied, and more often consider appraisals of family and friends.

Cross-cultural researchers have started to question the applicability of Western concepts of QOL and measures across different cultures and nations (e.g. Utsey, Bolden, Brown, and Chae 2001). They argue that the conceptualization of what is a good life itself, and consequently the measures applied in past cross-national studies are deeply rooted in Western, hence individualistic culture. Concepts such as life satisfaction, self-esteem and happiness, which emphasize the importance of the self, have been linked to quality of life in Western cultures. However, in collectivistic cultures where the emphasis is more on the “familial” self than on the individual self, these concepts may not be adequate to determine the quality of life in these societies (Utsey, Bolden, Brown, and Chae 2001).

Education. Small but significant positive correlations are reported between education and subjective well-being (e.g. Diener, Sandvik, Seidlitz, and Diener 1993; Veenhoven 1994). However,

education is closely linked to income and occupational status. Accordingly, much of the relation is due to the association of education with income and occupation.

Other Variables

Competencies. Competences such as social skills, cooperativeness and leadership were found to contribute to happiness because they lead to desired relationships with others. Extraverts, for example, often have more social skills, and this is one reason for their higher levels of happiness revealed in empirical studies (Argyle 1999).

Personality. Personality is one of the strongest and most consistent predictors of subjective well-being. Among personality traits and cognitive dispositions, extraversion and neuroticism received a lot of attention in previous research. While extraversion influences positive affect, neuroticism influences negative affect (Lucas and Fujita 2000). Self-esteem was found to be related to life satisfaction (Diener and Diener 1995). Optimistic people have a tendency to expect favourable outcomes in their lives and work positively towards goals set for themselves. This pattern of behavior was found to lead to a more successful achievement of goals, and if these goals are meant to satisfy personal needs the individual will experience subjective well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999). However, the effects of personality on SWB are often not straightforward primary effects. Personality may interact with situations, life events, and the environment, thus influencing subjective well-being indirectly (moderator or mediator relationships).

Leisure. Leisure has been found to be an important source of subjective well-being. Leisure activities are often carried out in groups (e.g. teams, clubs, voluntary groups), thus providing opportunity for social contact and relationships which, in turn, have an impact SWB. Specific forms of leisure such as sport, may not only improve physical health but also contribute to mental well-being through the release of endorphins, the experience of success, and the development of social relations (Argyle 1999). However, not all types of leisure in modern society are demanding and serious, and have a positive impact on well-being. Watching TV, for example, was found to be quite a poor source of satisfaction (Argyle 1996).

Work. The impact of work on quality of life and well-being has received a lot of attention in the past, and various facets of work (besides the pure status of being employed or unemployed) such as working conditions, job characteristics, income, etc., and their impact on overall life satisfaction, domain satisfaction, and well-being have been researched extensively. Due to the centrality of the construct of work to this research project, and to avoid replication of correlational findings at this stage of the review, we refer to Chapters 2 and 3 that are exclusively dedicated to quality of work and its associations with health and family.

Quality of Life Research in the Participating Countries

In the following section, we provide a short overview on quality of life research in the participating countries. A short summary of major and recent research topics prepared by each national research team provided the basis for this overview.

In *Finland*, quality of life research is closely associated with welfare studies and the development of welfare state institutions. The collaboration with other Nordic countries in comparative welfare studies (Allardt 1976) and the development of welfare indicators is considered a cornerstone in QOL research in Finland (e.g. Heikkilä and Kautto 2006; Rauhala, Simpura, and Uusitalo 2000). Starting with Allardt (1993) (see also Theoretical Approaches to Quality of Life in this chapter), scholars have noticed the inadequacy of the resource-oriented and objective research approaches to QOL in Finland, and stressed

the adoption of subjective approaches (Hjeppe and Räisänen 2004; Simpura 1996). Recently, quality of life and well-being of the aging population (Hietanen and Lyyra 2003; Melkas and Jylhä 1996; Melkas and Jylhä 1997), the impacts of poverty on well-being (e.g. Kautto and Moisio 2006), comparisons of regional levels of standard of living and subjective well-being (e.g. rural areas versus cities) (e.g. Kainulainen, Rintala, and Heikkilä 2001), and social capital and its contribution to quality of life and variations at the individual level (e.g. Kajanoja and Simpura 2000; Lillbacka 2002) have received considerable attention in quality of life research.

Similar to Finland, quality of life research in *Sweden* has its roots in research on welfare and living conditions (Erikson 1974; Erikson, Aberg, and Goldthorpe 1987) (see also Level of Living in this chapter). The improvement of the quality of life is an objective of social policy and as such the responsibility of the Swedish state. In Sweden as in other countries, the use of gender as an instrument to explore relations between the sexes is contested terrain. The definition of gender as a social and cultural construction that has more to do with people's beliefs about sexual differences than it does with biological sex, is critical to research in this area. However, the majority of research on the quality of life and the quality of work in Sweden simply uses the gender distribution approach for making comparisons between men and women without discussing and conceptualising the social and cultural construct of gender properly.

Quality of life research in *Germany* is much influenced by the social indicators movement. While early research conceptualised quality of life in terms of objective living conditions (Zapf 1972), it was later understood as incorporating both objective living conditions and subjective well-being across different life domains (Zapf 1984). Current research on quality of life is in the hands of sociologists and is mainly concerned with the definition and measurement of subjective and objective components of quality of life at the population level, and the development of social indicators systems for societal monitoring and social reporting (e.g. Noll 2002; Noll and Habich 2004). In addition, cross-regional (Eastern and Western parts of Germany) (e.g. Christoph 2002; Habich, Noll, and Zapf 1999) and cross-national comparisons (mainly Europe) of subjective and objective well-being (e.g. Christoph and Noll 2003), health-related quality of life (e.g., Bullinger 2006), and the impact of social cohesion on quality of life (Berger-Schmitt 2002) are important topics in the field. Gender issues have not received attention in German quality of life research in the past.

In the *Netherlands*, quality of life research has its focus on subjective well-being (life satisfaction and happiness). Understanding cross-national differences in life satisfaction and happiness as well as measurement issues (e.g. the happy life index which is comprised of life expectancy and self reported data on subjective enjoyment of life as a whole) are major research topics (e.g. Schyns 2003; Veenhoven 1991; Veenhoven 1994; Veenhoven 1996; Veenhoven 2005). Recently, Veenhoven (2000) presented a theoretical approach to quality of life which distinguishes between the opportunities for a good life (environmental conditions and individual abilities) and the outcomes of life (objective utility of life and subjective appreciation of life). Veenhoven and his team at Erasmus University also host and maintain the World Database of Happiness (<http://www1.eur.nl/fsw/happiness/>), a database dedicated to research on happiness (Veenhoven 2004).

Research on quality of life in the *United Kingdom* has moved on from early studies on living conditions ("state of states") to a concept of quality of life that is constructed at a more individualized level, focusing on the "state of persons" (Rapley 2003). Correspondingly, there has been a shift to non-economic aspects of life quality which is reflected in a growth of research on subjective well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction (e.g. Bond 2003; Gilbert and Abdullah 2002; Layard 2006). Objective indicators of QOL have been complemented by subjective appraisals of what constitutes a "happy" life

(Perry and Felce 2005), and some studies of general populations have begun to look at the gendered nature of subjective well-being (Crossley and Langdrige 2005). In addition, the impact of socio-psychological processes such as expectations, social comparisons, and sense of entitlement of appraisals of well-being is also recognized and explored (Dolan and White 2006; Lewis and Purcell in press). Much of the research in QOL over the past decade in the UK has been, and continues to be, in the socio-medical field, looking at individual quality of life attributes of specific populations, such as the elderly (Bowling and Gabriel 2004; Bowling, Gabriel, Dykes, Dowding, Evans, Fleissig, Banister, and Sutton 2003). Furthermore, there are a number of studies which examine the multi-dimensional nature of well-being of whole populations (e.g., Evans and Huxley 2002), and of specific groups such as divorcing couples, employed parents, young adults, carers, and refugees (e.g. Gardner and Oswald 2006; Hirst 2005; Lewis and Purcell in press; Pichler 2006).

The concept of quality of life is not widely discussed in *Bulgarian* social sciences. It is more often used in medical rather than in sociological publications and studies assessing the level of quality of life at the societal level are scarce. Denkova and Jordanova (2002), for example, applied the quality of life definition of the World Health Organization in their study, and examined the relationships between quality of life and satisfaction with health, personal life and self-confidence. A gender perspective is presented by studies on health and psychosocial well-being of women (e.g. Popova and Shopova 2004). The only Bulgarian book dedicated to the concept of quality of life is quite strongly ideologically tinted (Todorov 1977). According to Todorov (1977:p.52) quality of life is a sociological term which reflects the degree of satisfaction of the spiritual, intellectual, cultural, aesthetic, ethical and other needs of the people, and is determined to a great extent by the subjective evaluative attitude of the person towards one's life activity and conditions. The term well-being is used more often in Bulgarian literature. In their study on the well-being of children, Stoianova and Kirova (2002) defined the term well-being as a combination of interconnected elements (material provision, physical, mental and emotional health, educational level, ethical behavior, moral culture and social integration), determined by the level of development of the family and socioeconomic environment (p.19). With the preparations for joining the European Union, the influence of legislation on quality of life and social harmony of contemporary Bulgarian society has received attention by academic scholars (Bachvarova 2003; Petrova and Grozdanov 2003).

Similar to Bulgaria, quality of life has not received a lot of attention among academic scholars in *Hungary*. There are several studies on economic well-being which is a primary concern in the country due to major structural changes over the past 15 years, leading to increasing class and ethnic inequalities, poverty, experience of instability, unemployment, insecurity of work and social status (e.g. Fabian, Tamas, and Peter 2000; Ladányi and Iván 2004). In attitudinal surveys, Hungarians more than people in any other Eastern European country claimed that they were dissatisfied with their material well-being, and negatively affected by the collapse of state socialism (Sagi 2000). Only recently, a book on quality of life of Hungarians has been published by Kopp and Kovács (2006), and there is some research on health related quality of life (e.g. Skrabski, Kopp, Rózsa, Réthelyi, and Rahe 2005).

In *Portugal*, research on quality of life is rather recent in social sciences and in sociology in particular. The topic has been approached from a variety of theoretical perspectives, and therefore is very much fragmented. The majority of research on QOL in Portugal is related to the economic, social and cultural development of the country's regions, especially to urban areas. Studies have developed solid theoretical models and identified indicators capable of measuring the objective and subjective dimensions of urban quality of life (e.g. Ferrão 2004; Marques 2004; Martins and Santos 2004). A second stream of research investigating social exclusion and poverty has collected empirical data on objective material conditions of living and on the subjective representations and perceptions individuals have of those

conditions (e.g. Capucha 2005; Costa 1998; de Almeida 1993; de Almeida, Capucha, da Costa, Machado, Reis, and Nicolau 1992). Rather recently, empirical studies on practices and subjective perceptions towards the environment, its influence on QoL and sustainable development have been conducted in Portugal (e.g. de Almeida 2004; de Lima and Schmidt 1996).

2. Quality of Work

Employment is a central aspect of people's quality of life. Being employed and receiving adequate pay to make one's living is consistently ranked as an important requirement for individual quality of life (e.g. Clark 2001; EU 2004). In all European countries for which there is adequate evidence, people in employment were reported significantly higher levels of life satisfaction than those who were unemployed (Gallie and Russell 1998). Work not only provides an individual with an adequate income, it is also a source of psychological stability and development. It provides individuals with a clear time structure of the day, a stable pattern of regular activity, and a sense of identity and participation in a collective purpose (Gallie 2002). However, it also needs to be pointed out here that the quality of work varies significantly among sectors and workforce groups. There are certain jobs that do not allow for personal development, which are insecure, dangerous and unhealthy, and provide little opportunity for participation. In addition, there are certain groups in the workforce which are particularly affected by unfavourable working conditions such as non-skilled workers, older workers, women, part-time workers, etc.

Work has undergone dramatic changes over the last decades of the 20th century, mainly due to the introduction of new IT and telecommunication technologies, shifts towards globalization, restructuring and downsizing. The burst of the "internet bubble" in the year 2000 led to the continuation of restructuring and outsourcing processes in organizations. Other changes which came along with these major events include new patterns at work (e.g. teleworking, team work, self-regulated work, alternative working hours), resulting in a general move towards a more flexible work force in terms of number of employees, skills and functions (Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001). Research especially in the field of organizational behavior/psychology and management follows these trends, and looks at the consequences of those changes for individuals and organizations. At the individual level, the ambivalent impact of job characteristics on well-being, health and life satisfaction of employees, but also on family through mechanisms of spill over and compensation (see also Chapter 3) have been examined. Already in the 1970s, measures of quality of work life were found to be significantly and strongly related to life satisfaction (e.g. Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers 1976). At the organizational level, management scholars are mainly concerned about how certain job features enhance productivity and contribute to better organizational functioning.

Theoretical Approaches to Quality of Work

Similar to quality of life research, there is neither a single agreed upon definition of quality of work (QOW), nor consensus of what constitutes a good job. Scholars from various academic fields, concerned with different level of analyses conceptualize quality of work in varying ways. Economists, for example, mainly define quality of work in terms of pay and working hours, while organizational psychologists are concerned with a comprehensive view of an employee's well-being which includes factors such as job satisfaction, job autonomy, etc. (Rosenthal 1989). Indeed, empirical studies on what constitutes a good job provide evidence that quality of work is comprised of more than monetary awards (Clark 2005a). Neither income nor working hours were rated as the most important aspects of a job by employees in seven OECD countries, but job security and having an interesting job were considered most important among male as well as female participants equally (Clark 2005b). Lane (2000), for example, defined quality of work life in terms of having a meaningful job. The European Foundation (2005) conceives quality of work as a broad and multifaceted construct that includes four key areas: job security (status, income, social

protection and workers rights and representation), health and well being (occupational accidents, exposure to risks and work organization), competence development (skills and training, career development, job satisfaction and work organization), and combining work and non-working life (time patterns, equal opportunities, and non discrimination and social infrastructures). The most recent definition of quality of work, offered by Green (2006), defines quality of work life as a set of work features which foster the well being of the worker. Following the ideas of Sen (1993), he argues that high quality jobs generate capabilities that allow workers to achieve well being and to achieve a range of personal goals. Capabilities are derived through wages and other reward conditions, including future prospects (like pensions and security), as well as job control (the ability to choose). “A high quality job is one which affords the worker a certain capability - the ability and the flexibility to perform a range of tasks (including the necessary sense of personal control), to draw on the comradeship of others working in cooperation, to choose from and pursue a range of agency goals and to command an income that delivers high capability for consumption” (Green, 2006: p. 14-15).

In many empirical studies, quality of work has been operationalized in terms of job satisfaction. However, when we consider the definitions given in the previous paragraph, it seems that quality of work is a much broader concept than job satisfaction. Sirgy et al. (2001) highlight the importance to distinguish between quality of work and job satisfaction. They conceive job satisfaction as one of many possible outcomes of quality of work. Svetlik (1996), for example, found the association between objective indicators of quality of work and job satisfaction to be statistically significant but substantively small. Quality of work, not only has an impact on job satisfaction but on many other life domains such as family, leisure, social life and finances. Thus, the focus of quality of work goes beyond job satisfaction.

The aim of the current project is to investigate quality of work. The term “quality of working life” may be used interchangeably with the term “quality of work”. We would like to point out that we do not limit our study to job quality. To our understanding, job quality is a much narrower construct, mainly comprised of characteristics intrinsic to the job itself such as job variety, autonomy, and external job characteristics, such as pay, physical working conditions. We conceive quality of work as a broader, more inclusive construct, which in addition to task characteristics, also takes into account the social context of the organization and the work-nonwork interface.

When reviewing the literature, we came across a variety of theoretical frameworks which – to varying extent – touch the concept of quality of work or working life. A brief overview of the most important frameworks is provided in the following paragraphs.

Approaches to Job/Work Design

The Job Characteristics Model of Hackman and Oldham (1976) is the most widely studied model on motivational job design. Hackman and Oldham identified five core job characteristics that describe the motivating potential of job: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Jobs scoring high on these five characteristics lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and productivity. The Job Characteristics Model only includes factors intrinsic to the task, and does not take into account the extrinsic factors such as pay or working conditions or the social context of work. A broader work-design approach was developed by Campion and colleagues (Campion and Thayer 1985; Campion and McClelland 1991). This interdisciplinary framework incorporates four major approaches to work-design: the motivational approach (job enrichment, enlargement, and sociotechnical systems), the mechanistic approach (task specialization, work simplification, and repetition), the biological approach (physical task requirements and environmental factors), and the perceptual-motor approach (human factors, cognitive

skills, information processing). Campion and colleagues argue that each work-design approach by its own emphasizes different outcomes, but that it is important to study work form a holistic perspective.

Approaches to Occupational Stress

Among a variety of theoretical concepts on occupational stress (e.g. Dunham 2001 for an overview; Perrewé and Ganster 2002), Karasek's (1979) job demands-job control model is the most widely applied model in research on work stress. The model proposes that the effects of job demands (psychological stressors in the work environment) on employee well-being are influenced by job decision latitude (the degree to which the employee has the potential to control his/her work). According to the model, job environments that place high demands on employees but provide employees with low levels of control over work are extremely stressful (Karasek 1979).

A second, widely used theoretical framework in research on occupational stress is the person-environment (P-E) fit theory of stress (Edwards, Caplan, and Van Harrison 1999). The fundamental premise of the theory is that stress arises not from the person or environment separately, but from a fit or congruence between the two.

Need Satisfaction Approach

The need satisfaction approach is based on need-satisfaction models such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954), McClelland's Learned Needs Theory (1961), Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1966), and Alderfer's Existence-Relatedness-Growth Theory (1972). According to these models, individuals have certain basic needs that they seek to fulfil through work. Employees experience satisfaction at work to the extent that the jobs meet their needs. Basic needs include needs for survival (pay, security), social needs (need for interpersonal interaction, membership, friendship), ego needs (need for self-esteem and autonomy), and self-actualization needs. Need-based theories on quality of work have mainly been criticized by scholars because of the assumption that lower-order needs (e.g. pay, security) have a stronger predominance than higher-order needs (e.g. autonomy, self-esteem), and only if lower-order needs are fulfilled higher-order needs will become salient to the individual (Sirgy, Efraty, Siegel, and Lee 2001).

Spill over Approach

Spill over theory, as already briefly introduced in Chapter 1, states that psychological states (positive or negative) experienced in one domain may affect psychological states (positive or negative) experienced in another other, and vice versa (Staines 1980). A spill over framework is frequently applied in studies that examine the impact of work on other life domains such as family and health. Horizontal spill over refers to the influence of affect in one life domain on a neighbouring domain (e.g. job satisfaction may influence family satisfaction, and vice versa), while vertical spill over refers to the influence of affect on superordinate life domains (e.g. job satisfaction affecting overall life satisfaction). Segmentation and compensation are related mechanisms. While the first one refers to the separation of life domains to block spill over of affect between domains, the latter refers to the balance of affect between/among life domains (Sirgy, Efraty, Siegel, and Lee 2001). Work-family researchers have introduced a fourth mechanism, accommodation, when seeking to explain the linkage between work and family life. The process of accommodation is characterized by the limitation of an individual's involvement in one domain to better accommodate the demands of the other domain. Accommodation can most often be observed in women, as they are often more involved in family life through care giving activities and household tasks. In order to better accommodate their family obligations, they may limit their involvement in work (Lambert 2000).

Measurement

Similar to quality of life research, the assessment of quality of work poses a challenge, due to huge differences in the definitions of key concepts, the components that comprise quality of work, the development of work itself, and the various measurement instruments developed by scholars of different academic fields who are interested in the phenomenon at different levels of analysis. Economists, for example, interested in labor market mobility mainly concentrate the measurement of quality of work on pay and working hours, and thereby omit potentially important variables such as autonomy at work, satisfaction with certain job facets, etc. (Clark 2001). Sociologists, interested in variations in work preferences not only of individuals but between significant subgroups of the population have been criticized for neglecting the mediating effects of employee aspirations when assessing quality of work (Gallie 1996). Researchers interested in the “objective” quality of working life are concerned with the widespread use of job or domain satisfaction as the key outcome variable in studies on subjective quality of work which is obtained from employees directly involved in the working process. Gallie (1996) suggested that the possibilities a job provides for self-development and self-realization may serve as criteria to assess quality of work, but little effort can be found in research to date to specify these criteria.

Again, similar to the assessment of quality of life, the sole reliance on objective indicators such as working conditions is problematic due to the ambiguous effects some working conditions have on employees' well-being. Improvements in skill levels, variety at work and responsibility, for example, may be associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. However, high levels of responsibility and job variety may also lead to the experience of stress, fatigue and overload, ultimately decreasing an employee's well-being and productivity, and even negatively influencing other domains of life such as family life. In order to avoid subjective evaluations of individuals and the well-known problems which arise with self-reports one may assess working conditions by an expert assessor (often the researchers themselves). This method is rather unproblematic as long as the working environment and tasks are simple. However, work has changed dramatically over the past decades, has become more conceptual than physical, more people-oriented than object-based, and complexity has increased enormously. Hence, independent assessors external to these complex environments may face difficulties in drawing a complete picture of the job, and in developing reliable measure for such environments (Gallie 1996).

To close this section on measurement issues in quality of work - and again similar to research in quality of life - there is also a lively discussion on advantages and disadvantages of composite indices versus multiple indicators among scholars. Again, we argue that the choice of measurement instrument depends mainly on the objectives of the study and the level of analysis chosen (comparison among subgroups or populations vs. examination of individual level processes).

Correlates

There is an extensive body of literature mainly in the field of organizational/industrial psychology that has identified and examined the factors which affect quality of work, as well as the consequences of having a happy and satisfied workforce (e.g. Judge and Watanabe 1993; Petty, McGee, and Cavender 1984; Spector 1997). This stream of research has its roots in the job characteristics theory of Hackman and Oldham (1975) which states that job attitudes (mainly job satisfaction) are affected by various objective job characteristics. Quality of work is mainly conceptualized as overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with work domains or organizational commitment in these studies (Loscocco and Roschelle 1991). In the following paragraphs, we provide a brief overview of the main correlates of quality of work and job satisfaction. A

more detailed review of the relationships between quality of work, health and family is provided in Chapter 3.

Factors Affecting Quality of Work

Although there is no single, widely-accepted approach to classify the factors which constitute quality of work or quality of working life, it is possible to categorize them in three basic groups: 1) job characteristics, 2) organizational characteristics, and 3) employee characteristics.

Job characteristics. Two different types of job characteristics are distinguished in the literature: Intrinsic job characteristics which are mainly concerned with the conditions and processes inherent in the conduct of the job itself, and extrinsic job characteristics which are more concerned with the context of the task activities rather than with their content (Warr 1987). Among *extrinsic job characteristics*, physical working conditions (e.g. noise, temperature, vibration), work design, basic ergonomics, and technology (e.g. email, mobile phone, pager, handhelds, etc.) have an impact on quality of work (Danna and Griffin 1999; Sirgy 2001). Pay, compensation packages, and promotions contribute to job satisfaction and quality of work (Clark 1997; Judge and Watanabe 1993; Sirgy 2001), although not always in the expected direction. Clark (1997), for example, found income to be positively related to satisfaction with pay, but to be unrelated to overall job satisfaction. Working hours and work shifts were found to have detrimental effects on well-being (e.g. Sparks, Cooper, Fried, and Shirmo 1997 for an meta-analytic review). Work-life research provides evidence that flexible working arrangements such as flex-time or compressed work weeks can have a positive impact on job satisfaction, stress, work-family conflict and well-being (e.g. Baltes, Huff, Wright, and Neuman 1999). In times of restructuring and downsizing, perceived job insecurity has increased and presents an important determinant of quality of work (e.g. Clark 2005a; Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001).

Various intrinsic *job characteristics* have been found to be associated to higher levels of job satisfaction and subjective well-being, such as task variety, pace, task complexity, job autonomy, opportunity for use of initiative, meaningfulness of work, and whether the task was a recognizable, clear and identifiable piece of work (e.g. Clark 2005a; Hackman and Oldham 1975; Judge and Watanabe 1993; Spector and Jex 1991; Warr 1987; Warr 1994).

Organizational characteristics. Initial studies on organizational characteristics were focused on *structural variables*, such as complexity (e.g. vertical and horizontal differentiation, division of labor) and organizational size. Structural complexity tends to lead to lower job satisfaction and commitment through its impact on job rewards, while organizational size tends to be related to higher levels of job satisfaction, again via the positive impact on job rewards (see Loscocco and Roschelle 1991 for an overview).

The *social context* of the organization, conceived as social integration into the workplace community, a socially responsible work culture, relationships and interactions with co-workers and supervisors, and support from one's supervisor are important determinants of quality of working life. The nature of working relationships between co-workers as well as with supervisors have been associated with well-being, health and satisfaction (Clark 1997; Cooper and Cartwright 1994). Work-life research provides empirical evidence that a supportive work culture and social support provided by the direct supervisor mitigated work-life conflict, stress and facilitate work-life integration (e.g. Allen 2001; Thompson, Beauvais, and Lyness 1999). Violence in the workplace, sexual harassment and aggression have a negative impact on quality of work and subjective well-being (e.g. see Danna and Griffin 1999 for an overview). Teamwork is frequently mentioned in the context of quality of work, and indeed positive relations between working in teams and quality of work and employee productivity have been found (e.g. Nandan

and Nandan 1995). However, there are several factors which moderate or mediate the relationship between teamwork and these desirable outcomes such as role and goal clarity, work role overload, problem solving and conflict management competencies of the team members, educational level and prevalent stereotypes of team members, team diversity, etc (e.g. Lewis and Smithson 2005; Sirgy 2001).

Various forms of *participation* in the organization such as control over work (the perceived ability to exert some influence over one's work environment in order to make it more rewarding and less threatening) and decision latitude (the degree to which an employee has the potential to control his/her work), discretion, role clarity and availability of feedback (e.g. from colleagues, supervisor) were found to increase job satisfaction and quality of work (e.g. Danna and Griffin 1999; Judge and Watanabe 1993; Karasek 1979; Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001; Warr 1987). Job involvement was found to be positively related to job satisfaction (e.g. Adams, King, and King 1996). Studies about the linkage of being a member of a union and job satisfaction report ambiguous results. While some studies found a negative impact on job satisfaction, mainly explained by the atmosphere provided by unions which allows employees to voice dissatisfaction (e.g. Clark 2001), other studies found a positive linkage because unions reduce wage inequality and increase worker control (Pfeffer and Davis-Blake 1990).

Employee characteristics. Individual characteristics of the employee such as demographics and aspects of personality have received much attention in research on job attitudes. Employee's age has been found to have an impact on quality of work and job satisfaction. Manz and Grothe (1991) reported that workers in their late 30s to late 50s in the year 2000 were less satisfied with a variety of quality of work factors than three older comparison age groups. Clark et al. (1996) found a u-shaped relationship for overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with pay, and satisfaction with the work itself, declining from a moderate level in the early years of employment and then increasing steadily up to retirement. Job tenure, managerial responsibilities, and health were found to be positively associated with job satisfaction, while higher levels of education were associated with lower levels of satisfaction (Clark 1997). According to Siegrist (2006), people with lower socio-economic status are more exposed to poor quality of work and negative spillover between work and family life. In addition, their coping abilities are often less well developed and they often depend on appropriate welfare measures.

While no gender differences could be found in large-scale surveys in the United States (e.g. Pugliesi 1995), women in the UK reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than men (Clark 1997). Neither the different jobs held by men and women, nor differences in work values and demographic variables or sample selection accounted for the gender differences in the UK study. As an explanation, Clark (1997) proposed that women's expectations about what their job should entail are lower than those of men. This explanation is supported by the finding that gender differences in satisfaction disappear for young, highly educated professionals in male-dominated work places.

An extensive body of research has examined the influence of *personality* on job satisfaction. Negative affectivity, a stable personality variable manifested in one's affect and self-concept, and closely related to the concept of neuroticism was found to be related to job satisfaction. Recent meta-analyses revealed mean corrected correlations ranging from $r = -.33$ to $r = -.40$ (Connolly and Viswesvaran 2000; Thoresen, Kaplan, Barsky, Warren, and de Chermont 2003). The correlation between positive affectivity and job satisfaction was approximately $r = .50$ (Thoresen et al. 2003). Core self-evaluations including self-esteem, self efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability were found to correlate with job satisfaction at approximately $r = .29$ (Judge and Bono 2001), extraversion with job satisfaction at approximately $r = .25$ (Judge, Heller, and Mount 2002).

Consequences

The basic assumption behind research investigating possible consequences of quality of work is that a happy employee is a productive, dedicated and loyal employee. There is evidence from a broad body of research that quality of work and various workplace characteristics have a significant impact on a range of employee behavioural responses such as organizational commitment and identification, job involvement, job satisfaction, job effort, job performance, intentions to quit, actual turnover, stress, work-family conflict, well-being etc. (e.g. see Danna and Griffin 1999; Edwards, Scully, and Brtek 2000; Efraty and Sirgy 1990; Sparks, Cooper, Fried, and Shirmo 1997; Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001). In an analysis of survey data, Green (2006) found that rising work effort and declining task discretion (job autonomy) were associated with a decline in job satisfaction between 1992 and 2001. A third factor significantly relating to the decline in job satisfaction in the UK was the mismatch between workers qualification and job requirements. He also notes that trends in work intensification, job insecurity and workers control over their job vary between countries and industries (Green, 2006). Results of the European Survey on Working Conditions confirm that demanding working conditions do have a negative effect on social and family relations, but that this does not necessarily translate into dissatisfaction with quality of life in general. It seems that in more affluent countries the effect of working conditions on life satisfaction is more significant (EU 2005).

A relationship that has received quite a lot of attention in past research is the linkage between job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction. Tait, Padgett, and Baldwin (1989) reported an average corrected and positive correlation of $r = .44$ between the two constructs in a meta-analysis including 34 studies. The relationship was found to be stronger for women than for men. However, Tait and colleagues did not address the direction of causality between job and life satisfaction. There is a lively discussion in the field about which theory of the job-life satisfaction relationship (spillover, compensation or segmentation) is correct. A longitudinal study based on a US probability samples of workers conducted by Judge and Shinichiro (1993), revealed a significant, positive and reciprocal relationship between job and life satisfaction. In a subsequent analysis of the same sample, the Judge and Watanabe (1994) argued that each theoretical approach is possible for different individuals. While the spillover model was found to be appropriate for most individuals, also the compensation and segmentation model was characteristic for many participants in the study.

Quality of Work Research in the Participating Countries

In *Finland* quality of work has been studied from various angles. Numerous papers have been published from data on employee's working conditions and changes over time which has been collected by Statistics Finland ("Quality of Work Life Surveys") (e.g. Lehto 1999; Lehto, Lyly-Yrjänäinen, and Sutela 2005; Nätti, Väisänen, and Anttila in press). Health as a part of people's overall quality of life and work has been studied extensively. Several studies, for example, have examined the relationships between good work ability and quality of life, quality of work, partially with a specific focus on aging (e.g. Ilmarinen and Tuomi 2004; Savinainen, Nygård, and Ilmarinen 2004; Tuomi, Huuhtanen, Nykyri, and Ilmarinen 2001). Social inequalities in the country (e.g. temporary work, poverty/low income, regional disparities) and their effects on quality of life and work have also stimulated research in the field (e.g. Gallie 2003; Mauno and Kinnunen 1999b; Rintala and Hiekkilä 2006; Virtanen, Liukkonen, Vahtera, Kivimäki, and Koskenvuo 2003).

Due to the well-established dual-earner model in Finland, special attention has been paid to position of parents in the labor market. The positive effects of combining work and family and being

involved in multiple roles have been studied, as well as the negative effects of work-family conflict (e.g. Kinnunen, Guerts, and Mauno 2004; Kinnunen and Mauno 1998; Mauno and Kinnunen 1999a; Salmi 2003). In terms of gender issues, persistent wage-differences, over-exertion at work and unemployment are regarded as gendered phenomena in Finnish research and are well represented in studies on well-being, quality of life and work (Kinnunen and Korvajärvi 1996; Martelin, Karvonen, and Koskinen 2006), and social care patterns (Kröger 2005).

Research on family life and work-life balance in *Sweden* have over-lapped and enriched each other. Research has been conducted, for example, on young adult's attitudes to work and family (Bernhardt 2000) or on the construction of the modern family (Roman 2004). Other studies have focused on the connection between the internal structure of the family and the division of labor in the market (Björnberg 2000; Duvander 2000) and the distribution of un-paid work in households (e.g. Nordenmark 2004a; Nordenmark 2004b; Strandh and Nordenmark 2003). Research in progress includes studies on the impact of working at home on family life, the interaction between workplace culture and modern parenthood, the relationship between work, family and gender in the 'new economy', and welfare and equality in a comparative perspective.

Job satisfaction has received some attention in quality of work research in *Germany*. Comparative studies (regional and European level) of satisfaction with employment and the chance of finding a new job, overall job satisfaction, and satisfaction with various job characteristics parts have been conducted (Noll and Weick 1997; Noll and Weick 2003). Studies on occupational stress and the impact of work stressors on employee well-being can be found in the field of organizational psychology. There are numerous studies, which examined stress in the workplace and the stressor-strain relationship (e.g. Frese 1985; Garst, Frese, and Molenaar 2000; Semmer 1984; Zapf and Dormann 1996); stressful working conditions and their impact on turnover, absenteeism, psychological and physical well-being (e.g. Beblo and Ortlieb 2005; Leitner 1993; Siegrist 1996; Theis 1985); and the relationship between job insecurity/unemployment and well-being (e.g. Mohr 1997). Gender has not received a lot of attention in this stream of research, and if it did, has remained at a pure comparative level between the sexes (Sonntag 1996). Recently, work-life balance and reconciliation between work and personal life has attracted the attention of organizational psychologists but often remains at a theoretical or rather descriptive level (Abele 2005; Hoff, Grote, Dettmer, Hohner, and Olos 2005; Resch and Bamberg 2005). Either research which aims to examine direct relationships between specific work characteristics and family/personal life, or to identify possible mediators or moderators of such relations (e.g. marital support, supervisor support and organizational culture) are scarce.

Because of the high rate of permanent work disability in the *Netherlands*, there has been a strong focus in research on the quality of working conditions and work disability prevention. Josten and Ester (2005), for example, examined the relation between quality of work life and work transitions (e.g. the intention to change jobs, actual change of job or function, and the desire to change working hours) and whether men and women, older and younger workers, and low and high skilled workers respond differently to low job quality. Studies on work, stress, and work pressure in the Netherlands (e.g. Houtman, Smulders, and van der Berg 2006; Kompier and Marcelissen 1990) are mainly based on Karasek's (1979) job demand – job control model, and there is some research which examines the impact of ICT on the quality of work (Cox-Woudstra and Clarenbeek 2002; Steijn 2001). A growing number of studies has studied the impact of work on family life and well-being (e.g. den Dulk, van Doorne-Huiskes, Peper, and Phlippen 2003; Groenendijk 1998). Psychological research in this area is mainly focused on work-family conflict and its impact on well-being and health outcomes (e.g. Bekker 1999; Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh, and Houtman 2003; Guerts and Demerouti 2003).

There is much overlap between quality of life and employment research in the *United Kingdom*. Issues of occupational health, job insecurity, intensification of work and organisational change all affect the well-being of employees (e.g. Green and Gallie 2003; Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001). The concept of job quality is also gaining ground (e.g. Clark 2005b), examining the impact of factors such as autonomy/control, task discretion and flexible working arrangements (Halpern 2005). Employee well-being is increasingly being perceived in terms of “healthy organisations” and mutual employer-employee gains (Haworth, Lewis, Brannen, Janet, Brockmann, and Purcell 2005; Lewis and Purcell in press). Recent studies have explicitly addressed the issue of quality of working life (e.g. Burchell 2006; Worrall and Cooper 2006) drawing on the concept of quality of life. The gendered nature of family roles is inevitably a focus of research in the UK (Apps and Rees 2005), and overlaps with quality of working life research in terms of multiple role occupancy and its impact on overall well-being, life satisfaction (e.g. Evandrou and Glaser 2004; Evans and Huxley 2002), and work-life balance (Lewis and Purcell in press; Smithson, Lewis, and Purcell 2005; Warren 2004).

Bulgarian labor market research uses the term quality of work as equivalent to quality of employment. The concept and a set of indicators developed by the International Labour Organization and the European Commission have been applied in a number of national and comparative cross-national studies (e.g. Alexandrova 2002; Atanasova 2004). Unemployment and work related problems (access to employment, bad working conditions, opportunities for professional career development, payment inequalities, and less time for recreation because of unequal gender distribution of time and household tasks in the family) and their negative effects on women (e.g. health, family) have attracted much interest in research since the beginning of the transition period (e.g. Mihova 1995; Mihova 1999). These relationships are widely examined in comparative studies of other Eastern European and EU countries, as well as before and after the beginning of the transition to a market economy (e.g. Dimitrova 1998; Vladimirova 2003).

In *Hungary*, there is little research on quality of work, and little is known about trends in the quality of jobs people hold and the quality of their working life as a whole. There is some work on working hours (Bukodi 2005), the distribution of paid work and domestic work among men and women (Falussy and Harcsa 2000), and stress (Kopp and Réthelyi 2004). Little (and decreasing) political attention is given to gender issues in Hungary. This is partly so, because Hungarians hold fairly conservative attitudes about women’s role in society, thus there is little pressure to improve women’s position in the workplace. Research on gender inequality is mainly focused on the labor market and on access to managerial positions (Nagy 2005). Few comparative studies on the topic have been conducted to date (Pollert and Fodor 2005).

Research on working conditions and quality of work in *Portugal* is mainly conducted by researchers in the field of organizational psychology and focuses on the development of theoretical frameworks, measures of job satisfaction, and analyses of working conditions (e.g. Alcobia 2001; Ferreira, Neves, and Caetano 2001; Lima, Vala, and Monteiro 1994; Rego and Freire 2001). Only very recently, work-life balance and well-being have received more attention by academic scholars, and the concept of quality of life has been connected with work-family balance and well-being (Guerreiro 2004). A recent ISSP survey included some questions about work-family stress and gender issues.

3. Other Life Domains: Well-being and Family

Two domains in particular seem to stand out as an important link in the relationship between quality of work and quality of life: health/well-being and family. Identical job requirements and job quality may have quite diverse impact on the overall quality of life, depending on the family constellation and health conditions of an individual. Therefore, these two domains will be examined more carefully in our attempt to better understand the relationship between QOL and QOW.

Quality of Work and Well-being

Scholars interested in the relationship between work and well-being have not always been consistent with the terms used to describe psychological and physiological concerns of individuals. Consequently, a variety of terms are frequently used in the literature (e.g. health and well-being, physical and psychological well-being, mental and physical health, subjective well-being). In an effort to provide synthesis and consistency to the terminology used in current research, Danna and Griffin (1999) suggested a conceptual framework to study health and well-being related to work. According to Danna and Griffin, when specific psychological and physiological indicators are of interest, the term health refers to both physiological and psychological symptoms within a more medical context and should be applied to organizational studies. In line with Warr (1987), Danna and Griffin define well-being as a broader and more encompassing construct which is comprised of life/non-work satisfactions (e.g. with social life, family), work/job-related satisfactions (e.g. with pay, promotion opportunities, work itself; job attachment) and health. Health is seen as a sub-component of well-being in this framework, and is comprised of mental/psychological indicators such as affect, frustration, and anxiety, and physical/physiological indicators such as blood pressure, heart conditions, and general physical health (Danna and Griffin 1999).

A variety of subjective (self-reported) and objective indicators have been used to assess health and well-being. Self-report measures often included indicators such as job satisfaction, life satisfaction, anxiety, depression, perceived stress, and psychosomatic symptomatology measures (reported sleeplessness, headaches, and similar problems), or doctor visits. Objective physiological indicators commonly used include cardiovascular assessment of heart rate, blood pressure, etc. While self-reported measurements are at risk of common method variance when both dependent and independent variables are obtained from the same source, even objective measures are not free of contamination. Factors such as, gender, age, weight and health habits, diet, and exercise may all cause variations in measurement (Danna and Griffin 1999).

According to Smith, Kaminstein, and Makadok (1995), three major areas of research that link organizational life to the well-being of employees can be identified: 1) dangerous work settings and health; 2) personality characteristics, types of work environment and specific illnesses; and 3) stress and working conditions.

Dangerous Work Settings

Occupational health literature identified a number of working conditions that make a workplace hazardous to worker's health such as temperature, noise, illumination, vibration, danger, and physical effort (see Warr 1987 for an overview). In recent years, additional workplace hazards that seem to increase in organizations, such as violence, ergonomic perils, respiratory diseases, dangers from second-hand

smoking, and a variety of non-specific symptoms such as, headache, backache, eye irritation, poor concentration, etc. received academic attention (see Danna and Griffin 1999 for an overview). Furthermore, with an increasing number of teleworkers, health and safety concerns at telecommuters' homes became more of a concern (McClay 1998).

The relationships between working environments and health and well-being of employees are complex, and physical as well as psychological factors and their interactions influence well-being. In many workplaces, employees are exposed to multiple hazards which have a greater impact on health and well-being than a single hazard (Danna and Griffin 1999). Bourbeau, Brisson and Allair (1996), for example, found that high job strain, low social support at work, and working for more than 20 hours a week on a video display terminal were associated with sick-building syndromes. A safety culture of an organization which ensures that the responsibility for safety is an integral part of every job has also been recognized as an important determinant of health in the workplace (Danna and Griffin 1999).

Personality Factors and Work Environment

There is empirical evidence that personality factors within the workplace or particular types of settings and environments have an influence of health and well-being. More recently, personality factors have received more attention in research. The two most intensively examined personality factors in the field are Type A behavior and locus of control. Type A individuals are usually ambitious, persistent, impatient, and very much involved in their work. In contrast, Type B individuals are relaxed, patient, and rarely over activated (Carlson 1999). Empirical studies provide evidence that employees with Type A tendencies more frequently experience certain illnesses (Smith, Kaminstein, and Makadok 1995). These people were also found to experience higher levels of work-family conflict which in turn may negatively impact well-being (Carlson 1999). Locus of control reflects an individual's belief in personal control in life rather than in control by outside forces and individuals. Locus of control in the workplace has been found to be associated to job satisfaction, mental and physical health (Spector, Cooper, Sanchez, O'Driscoll, Sparks, Bernin, Buessing, Dewe, Hart, Lu, Miller, Renault de Moraes, Ostrogany, Pagon, Pitariu, Poelmans, Radhakrishnan, Russinova, Salamatov, Salgado, Shima, Siu, Stora, Teichman, Theorell, Vlerick, Westman, Widerszal-Bazyl, Wong, and Yu 2002).

Occupational Stress

Over the past twenty years, work has undergone significant changes. The well-defined "static" job has almost disappeared. Corporate downsizing and rationalization have left many organizations with fewer employees handling an increasing workload. Long-term employment relationships have been replaced by frequent job changes and temporary work contracts (e.g. Cappelli 1997). Team and project oriented work-organizations, the shift from manufacturing to service-based industries, and growing global competition empowered by the rapid developments in information and telecommunication technologies, have changed the nature of work (e.g. Howard 1995). Working days have become more fragmented, work pace has accelerated, job complexity and flexibility in time, space and function have increased (Burchell, Ladipo, and Wilkinson 2002). Employees today put more effort in their jobs (work intensification) than only 10 years ago, and are increasingly expected to demonstrate individual initiative in their work places. In a study among employees and managers in the UK, 80% of the participants reported an increase in the skill content of their jobs, 78% an increase in the variety of tasks, and 75% growing responsibilities over the last 5 years (Hudson 2002). Stress related health complaints of employees at all organizational levels have become a major problem. Stress is one of the most rapidly growing forms of occupational illness, and often results from a complex set of phenomena in the work place and not just from a single event.

According to Cooper and Cartwright (1994) stress can be understood as the consequences of the lack of fit between individuals' needs and demands and those of the environment. Stressors are defined as stimuli encountered by the individual, whereas strain is defined as the psychological, physical and/or behavioral response to stress. For example, experiences at work which give rise to stress are defined as stressors, whereas the effects of stress are defined as strain (Hart and Cooper 2001). The literature has identified three groups of strains: behavioral, physical, and psychological (Jex and Beehr 1991). Behavioral strains are behavioral responses towards job stressors such as drinking on the job or avoiding work. Physical strains are health responses such as headaches or disease. Psychological strains are affective responses such as attitudes (e.g. job dissatisfaction) or emotions (anxiety or frustration).

Sources of Occupational Stress

According to Cooper and Marshall (1978), sources of occupational stress can be conceptualised in six broad categories:

Working conditions. A variety of occupational factors such as work overload or underload, job insecurity, shift work, working hours, business travel, risks and danger, new technologies, and the quality of the physical environment are potential sources of stress (Danna and Griffin 1999). Smith, Kaminstein, and Makadok (1995) found evidence for Karasek's job demands – job control model. Sparks et al. (1997) in a meta-analysis, reported small means correlations between prolonged work hours and employee mental ($r = .15$) and physical ill health ($r = .06$). Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1992) found work pressure, lack of autonomy and role ambiguity related to job stress. High levels of control at work are directly related to a range of positive health and work outcomes, such as decreased anxiety, depression, psychosomatic health complaints, and life satisfaction (see Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001 for an overview). Hayman and colleagues (2003) reported that unpaid overtime and taking work home was related to feelings of stress and exhaustion among workers in call centers and software development. The relationships between job characteristics/working conditions and stress/health have been found to be moderated by factors such as include age, domestic working hours, Type A characteristics, lifestyle factors, social support etc. (Danna and Griffin 1999; Wichert 2002).

Role in the organization. Role ambiguity, role conflict, and the degree of responsibility are a major sources of work-related stress (Cooper and Cartwright 1994). Meta-analyses revealed that interpersonal conflict, organizational constraints on performance, workload (Spector and Jex 1998), role ambiguity, and role conflict (Jackson and Schuler 1985) have all been related to psychological and physical strain. Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1995) found that job involvement moderated the relationship between role ambiguity and physical health, role ambiguity and heavy alcohol use, and work pressure and heavy alcohol use.

Relationships at work. Relationships with co-workers, supervisors and subordinates can present potential sources of stress. Mistrust of co-workers, for example, has been found to be related to high role ambiguity, poor communication, low job satisfaction, and poor psychological well-being (Cooper and Cartwright 1994). On the other hand, relationships at work offering emotional and social support can have direct positive effects on well-being or work as a buffer between stressors and well-being (Daniels and Guppy 1994).

Career development. Career development and job security increasingly act as a source of work stress with various negative outcomes for the individual (e.g. job dissatisfaction, poor work performance, etc.). Cooper and Cartwright (1994) suggest that such outcomes may be the results of mergers, acquisitions and downsizing which have increased in organizations over the past years. Job insecurity has been found to be a chronic stressor whose negative effects become more profound with time (Ferrie 2001; Heaney, Israel,

and House 1994). It is related to a variety of negative consequences (from psychological to physical) including anxiety, depression, irritation, and strain-related psychosomatic complaints (e.g. Ferrie 2001; Ferrie, Shipley, Marmot, Martikainen, Stansfield, and Smith 2001; Probst 1999; Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001; Wichert 2002).

Organizational structure and climate. Organizational culture, poor management style, lack of participation and social support, poor communication, and ambiguous work environments may serve as a source of occupational stress (Danna and Griffin 1999). Managers and supervisors, intentionally or unintentionally can cause stress for their subordinates through their management style and practices. Managerial support, such as effective communication and feedback, has a positive effect on employees mainly through a stress buffering role. On the other hand, poor supervisor support has been linked to increased levels of stress and symptoms of depression (Sparks, Faragher, and Cooper 2001). Furthermore, through their actions and behavior managers shape organizational culture. This in turn, may have an impact (positive or negative) on employee well-being and their work-life balance. Whether managers are supportive of an employee's needs for work-life balance or not depends on various factors such as personal values and beliefs, their own life experiences and circumstances, and undoubtedly also on the way they advanced in their career (Poelmans and Beham 2005). Managers who often worked long hours by themselves and were required to sacrifice their private lives in order to climb the corporate ladder, may demand the same commitment from their employees, thus making it virtually impossible to balance work and private life (Poelmans and Sahibzada 2004).

Home-work interface. The recent changes in the nature of work also have left marks on the home-work interface. Technological innovations have not only changed the way work is done but also where work is done. Mobile office devices make it possible to perform job tasks almost anywhere: at home, while travelling and during holidays (Kinnunen, Guerts, and Mauno 2004). Work and private life has become more intertwined, and balancing a highly demanding job and family activities has become a challenge for men and women. This trend has been further emphasized by the growing number of women entering the paid labor force. The classical male "breadwinner" model is on its retreat in Europe. Dual-career couples have become the norm rather than the exception, increasing the likelihood that both partners have substantial household responsibilities in addition to their work responsibilities. On average, 62% of all households within the European households were dual-earner households in 2002 (Eurostat). As a consequence, managing the work-home interface has become a potential source of stress for men and women (see also section on Quality of Work and Family). Stressful experiences at work may spill over into family life and vice versa. The experience of conflict between work and family was found to be related to emotional exhaustion, strain, lower levels of job, family and life satisfaction, etc. (e.g. Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton 2000 for an overview).

Consequences of Stress and Low Levels of Health and Well-being

At the individual level, various studies provide empirical evidence of relationships between stress and coronary heart disease, mental breakdown, poor health behaviors, job dissatisfaction, accidents, absenteeism, lost productivity and performance, family problems, and certain forms of cancer (Cooper and Cartwright 1994; Warr 1999). At the organizational level, health and well-being of employees has a significant impact on the financial situation of the organization and profitability (e.g. direct and indirect costs through sickness days, accidents, staff turnover, health insurance costs, lawsuits, compensable disorders, etc.) (Danna and Griffin 1999).

The Healthy Work Organization

The concept of the healthy work organization has received increasing attention in the last few years. Work organization refers to the way work processes are structured and managed (e.g. job design, scheduling, management, policies & procedures, organizational characteristics) (Wilson, DeJoy, Vandenberg, Richardson, and McGrath 2004). The term healthy work organizations is a logical extension of work organization and is aimed at distinguishing healthy from unhealthy work systems (Cooper and Williams 1994). According to Wilson et al. (2004) a healthy organization is characterized by “intentional, systematic, and collaborative efforts to maximize employee well-being and productivity by providing well-designed and meaningful jobs, a supportive social-organizational environment, and accessible and equitable opportunities for career and work-life enhancement” (p. 567). In the same paper, Wilson and colleagues proposed a theoretical model of the healthy organization comprised of six interrelated domains (job design, organizational climate, job future, core organizational attributes, psychological work adjustment, and employee health and well-being). First empirical evidence for an acceptable overall model fit was found in the same study.

Quality of Work and Family

Research on the impact of work on personal life, and more specifically on the interface between work and family has increased rapidly over the last decade. The central construct in this field of research is work-family conflict, a type of inter-role conflict which is experienced by an individual when role demands stemming from one domain (work or family) are incompatible with role demands stemming from another domain (family or work) (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal 1964).

Theoretical Approaches

The main theoretical framework in the field is role theory (Katz and Kahn 1966). Within this theoretical framework, two competing arguments dominate the academic discussion about outcomes associated with the engagement in multiple life roles such as work and family. According to the scarcity argument, individuals have limited resources and energy. Engaging in multiple roles (e.g. work and family) means competition for these limited resources, thereby causing psychological distress and role strain, since there is only a finite amount of resources and energy available to the individual (Goode 1960). The proponents of the enhancement theory, on the other hand, suggest that engaging in multiple roles can have a positive and enhancing effect on the individual (Marks 1977; Sieber 1974). Their argument is based on the assumption that multiple roles generate social and economic resources. Accordingly, involvement in multiple roles often generates social support, added income, increased self-complexity, and opportunities to experience success which in turn can create a satisfactory self-image and life situation (Barnett and Hyde 2001). Engagement in multiple roles was also found to be positively related to various measures of health (Moen, Dempster-McClain, and Williams 1992).

Work-family research has been mainly dominated by the conflict perspective derived from the scarcity hypothesis, but more recently scholars called for a more balanced approach that recognizes the positive effects of combining work and family roles (Barnett and Hyde 2001; Frone 2003). Experiences in one role can produce positive experiences and outcomes in the other role. Greenhaus and Powell (2005) refer to this mechanism as work-family enrichment. Both concepts work-family enrichment and work-family conflict are bi-directional in nature: work can interfere with family (referred to as work-to-family conflict or work-to-family enrichment when work experiences improve the quality of family life) and family can interfere with work (referred to as family-to-work conflict or family-to-work enrichment

respectively) (Carlson, Kacmar, Holliday Wayne, and Grzywacz 2006; Frone, Russell, and Cooper 1992; Greenhaus and Powell 2005). In addition, three different forms of work-family conflict can be distinguished: time-based, strain-based, or behavior based work-family conflict (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985).

Antecedents of Work-Family Conflict

Causes of work-family conflict can be summarized in three basic categories: 1) personal characteristics, 2) family characteristics, and 3) work-related conditions (Hammer, Colton, Caubet, and Brockwood 2002).

Personal characteristics. Gender has been one of the most frequently studied personal characteristics in work-family. Because of asymmetrical permeable boundaries between work and family and different roles and responsibilities of men and women, Pleck (1977) suggested that males and females will experience different levels of work-family interference, with work-to-family interference being stronger for men, and family-to-work interference being stronger for women. Empirical studies testing these hypotheses revealed mixed results. While some studies reported higher levels of work-family conflict for women (Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams 2000; Hammer, Allen, and Grigsby 1997), others studies could not find any gender differences at all (Frone, Russell, and Cooper 1992; Grandey and Cropanzano 1999; Grzywacz and Marks 2000) (see Hypotheses section for more details on gender and work-family conflict).

Besides gender, a number of other individual characteristics have been found to predict work-family conflict: Type A behavior, negative affectivity, level of perceived control, hardiness, extraversion, neuroticism, and self-esteem (Bernas and Major 2000; Carlson 1999; Duxbury, Higgins, and Lee 1994; Grandey and Cropanzano 1999; Grzywacz and Marks 2000).

Family characteristics. Among family characteristics, age and the number of dependents (children and elderly relatives) were positively associated with work-family conflict (Carlson 1999; Hammer, Allen, and Grigsby 1997). Family type has been found to have a significant impact on work-family conflict experienced by individuals. When comparing single and dual-parent households, single mothers experience the highest levels of work-family conflict (Duxbury, Higgins, and Lee 1994). Men in traditional dual-parent households with a wife not working outside the home, experienced significantly lower levels of work-family conflict than men in dual-career households where both partners were employed outside the home (Higgins and Duxbury 1992b).

Individuals who spend more hours in their family role and display high levels of family involvement were found to experience higher levels of work-family conflict (Frone, Russell, and Cooper 1992). In addition, work-family conflict experienced by one's spouse/partner has been found to be related to one's own work-family conflict due to crossover effects between partners (Hammer, Allen, and Grigsby 1997). Social support provided by a spouse/partner or other family members was found to alleviate work-family conflict (Aycaan and Eskin in press) and its impact on work-family conflict. A significant, negative relationship was found with work-to-family interference but not with family-to work conflict.

Work-related conditions. Long working hours and overtime were both found to cause work-family conflict (e.g. Gutek, Searle, and Klepa 1991; Jansen, Kant, Kristensen, and Nijhuis 2003; White, Hill, McGovern, Mills, and Smeaton 2003). Flexible working arrangements are considered a useful means to achieve a higher quality of life by a better integration of work and family life (e.g. Lewis 2003; Peper, van Doorne-Huiskes, and den Dulk 2005; Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, and Pruitt 2002). However, findings reported by studies that examined alternative work schedules predicting work-family conflict are somewhat inconsistent (Christensen and Staines 1990). Alternative work schedules differ in their level of flexibility. Accordingly, the perceptions of an individual on how his/her needs to balance work and family life are met by a flexible work arrangement also differ. In addition, different socio-economic groups have

access to different patterns of flexibility. Research found that only if flexibility is employee driven, it creates greater autonomy and more opportunities to better integrate work and life. If flexibility is market or employer driven it may even create higher levels of insecurity, tension and conflict (Kovacheva 2002; Wallace 2003).

An overall supportive organizational environment, and social support from one's supervisor or from colleagues are more specifically related to reduced levels of work-family conflict (Carlson and Perrewé 1999; Grzywacz and Marks 2000). High performance management practices such as certain appraisal systems, group and teamwork were found to increase to job-to-home spillover for men and women equally (White et al. 2003).

Work-related role conflict and role ambiguity have been found to directly and indirectly influence work-family conflict (e.g., Bedeian, Burke, and Moffett 1988; Carlson 1999; Greenhaus, Collins, Singh, and Parasuraman 1997; Kopelman, Greenhaus, and Connolly 1983). Frone and colleagues (1992; 1997a) reported a significant, positive relationship between high levels of work involvement and work-family conflict. Work-role overload has been found to have a direct effect on work-family conflict (Aryee, Luk, Leung, and Lo 1999). Lastly, job insecurity and the frequency of family intrusion at work were found to be antecedents of work-family conflict (e.g. Jansen, Kant, Kristensen, and Nijhuis 2003; MacEwen and Barling 1994).

Consequences of Work-Family Conflict

Consequences of work-family conflict can be categorized in four main groups: 1) health (mental and physical), 2) performance in the work and family/general life domains respectively, 3) satisfaction, and 4) commitment outcomes (Poelmans, O'Driscoll, and Beham 2005).

Health outcomes. The impact of work-family conflict on individuals' well-being has been demonstrated in a large number of studies. Various negative mental and physical health outcomes have been found to result from the experience of high levels of work-family conflict such as role strain, psychological distress, and somatic complaint (Frone, Russell, and Cooper 1992); psychosomatic symptoms, and negative feeling states (Burke 1988); depression, irritation, and anxiety (e.g. Greenglass 1985); burnout (e.g. Burke 1988; Kinnunen and Mauno 1998); and alcohol abuse (e.g. Frone, Russell, and Cooper 1993; Frone, Russell, and Cooper 1997b).

Performance outcomes. Several studies have investigated the relationship between work-family conflict and job performance but results are not clear cut. Frone et al. (1997a) found a significant negative relationship between family-to-work conflict and work performance, and between work-to-family conflict and family performance. Netemeyer et al. (1996) only found family-to-work conflict to be negatively related to sales performance. Aryee (1992) examined the relationship of three types of work-family interference with work quality, and found only job-parent conflict to be related with lower work quality but not job-homemaker and job-spouse conflict.

Career progression typically signals the success and performance levels of employees. Linehan and Walsh (2000) found that work-family conflict prevented many female international managers from progressing to senior management. Ngo and Lui's (1999) study among 772 managers in Hong Kong confirmed these findings. A meta-analysis on work-family conflict and performance outcomes revealed an overall mean weighted negative correlation of $r = -0.12$ (Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton 2000).

More uniform results were reported by studies which examined the relationship between work-family conflict and family performance. The findings demonstrate that work has an indirect but clear impact on family performance (Frone, Yardley, and Markel 1997a). Work stressors such as long working hours for example can cause strain in the employee which then can spill over into home life. The impact is

indirect and goes via the employee who feels strained, and consequently performs less well in the partner or parent role (Atkinson, Liem, and Liem 1986; Dew, Bromet, and Schulberg 1987).

Satisfaction outcomes. Numerous studies have investigated the impact of work-family conflict on job/career, life, family, and marital satisfaction (e.g. Aryee, Luk, Leung, and Lo 1999; Bedeian, Burke, and Moffett 1988; Duxbury and Higgins 1991). A meta-analysis conducted by Kossek and Ozeki (1998) found a consistent negative relationship among all forms of work-family conflict and life satisfaction. The results of those studies which focused on the relationship between work-family conflict and marital satisfaction are somewhat mixed. Aryee (1992), for example, found marital satisfaction to be related to job-spouse conflict and job-parent conflict but not to job-homemaker conflict. Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) reported a significant negative relationship for women but not for men. The meta-analysis conducted by Allen and colleagues (2000) revealed a weighted mean correlation of $r = -.25$ across 15 studies that have examined marital satisfaction and work-family conflict.

High levels of work-family conflict have been found to be associated to lower levels of individuals' family satisfaction (e.g. Higgins, Duxbury, and Irving 1992a; Kopelman, Greenhaus, and Connolly 1983). Similar results have been reported by studies examining the linkage between job satisfaction and work-family conflict. Job satisfaction has been found to be negatively related to work-family conflict (e.g. Aryee 1992; Bedeian, Burke, and Moffett 1988; Burke 1988). Both meta-analyses conducted by Kossek and Ozeki (1988) and Allen et al. (2000) confirmed these results. Results about career satisfaction as an outcome of work-family conflict are again more controversial. Whereas Peluchette (1993) found that multiple stressors in the work and family domain were associated with more subjective career dissatisfaction, neither Aryee and Luk (1996) nor Parasuraman et al. (1996) found a significant relationship between work-family conflict and career satisfaction. The overall weighted meta-analytic mean correlation across the three studies is $r = -.04$ (Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton 2000).

Commitment outcomes. Three forms of organizational commitment are distinguished in the literature: Affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Meyer and Allen 1991). The majority of studies in work-family literature have focused on affective commitment. The results are highly comparable to those of job satisfaction. As work-family conflict increases, affective commitment decreases (Lyness and Thompson 1997; Netemeyer, Boles, and McMurrian 1996; Tompson and Werner 1997). Work-family conflict has also been found to be positively related to temporary withdrawal behaviors, such as lateness and absenteeism, and to permanent withdrawal behaviors, such as intentions to leave work and actual turnover (Burke 1988; Greenhaus, Collins, Singh, and Parasuraman 1997; MacEwen and Barling 1994).

Conclusion

An extensive body of research on quality of life and quality of work has been conducted in various academic disciplines in the past. We reviewed those parts of the literature that seemed important for the conduct of subsequent work packages of the present research project. The review is aimed at providing a basic understanding of the main theories, concepts and relationships of quality of life and quality of work. It is further intended to help the project team to identify and specify interesting and new relationships that will be examined in the quantitative and qualitative part of the research project in more detail.

As the previous chapters have demonstrated, quality of life research is mainly characterized by two streams of research. The first one is mainly concerned with the examination of quality of life at the aggregated (society/country) level and a comparison across countries. The second stream deals with the experience of subjective well-being at the individual level. Both lines of research have been dominated by quantitative, survey-based studies. Few qualitative studies have been conducted in the past (e.g. Mickel, Dallimore, and Nelson 2004). Only recently, researchers have called for more sophisticated research methods in the field that include both qualitative and quantitative designs as well as experimental approaches (e.g. Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999). In addition, more sophisticated measurement instruments are needed. Studies that have examined quality of life at the aggregated level have mainly use single-item scales with questionable reliability to assess satisfaction with various domains of life. Research on subjective well-being (in general and at work) at the individual level has applied more sophisticated multi-items measures, but has heavily relied on cross-sectional survey research and self-reports. Research at both levels of analysis would definitely benefit by the incorporation of non-self-report measures, more sophisticated, multi-item measurement instruments, longitudinal studies, and qualitative research designs.

In terms of content, more research is needed on the detrimental impact of new technologies, flexible work arrangements and new working techniques and arrangements on work intensification, and consequently on employees' well-being/health, work-life balance, and life satisfaction. Many scholars make note of rising work demands as a result of downsizing and restructuring as well as rising demands at home as a result of the push toward intensive mothering and insights from child development, and the aging population. The QUALITY project will focus on the experiences of employees with respect to the quality of work and life and how these are affected by rising demands in both work and private life. The experienced quality of work and life will be related to job and household characteristics, the workplace context as well as to the wider national context.

Work-life research in the past has been mainly dominated by a conflict perspective which assumed that different roles in life compete for limited resources such as time and energy. Researchers have already called for a more positive approach that examines potential positive effects of multiple roles on well-being, health, and life satisfaction of individuals (e.g., Greenhaus and Powell 2005). New measures on work-family enrichment and work-life balance have been developed recently (e.g., Carlson, Kacmar, Holliday Wayne, and Grzywacz 2006), and open fruitful avenues for new research.

The QUALITY project aims to contribute to research on quality of life and work by investigating new relationships especially between quality of work and the two most salient domains of life, well-being/health and family. By applying validated and reliable measurement instruments in a cross-national quantitative study among employees in various organizations, and by incorporating a qualitative design to investigate what constitute a "healthy" work place that allows employees to enhance their quality of work

and lives, the study intends to overcome some of the methodological pitfalls of previous research in the field.

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