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Abstract

Is ‘switching off’ from work and home more or less necessary for individuals depending on role salience? The present study focuses on this question by assessing the importance of trait role salience for the relationship between daily detachment from work and home on the one hand, and several outcomes on the other hand. Forty-nine employees from different organizations in Spain filled out a general questionnaire and a daily questionnaire three times a day, during five consecutive working days. Results show that detaching from home particularly helps individuals with low work role salience to perform better at work and reduce home–work interference. Contrary to our expectations, detaching from work is especially important for individuals with high home role salience, increasing evening cognitive liveliness and reducing work–home interference. Our findings indicate that differences in trait role salience may affect the beneficial impact of detachment from work and non-work domains.

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Keywords

daily diary study, detachment, recovery, role salience, vigor, work-home interference

It is well known that when people are exposed to daily work demands it is important to have some rest before starting the new working day. However, this is not an easy thing to do for everyone. While some people forget about work and focus on different types of activities, other persons find it difficult to disconnect from work-related issues and continue thinking about unfinished job tasks or checking their work-related email. Researchers have started to study the benefits that detaching from work has for well-being, and empirical findings from diary and longitudinal studies have confirmed the recovery value of detachment (e.g. Binnewies et al., 2009; Sonnentag and Bayer, 2005). Detaching from work is important because employees have other social roles; they are also spouses, parents, friends or children. However, these social roles can also affect their working life. For instance, one can be thinking about family issues at work (i.e. a child that has become ill), making it difficult to concentrate on job tasks. It is therefore important not only to focus on the necessity to detach from work but also from home. Unfortunately, there is a lack of studies focusing on the importance of detaching from the home domain as well (Moreno-Jiménez et al., 2009a). In this study, we seek to address this gap by examining the effects of both detachment from work and from home on several outcomes.

A possible reason why people do not disconnect from a specific domain is that their role in that domain is very important for them. Take for instance a manager who could constantly be busy with his/her work. This would be the case if this manager considers his/her work as an important part of him/herself. Alternatively, such a person might be involved in other activities if work is not viewed as a central role. It leads us to think about how the importance that each role has for the individual may affect the impact of detachment. Therefore, we seek to bring together the study of detachment and the study of social roles.

As employees function in both work and home domains during a normal working day, we combine these two spheres in studying employees' well-being and other favorable outcomes. Specifically, in the work domain, we examine the moderating effect of work role salience on the relationship between detachment from home and outcomes in the work setting, including home-to-work interference (HWI) and work performance. Along the same lines, in the home domain, we examine the moderating effect of home role salience on the relationship between detachment from work and outcomes in the home setting, including work-to-home interference (WHI) and cognitive liveliness.

We focus on HWI and WHI as these capture the intrusions of work into family life (or family into work life) that subsequently influence behavior in the family (or work) domain. Moreover, since job performance represents the most valued behavioral outcome in the work domain that has also been found to be affected by home life (Demerouti et al., 2010), we will additionally focus on this outcome. However, because as yet performance in the home domain has not been adequately conceptualized, we focus on cognitive liveliness, representing the feeling of being mentally alert (Shirom, 2004).

The study contributes to the work-family interface and recovery literatures in various ways. First, we examine psychological detachment not only from work but also from home, which is important when studying the work-family interface. Second, by examining the effect that the interplay between role salience and detachment has on work and context-free

outcomes, we combine the literature on the work–family interface and recovery. Third, we focus on a broad range of work-related (work performance), context-free outcomes (cognitive liveliness), and inter-role relationships (WHI/HWI). Additionally, we capture fluctuations in these outcomes by analyzing them at the day-level. The advantage of daily diary methods with respect to survey methods is the possibility of analyzing activities in the job (and at home) as they happen, within specific time frames (Daniels, 2006).

Theoretical framework and hypotheses

Psychological detachment from work and home

Psychological detachment has been widely studied within the field of recovery. The notion of recovery refers to a process during which no further demands are made on the same functional systems that are called upon during a stressful experience (Meijman and Mulder, 1998). Based on this idea, Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) referred to *recovery experiences* to characterize attributes associated with off-job activities that help to achieve recovery, including psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery experiences, and control over leisure time.

In the present study, we focus on psychological detachment, defined as the ‘individual’s sense of being away from the work situation’ (Etzion et al., 1998: 579). Although roles are more or less stable, people have to engage daily into role transitions, which have been known as ‘microtransitions’ (Ashforth et al., 2000). When the working day is over, people have to move not only physically but also psychologically to another role. According to Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) detachment implies disengaging oneself mentally from work and stopping thinking about job-related problems. Therefore, psycho-physiological systems can return to the baseline level after effort expenditure, making it possible for the individual to feel recovered (Geurts and Sonnentag, 2006). As Mojza et al. (2010) have found in a daily diary study, it is more difficult to detach from work when people spend off-job time on job-related activities. The impact of detachment from work can be observed on a wide range of outcomes. For instance, it has been demonstrated on a daily basis that whereas job-related activities had a negative effect on individuals’ well-being before going to sleep, social activities had a positive effect (Sonnentag, 2001). More recently, Sonnentag et al. (in press) have found that poor psychological detachment predicted higher levels of emotional exhaustion and need for recovery, taking into account not only self-reported data but also spouse-reports of the employee’s detachment. Similarly, Sonnentag et al. (2008a), in a study with daily diary data, found that psychological detachment from work during the evening predicted reduced negative activation and less fatigue the next morning.

Until now, research has focused on work detachment as a crucial recovery experience. However, when studying the work–family interface, examining detachment from home is also necessary – particularly to achieve a better understanding of how the home domain spills over to the work domain (Moreno-Jiménez et al., 2009a). We introduce the concept of detachment from home, which implies ‘disengaging oneself mentally from private issues and stopping to think about personal or family-related problems’. For instance, if a family member is confronted with a problem, one could try to focus on solving that situation after work or during a break at work instead of ruminating about it during a meeting.

While it has been found that psychological detachment from work helps individuals to improve well-being in the non-work domain (e.g. Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007), the benefits of detaching from home have not been previously assessed. As Sonnentag et al. (2008b) demonstrated, the best way to achieve a positive affective state is to be engaged at work while performing job-related tasks and detached from work during off-job time. In short, in this study we propose that detachment can take place both at work and at home, and examine both types of psychological detachment.

The moderating effect of role salience

The term 'role salience' has been used by researchers as the choice that people make among various social roles (Stryker and Serpe, 1994). Other terms such as 'role centrality' or 'involvement' have been used interchangeably (e.g. Frone and Rice, 1987). In this study, we propose that the significance of work and family roles to an individual may affect the impact of detachment on several outcomes, and propose a moderating effect of role salience.

Border theory (Clark, 2000) provides a useful framework to develop our hypotheses. This theory proposes that each person's role takes place in different domains that are separated by physical, temporary, or psychological borders, although it is possible to 'cross borders' between domains, and people may differ in the way in which they cross these borders. Therefore, there are different types of border-crossers depending on the degree to which they are peripheral or central participants in either domain. Whereas peripheral border-crossers do not internalize the domain characteristics, central border-crossers identify personally with them. Specifically, border-crossers who are central participants in one domain feel more motivated to guard the borders of that domain (Clark, 2000).

In this study, it means that individuals who are central border-crossers in the work domain feel motivated and do not let family issues interfere with job tasks, in order to control what they do and to perform better. However, when the work domain is not central to the individual, it is easier to cross the border and start thinking about family-related issues at work (Clark, 2000).

This is in line with the work of Beal et al. (2005), who proposed that being focused on work tasks helps to improve daily performance. They suggest that behaviors at work are composed of a series of episodes experienced subjectively. Off-job tasks that consume attentional demands (e.g. thinking about family issues) may influence the ability to perform during these episodes (Demerouti et al., 2007).

Based on this literature, we consider that it is necessary to identify experiences that help employees to be focused during working time, especially when the work role as a trait is not salient. A possible experience to perform well at work is to detach psychologically from family or other private issues that can distract their attention and affect their daily work performance. Therefore, we predict that:

Hypothesis 1a: Daily detachment from home will be more positively associated with daily work performance among employees with a low, as opposed to high, level of trait work role salience.

Moreover, it is important to stimulate individuals to use strategies that help them daily to reduce cognitive interference during episodes at work. Daniels et al. (2008) proposed coping strategies as a way to reduce cognitive interference. Following an experience sampling methodology, these authors analyzed the influence of coping during four episodes at work. They found that the use of problem-focused or emotional-approach coping in a specific episode had a differential impact on well-being and decision-making in subsequent episodes. In this line, we consider that the experience of detachment from home helps individuals to reduce cognitive interference at work.

We expect that the experience of psychological detachment from home will be more beneficial in reducing HWI for employees who are low on work role salience as these employees have difficulties guarding the borders of their work domain (see Clark, 2000). When people do not disconnect from home, it is easier to find that family issues become an obstacle and interfere with job tasks (e.g. the person has difficulty in concentrating because he/she is preoccupied with domestic matters). This type of interference can be reduced if employees detach from home and focus on family issues only when a specific work task has been finished. Therefore, we propose that:

Hypothesis 1b: Daily detachment from home will be more negatively associated with daily home–work interference among employees with a low, as opposed to high, level of trait work role salience.

As mentioned before, people have to engage daily into role transitions, also known as ‘microtransitions’. In this sense, when the working day finishes, detaching from work may help individuals to move easily from their role as workers to their role as spouses or parents. In the non-work domain, it has been demonstrated that people who identify with their family role have higher levels of family–work enrichment (Wayne et al., 2006). Noor (2004) argued that for those individuals who considered their family as psychologically salient, job-related issues intruding into the home domain might have negative implications on their well-being.

However, individuals who do not consider the home role as salient may be more prone to let work issues cross the border to the home sphere. For instance, those who do not identify with their family may engage more in activities that are known to impair well-being, such as job-related activities (e.g. checking their email or making phone calls instead of participating in family life). When these people continue working during leisure time the same resources required at work remain activated so that the process of recovery remains incomplete and people report feeling less drained of cognitive resources at bedtime. For these people, detaching from work may be especially important. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2a: Daily detachment from work will be more positively associated with daily cognitive liveliness among employees with a low, as opposed to high, level of trait home role salience.

We also argue that people who identify strongly with the family role will develop strong borders to avoid intrusions from the work into the home domain and achieve a

balance between work and family. Positive outcomes such as job satisfaction or organizational commitment exist when there is a balance between the work and the home domain, suggesting that the absence of conflict per se is not enough to achieve well-being (Carlsón et al., 2009). When family is not central to the individuals, daily detachment from work may help them to improve their functioning in the home domain, reducing work-home interference. By detaching daily from work issues, people can focus on a specific task or activity in the home domain, also integrating the home domain as part of their identity or at least as part of their daily responsibilities. Therefore:

Hypothesis 2b: Daily detachment from work will be more negatively associated with daily work-home interference among employees with a low, as opposed to high, level of trait home role salience.

Method

Sample and procedure

Data for this project were collected through researchers' contacts working in different organizations in Madrid (Spain). After these contacts agreed to participate in the project, they looked for other colleagues interested in participating. Participants received a package including a letter describing the study and the instructions, a general questionnaire, daily surveys, and a return envelope. Apart from the letter with the instructions, researchers explained directly to the participants that they had to fill in the general questionnaire before starting to complete the daily surveys. After that, they had to complete the daily surveys three times a day, during five consecutive working days. Researchers insisted on the importance of answering the daily measures at the right moments: in the morning (before going to work), in the afternoon (after work), and in the evening (before bedtime).

In total, after excluding participants who did not fill in all the days or answered at wrong times, 49 persons (61% female) responded to the general and daily questionnaires (80% response rate). Most of them had achieved a university degree (87%). Of these participants, 20.4 percent worked in the construction sector, 18.4 percent worked in public administration organizations, 14.3 percent worked in the communication sector, 12.2 percent in industry, 10.2 percent in trade companies, 10.2 percent in education, and the rest (14.3%) worked in other types of professional backgrounds such as health, financial institutions, or culture.

Average age of the participants was 31.98 years ($SD = 5.60$), and average work experience was 8.63 years ($SD = 5.93$). Regarding family situation, 67.5 percent lived with a partner and 73.5 percent had no children. According to their contract, the mean work hours per week was 37.61 ($SD = 3.28$), and they actually worked an average of 40.69 hours ($SD = 8.78$). Compared with the Spanish working population, our sample was younger, higher educated, and had fewer children.

Measures

We collected data through a general questionnaire and package comprising daily surveys for five days. Given that the original scales were developed in English, we used scales

that had been validated in Spanish samples when it was possible. Those scales without a Spanish version were translated into Spanish by two researchers and translated back into English to ensure the correspondence of the two versions, as recommended by Hambleton et al. (2005).

General questionnaire measures We assessed socio-demographic information as well as trait aspects through a general questionnaire that had to be completed once, before the daily surveys. We included gender, age, marital status, number of children, and hours worked per week as person-level control variables.

Trait work and home role salience were measured with 10 items (five for each type of role salience) adapted from The Life Role Salience Scales developed by Amatea et al. (1986). Respondents used a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = *totally disagree* to 5 = *totally agree*). Sample items are: 'Having work/a career that is interesting and exciting to me is my most important life goal' (work role salience), and 'I expect my family/personal life to give me more real personal satisfaction than anything else in which I am involved' (home role salience).

Trait work performance was assessed with three items from the scale of Williams and Anderson (1991). Example item is 'I perform well my job tasks'. Items were scored on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 = *totally disagree* to 5 = *totally agree*.

Trait work-home and home-work interference were measured with two subscales from the SWING, developed by Geurts et al. (2005) and adapted to Spanish samples by Moreno-Jiménez et al. (2009b). The WHI scale included eight items whereas the HWI scale was composed of four items. Respondents had to indicate on a four-point scale the frequency with which they had experienced each of the described situations (from 0 = *never* to 3 = *always*). Sample items are: How often does it happen that: 'You do not have the energy to engage in leisure activities with your spouse/family/friends because of your job?' (WHI) and 'you have difficulty concentrating on your work because you are preoccupied with domestic matters?' (HWI).

Trait cognitive liveliness was assessed with five items (e.g. 'I feel I can think rapidly') from the 'cognitive liveliness subscale' included in the Shirom-Melamed Vigor Measure (Shirom, 2004). Respondents used a seven-point frequency scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*.

Daily questionnaire measures We collected daily fluctuations in detachment, work performance, WHI, HWI, and cognitive liveliness through a daily questionnaire that had to be filled in from Monday to Friday three times a day: 1) in the morning (before going to work), 2) in the afternoon (after work), and 3) in the evening (before going to bed). We assessed vitality in the morning as a control variable. Psychological detachment from home, work performance, and HWI were measured in the afternoon. Finally, in the evening we collected data about psychological detachment from work, cognitive liveliness, and WHI. To avoid excessive questionnaire length, we used subsets of three items instead of the full versions, and adapted these items to the day-level. All responses were given on six-point scales ranging from 1 = *not true at all* to 6 = *totally true*.

Psychological detachment from work was measured with a subscale of the Recovery Experience Questionnaire developed by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007). We developed three

items similar to those used for the work domain, but applied to the home sphere to measure *psychological detachment from home*. Sample items are: 'During the evening I haven't thought about my work at all' (psychological detachment from work), and 'Today at work, I haven't thought about my home responsibilities at all' (psychological detachment from home).

Work performance was measured with the same three-item scale used in the general questionnaire, adapted to the day-level (e.g. 'Today, I have performed well my job tasks').

Work-home interference and home-work interference were assessed with a selection of three items from the Spanish version of the SWING used in the general questionnaire. Sample items are 'Today, my work obligations have made it difficult for me to feel relaxed at home' (WHI), and 'Today, I had difficulty concentrating on my work because I was preoccupied with domestic matters' (HWI).

Evening cognitive liveliness was also adapted to the day-level, based on the subscale included in the Shirom-Melamed Vigor Measure (Shirom, 2004). A sample item is: 'At this moment, I feel I can think rapidly'.

Morning vitality was assessed as a day-level control variable. We used a subscale of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale validated in Spanish samples (Schaufeli et al., 2002). A sample item is: 'At this moment, I feel bursting with energy'.

Data analyses

Our data had a hierarchical structure, with two levels. Level 1 is composed of data collected at the day-level whereas Level 2 is composed of measurements at the person-level. Day-level data were nested within persons. Given this type of data structure, the most appropriate approach is multilevel analysis (Bryk and Raudenbush, 1992). We centered predictor variables at the day-level around the respective person mean and predictor variables at the person-level around the grand mean.

Results

Preliminary analyses

First, we calculated means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alphas, and correlations among all the variables of the study. Day-level variables across the five days were averaged to correlate them with those measured at the person-level. As can be seen in Table 1, demographic characteristics were significantly related to some of the dependent variables, except marital status, which was excluded from further analyses.

In order to examine the extent to which psychological detachment from work and from home, WHI, and HWI could be empirically discriminated, we conducted a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) using Mplus 5.1. In the analysis, we included the 12 observed indicators that were meant to assess the four factors. At the between-person level of analysis, we found negative residual variance for two indicators. This is most likely owing to the small sample size at the person level ($N = 49$). We therefore decided to conduct a new analysis, in which the four-factor model was tested using the sample pooled-within covariance matrix. The values in the sample pooled-within matrix are adjusted to

Table 1 Means, standard deviations, reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha), and intercorrelations (N = 49 participants)

	M	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender ^a	0.61	0.48		—						
2. Age	31.98	5.60		-.06	—					
3. Marital status ^b	0.67	0.46		-.31**	.17*	—				
4. Number of children	0.30	0.54		-.01	.67**	.45**	—			
5. Work hours actually worked per week	40.69	8.78		-.34**	.01	-.00	-.24**	—		
6. Morning vitality	3.13	1.09	.81	-.12	.03	.03	.01	.04	—	
7. Trait work performance	4.17	0.40	.48	-.10	.05	-.00	-.06	.23**	.19**	—
8. Trait home-work interference	0.52	0.36	.60	.16*	-.02	.42**	-.00	-.22**	-.12	-.01
9. Trait cognitive liveliness	3.25	1.20	.76	-.41**	.07	-.04	.05	.40**	.32**	.18**
10. Trait work-home interference	0.98	0.56	.84	-.18**	-.06	.03	-.21**	.55**	-.16*	-.13*
11. Detachment from home	3.08	1.36	.82	-.03	.05	-.21**	-.07	.02	.01	.05
12. Detachment from work	3.78	1.68	.92	.05	-.01	.07	.08	-.42**	.01	-.13*
13. Home role salience	4.41	0.50	.76	.03	-.34**	.14*	-.17**	.18**	.01	.26**
14. Work role salience	3.09	0.70	.78	-.00	-.40**	-.22**	-.41**	.25**	-.01	.38**
15. Work performance	4.72	1.12	.89	-.03	.03	.03	.00	.03	.04	.26**
16. Home-work interference	1.56	0.90	.79	.17**	.27**	.12	.28**	-.20**	-.03	.01
17. Evening cognitive liveliness	2.46	1.18	.93	-.14*	.10	-.11	.00	.05	.15*	.04
18. Work-home interference	2.75	1.38	.75	.01	.01	.11	-.02	.13*	.07	.03

Table 1 (Continued)

	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Gender ^a											
2. Age											
3. Marital status ^b											
4. Number of children											
5. Work hours actually worked per week											
6. Morning vitality											
7. Trait work performance											
8. Trait home-work interference	-.45**										
9. Trait cognitive liveliness	-.14*	.21**									
10. Trait work-home interference	-.16**	.10	.08								
11. Detachment from home	.16*	-.09	-.39**	.02							
12. Detachment from work	.07	.00	.19**	-.09	.01						
13. Home role salience	-.26**	.06	.16*	.15*	-.12	.24**					
14. Work role salience	-.00	.05	.10	.03	-.10	.08	.24**				
15. Work performance	.19**	-.15*	-.13*	-.33**	.14*	-.17**	-.32**	-.20**			
16. Home-work interference	-.10	.11	.08	.08	.07	.07	-.20**	-.04	-.03		
17. Evening cognitive liveliness	.10	.08	.25**	-.00	-.31**	-.02	.06	.04	-.01	-.22**	
18. Work-home interference											

Note: Cronbach's alpha for day-level variables are mean internal consistencies averaged over all measurement days.

^a0 = male, 1 = female

^b0 = single, 1 = partner.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

remove between-person differences by subtracting relevant person means from daily scores. Consequently, the resulting values in the matrix reflect the factor structure at the within-person level only. The model showed good fit to the data ($\chi^2(48) = 87.62$, CFI = .97, TLI = .96, RMSEA = .058) and acceptable factor loadings in the range from .52 to .97. This indicates adequate discriminant validity of the constructs at the within-person level.

Test of hypotheses 1a and 1b: The moderating effect of work role salience

Hypotheses 1a and 1b stated that employees would profit more from daily detachment from home in terms of work performance and reduced HWI if their work role salience was low rather than high. To test these hypotheses, we compared four nested models. We included first the intercept as the only predictor (null model). In Model 1, we included person-level and day-level control variables and the trait aspect of the respective dependent variable (work performance and HWI). In Model 2, we entered the predictor variable of interest (detachment from home). In Model 3, we added the moderating variable (work role salience), and finally in Model 4 we included the interaction term between detachment from home and work role salience. We will focus on results of Model 4, given that it is the model of interest.

As Table 2 shows, for work performance as an outcome variable, Model 4 fitted the data better than Model 3 (difference of $-2 \times \log = 9.267$, d.f. = 1, $p < .01$). Daily detachment from home was positively related to daily work performance ($t = 3.69$, $p < .01$) and the interaction term was also significant ($t = -3.06$, $p < .01$). We conducted simple slope tests in order to examine the interaction effect (Aiken and West, 1991). As Figure 1 shows, in line with Hypothesis 1a, for persons with a low level of work role salience, daily detachment from home was positively related to work performance ($\gamma = 0.4504$, SE = 0.0935, $z = 4.81$, $p < .001$), whereas for persons with a high level of work role salience, daily detachment from home was unrelated to daily work performance ($\gamma = -0.0592$, SE = 0.0937, $z = -0.63$, n.s.).

For HWI as an outcome variable (see Table 3), Model 4 also fitted the data better than Model 3 (difference of $-2 \times \log = 16.913$, d.f. = 1, $p < .001$). Daily detachment from home had a direct impact on daily HWI ($t = -7.26$, $p < .001$) and the interaction term was also significant ($t = 4.19$, $p < .001$). As can be seen in Figure 2, and consistent with Hypothesis 1b, for persons with a low level of work role salience, daily detachment from home was negatively related to daily HWI ($\gamma = -0.6390$, SE = 0.0840, $z = -7.60$, $p < .001$), whereas for persons with a high level of work role salience, daily detachment from home was not significantly related to daily HWI ($\gamma = -0.0280$, SE = 0.0842, $z = -0.33$, n.s.).

Test of hypotheses 2a and 2b: The moderating effect of home role salience

According to Hypotheses 2a and 2b, employees would benefit more from daily detachment from work in terms of cognitive liveliness and reduced WHI if their home role salience was low rather than high. To test these two hypotheses, again, we compared four nested models. As Table 4 shows, Model 4, which included the interaction term of daily detachment from work and home role salience, showed a better fit than Model 3 (difference of $-2 \times \log = 7.480$, d.f. = 1, $p < .01$). There were no direct effects of daily detachment from work and trait home role salience, but the interaction term was significant

Table 2 Multilevel estimates for models predicting work performance ($N = 49$ participants)

Variable	Null model		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4							
	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE						
Intercept	4.729	0.126	37.53		1.617	1.481	1.09	1.617	1.481	1.09	2.360	1.474	1.60	2.360	1.474	1.60
Gender ^a					-0.034	0.260	-0.13	-0.034	0.260	-0.13	-0.069	0.251	-0.27	-0.070	0.251	-0.27
Age ^a					0.006	0.030	0.20	0.006	0.030	0.20	0.022	0.030	0.73	0.022	0.030	0.73
Number of children ^a					-0.020	0.316	-0.06	-0.020	0.316	-0.06	0.050	0.306	0.16	0.050	0.306	0.16
Work hours actually worked per week ^a					-0.005	0.016	-0.31	-0.005	0.016	-0.31	-0.010	0.015	-0.66	-0.010	0.015	-0.66
Morning vitality ^b					0.060	0.069	0.86	0.060	0.068	1.20	0.082	0.068	1.20	0.076	0.067	1.13
Trait work performance ^a					0.757	0.302	2.50**	0.757	0.301	2.51**	0.500	0.318	1.57	0.500	0.318	1.57
Detachment from home ^b								0.150	0.052	2.88**	0.150	0.052	2.88**	0.196	0.053	3.69**
Work role salience ^a											0.401	0.203	1.97*	0.401	0.203	1.97
Detachment from home × Work role salience														-0.196	0.064	-3.06**
$-2 \times \text{Log (ll)}$					654.717			646.441			642.683			633.416		
Difference of $-2 \times \text{Log d.f.}$					6.931			8.276**			3.758*			9.267**		
Level 1 intercept variance (SE)					0.598 (0.060)			0.573 (0.058)			0.573 (0.058)			0.547 (0.055)		
Level 2 intercept variance (SE)					0.656 (0.157)			0.569 (0.139)			0.519 (0.128)			0.524 (0.128)		

^aPredictors at the person level.^bPredictors at the day level.* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 3 Multilevel estimates for models predicting home-work interference (N = 49 participants)

Variable	Null model		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4						
	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE					
Intercept	1.569	0.089	17.62	0.496	0.636	0.77	0.496	0.636	0.77	0.680	0.619	1.09	0.681	0.619	1.10
Gender ^a				0.247	0.158	1.56	0.247	0.158	1.56	0.271	0.153	1.77	0.271	0.153	1.77
Age ^a				0.033	0.018	1.83	0.033	0.018	1.83	0.025	0.018	1.38	0.025	0.018	1.38
Number of children ^a				0.210	0.191	1.09	0.210	0.191	1.09	0.154	0.186	0.82	0.154	0.186	0.82
Work hours actually worked per week ^a				-0.010	0.009	-1.11	-0.010	0.009	-1.11	-0.007	0.009	-0.77	-0.007	0.009	-0.77
Morning vitality ^b				-0.031	0.066	-0.46	-0.073	0.061	-1.19	-0.073	0.061	-1.19	-0.066	0.059	-1.11
Trait home-work interference ^a				0.385	0.203	1.89	0.385	0.203	1.89	0.277	0.203	1.36	0.277	0.203	1.36
Detachment from home ^b							-0.280	0.046	-6.08 ^{***}	-0.280	0.046	-6.08 ^{***}	-0.334	0.046	-7.26 ^{***}
Work role salience ^a										-0.231	0.116	-1.99 [*]	-0.232	0.116	-2.00 [*]
Detachment from home × Work role salience													0.235	0.056	4.19 ^{***}
-2 × Log (lh)	609.368			587.909			554.364			550.545			533.632		
Difference of -2 × Log d.f.				21,459 ^{**}			33,545 ^{***}			3,819			16,913 ^{***}		
Level 1 intercept variance (SE)	0.547	(0.055)		0.546	(0.055)		0.460	(0.047)		0.460	(0.047)		0.422	(0.043)	
Level 2 intercept variance (SE)	0.277	(0.079)		0.142	(0.052)		0.159	(0.052)		0.140	(0.048)		0.147	(0.048)	

^aPredictors at the person level.

^bPredictors at the day level.

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

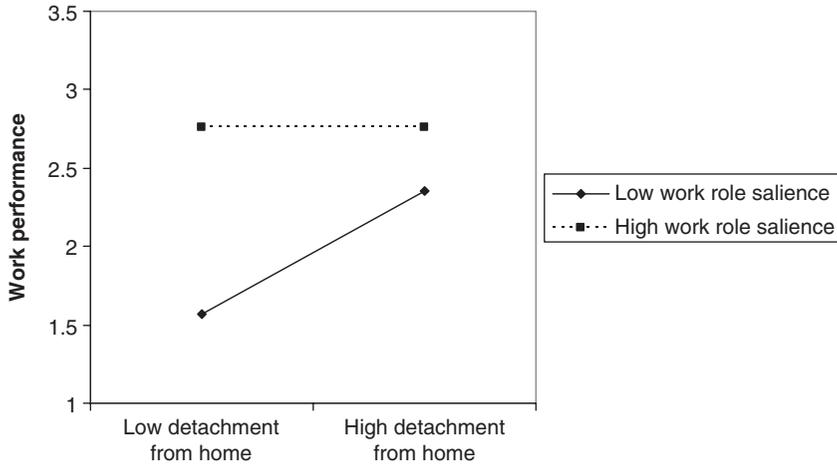


Figure 1 Interaction effects of detachment from home and work role salience in predicting work performance.

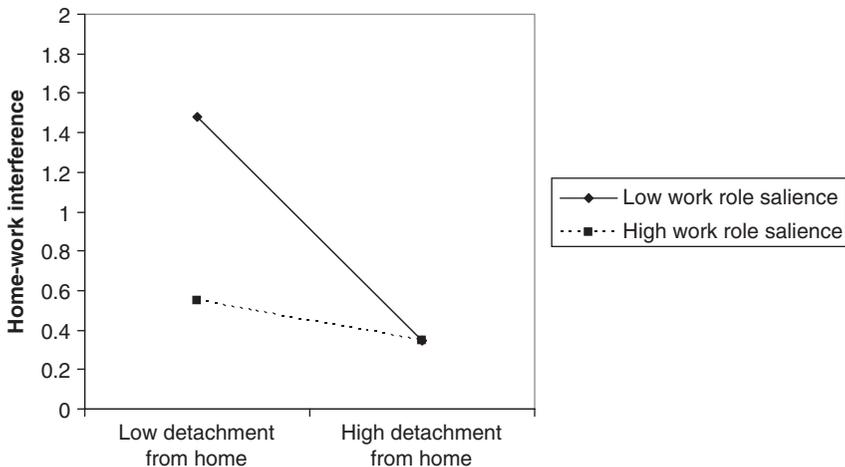


Figure 2 Interaction effects of detachment from home and work role salience in predicting home-work interference.

($t = 2.75, p < .01$). We conducted again simple slope tests in order to examine the interaction effect in more detail (Aiken and West, 1991). As Figure 3 shows, and contrary to our expectations, for persons with a low level of home role salience, daily detachment from work was negatively related to evening cognitive liveliness ($\gamma = -0.2119, SE = 0.0958, z = -2.21, p < .05$). Moreover, for persons with a *high* level of home role salience, daily detachment from work was positively related to evening cognitive liveliness ($\gamma = 0.1861, SE = 0.0665, z = 2.79, p < .01$).

For WHI as an outcome variable (see Table 5), Model 4 fitted the data better than Model 3 (difference of $-2 \times \log = 7.029, d.f. = 1, p < .01$). Daily detachment from work

Table 4 Multilevel estimates for models predicting evening cognitive liveliness ($N = 49$ participants)

Variable	Null model		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Estimate	SE								
Intercept	2.467	0.129	1.524	1.098	1.524	1.098	1.283	1.094	1.283	1.094
Gender ^a			-0.288	0.287	-0.288	0.287	-0.320	0.283	-0.320	0.283
Age ^a			0.040	0.031	0.040	0.031	0.055	0.033	0.055	0.033
Number of children ^a			-0.299	0.334	-0.299	0.334	-0.376	0.333	-0.376	0.333
Work hours actually worked per week ^a			-0.007	0.017	-0.007	0.017	-0.014	0.017	-0.014	0.017
Morning vitality ^b			0.188	0.075	0.188	0.075	0.188	0.075	0.189	0.074
Trait cognitive liveliness ^a			0.075	0.120	0.075	0.120	0.085	0.118	0.084	0.118
Detachment from work ^b					0.034	0.048	0.034	0.048	0.036	0.047
Home role salience ^a							0.360	0.269	0.360	0.269
Detachment from work × Home role salience									0.245	0.089
-2 × Log (lh)	700.493		690.735		690.226		688.467		680.987	
Difference of -2 × Log d.f.			9.758		0.502		1.759		7.480**	
Level 1 intercept variance (SE)	0.724 (0.073)		0.702 (0.071)		0.700 (0.071)		0.700 (0.071)		0.422 (0.043)	
Level 2 intercept variance (SE)	0.655 (0.164)		0.612 (0.153)		0.613 (0.153)		0.586 (0.147)		0.147 (0.048)	

^aPredictors at the person level.
^bPredictors at the day level.
 * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Table 5 Multilevel estimates for models predicting work-home interference (N = 49 participants)

Variable	Null model			Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	t	Estimate	SE	t
Intercept	2.751	0.129	21.32	1.620	1.023	1.58	1.620	1.023	1.58	1.774	1.027	1.72	1.774	1.027	1.72
Gender ^a				0.212	0.261	0.81	0.212	0.261	0.81	0.238	0.260	0.91	0.238	0.260	0.91
Age ^a				0.008	0.030	0.26	0.008	0.030	0.26	-0.002	0.031	-0.06	-0.002	0.031	-0.06
Number of children ^a				0.024	0.316	0.07	0.024	0.316	0.07	0.075	0.318	0.23	0.075	0.318	0.23
Work hours actually worked per week ^a				0.002	0.018	0.11	0.002	0.018	0.11	0.006	0.018	0.33	0.006	0.018	0.33
Morning vitality ^b				0.085	0.105	0.80	0.081	0.102	0.79	0.081	0.102	0.79	0.080	0.100	0.80
Trait work-home interference ^a				0.637	0.253	2.51**	0.637	0.253	2.51**	0.660	0.252	2.61**	0.660	0.252	2.61**
Detachment from work ^b							-0.229	0.065	-3.52**	-0.229	0.065	-3.52**	-0.232	0.064	-3.62**
Home role salience ^a										-0.241	0.260	-0.92	-0.241	0.260	-0.92
Detachment from work × Home role salience													-0.323	0.121	-2.66**
Home role salience													798.472		
-2 × Log (lh)				818.279			806.352			805.501			798.472		
Difference of -2 × Log d.f.				9.223			11.927**			0.851			7.029**		
Level 1 intercept variance (SE)				1.376 (0.139)			1.294 (0.131)			1.294 (0.131)			1.249 (0.126)		
Level 2 intercept variance (SE)				0.412 (0.142)			0.428 (0.141)			0.416 (0.139)			0.426 (0.139)		

^aPredictors at the person level.^bPredictors at the day level.* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

was negatively related to this outcome variable ($t = -3.62, p < .01$). We also found a significant interaction term ($t = -2.66, p < .05$). As shown in Figure 4, for persons with a *high* level of home role salience, daily detachment from work was negatively related to evening WHI ($\gamma = -0.4219, SE = 0.0940, z = -4.48, p < .001$), whereas for persons with a low level of home role salience, daily detachment from work was not significantly related to evening WHI ($\gamma = 0.0949, SE = 0.1354, z = 0.70, n.s.$). This is again not in line with our expectations.

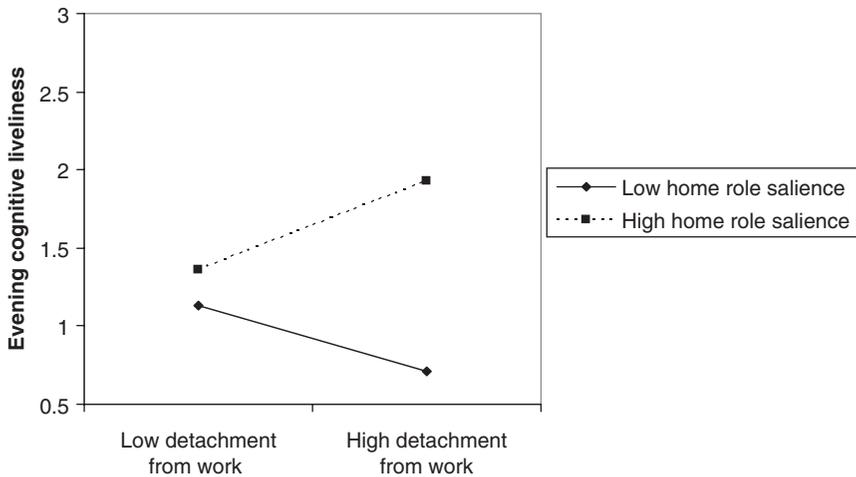


Figure 3 Interaction effects of detachment from work and home role salience in predicting evening cognitive liveliness.

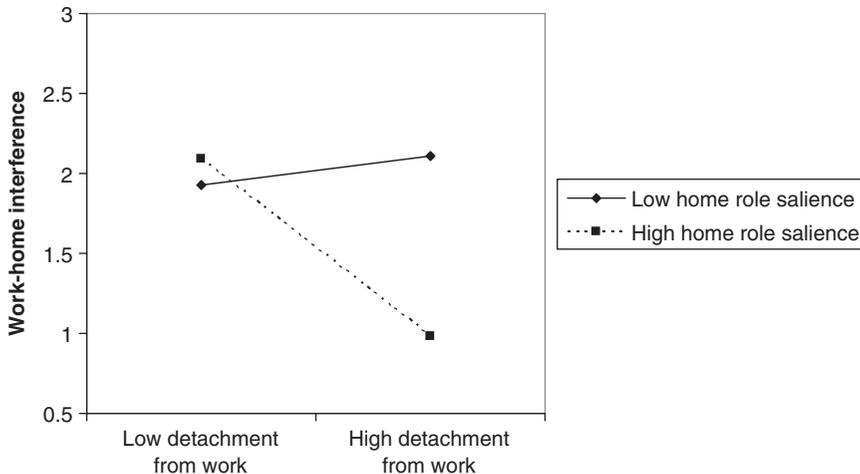


Figure 4 Interaction effects of detachment from work and home role salience in predicting work-home interference.

In sum, we found support for Hypotheses 1a and 1b, regarding the moderating effect of work role salience on the relationship between daily detachment from home and work-related outcomes. However, although home role salience had a moderating impact on the relationship between daily detachment from work and non-work related outcomes, Hypotheses 2a and 2b were rejected as the pattern of the interactions was unanticipated.

Discussion

Is 'switching off' from work and home more or less necessary for individuals depending on their degree of role salience? The present daily diary study focused on this question by assessing the importance of role salience for the relationship between daily detachment from work and home on the one hand and several outcomes on the other hand. We collected data three times per day, so that the participants consistently reported their recent feelings and experiences, reducing retrospective bias.

Regarding the main effects, we found that trait work role salience may be beneficial for daily work performance and for (reduced) daily home-work interference (as measured in the afternoon), which is in line with previous studies (e.g. Noor, 2004). However, whereas other studies have found a beneficial main effect of commitment with the family role on the home domain (e.g. Day and Chamberlain, 2006), in this study home role salience did not have any main effect on our non-work domain outcomes. Moreover, our results showed that daily detachment from home increased daily work performance and reduced daily HWI. As Beal et al. (2005) suggested in their performance episodes model, being focused on job tasks during the working day is crucial to perform well.

Results regarding the moderating effect of role salience showed a differential pattern depending on the domain (work or home). On the one hand, and supporting our first set of hypotheses, detaching daily from home was especially beneficial for individuals with a low level of trait work role salience, so that they increased daily work performance and decreased HWI. As we argued, when individuals do not identify with work, it is useful to use strategies or individual tools to perform well (Clark, 2000). In this study, we have identified detaching from home as a positive daily experience to separate borders. It is also worth mentioning that participants with low trait work role salience who detach well on a daily basis reached about the same level of daily work performance/HWI as participants with high trait work role salience have throughout. It seems that high work role salience as a trait prevents itself from daily HWI and decreased performance, so that it may not depend on the ability to detach from home. When the work role is important for individuals, they may choose other strategies to perform well even when they do not detach, such as only focusing on family issues during specific work breaks. As Ashforth et al. (2000) pointed out, individuals tend to create and maintain boundaries as a way of simplifying and ordering the environment.

In the home domain, the pattern of results was the opposite. Contrary to our expectations, for those individuals with a low level of trait home role salience, detaching daily from work had no beneficial effects on outcomes. However, those who really benefited from detaching from work were individuals with a high trait home role salience. Thus, it could be that when family life is important for individuals, they do their best to feel

energetic when being at home and not to let work issues interfere with their private lives. These people may benefit more from daily work detachment because they really make an effort to be engaged in non-work activities after the working day has finished.

We consider that the permeability of the borders, as well as the type of sanctions existing in each domain, could explain these differences. First, the permeability of the boundaries is different depending on the domain. As Frone et al. (1992) noted, these boundaries are asymmetrically permeable, so that people more frequently let work issues interfere with their private life than vice versa. Boundaries are more permeable at home, so if family is especially important for an individual, she/he has to try harder to prevent work issues from interfering with home life. This could be a reason why individuals with a high level of home role salience benefit more from work detachment.

Second, the type of sanctions in each domain is different. For instance, there are clear sanctions at work if individuals do not perform well. Therefore in the formal context of work, individuals need to be focused while working. However, home responsibilities may be considered as more voluntary in nature than work responsibilities. Apart from that, it has been noted that people have more control at home than at work (Frone, 2003). Therefore, it seems that in the home domain there are fewer obligations to perform well, and the sanctions if you do not engage in home responsibilities are not as clear as at work. For instance, intimate partners do not sanction each other in a formal way like supervisors may do at work. Future studies should continue exploring this pattern to confirm the differential impact of role salience depending on the context.

Finally, other intriguing findings are related with cases of low home role salience. First, for persons with a low level of home role salience, daily detachment from work was negatively related to evening cognitive liveliness. A possible explanation may be that when people have a low level of home role salience, it is less likely that they engage in home responsibilities. If they also detach from work-related issues, they can engage in other types of activities that make them feel relaxed instead of mentally active. It has been demonstrated that activities such as taking a walk or listening to music provide mental and physical relaxation, which has been associated with calmness (Parkinson and Totterdell, 1999) and serenity (Sonnentag et al., 2008a).

Second, for persons with a low level of trait home role salience, daily detachment from work was not significantly related to WHI. One could argue that whether or not you detach from work, it will not interfere in your family life because this last domain is not central for you. In line with Ashforth et al. (2000), people vary in how many roles they prefer to enact and have some latitude over the role that they want to select. For instance, individuals who do not detach from work can decide to continue working at home, and they do not perceive it as interference because they are not interested in enacting another role.

In this study, we linked daily experiences (measured in the morning, afternoon, and evening) with the influence of stable characteristics. Specifically, we conducted cross-level interactions to analyze whether the relationship between variables at the day-level is the same for all individuals. For instance, the relation between detachment from home and work performance, both measured in the afternoon, can be moderated by a trait aspect such as work role salience. Overall, our results show that stable characteristics (i.e. role salience) can influence transient states, experiences or feelings (i.e. detachment, performance, WHI, HWI, cognitive liveliness).

Limitations and suggestions for future research

The present study has some limitations. The first refers to the fact that we collected self-reported data, which raises concerns about common-method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To face this problem, we gathered data through two different types of questionnaires and used person-centered scores in the analyses. Moreover, it should be noted that diary designs minimize the amount of time between the experience of an event and the account of the event (Laurenceau and Bolger, 2005), reducing retrospective bias, which increases the validity of this type of design compared with traditional survey studies (Reis and Gable, 2000).

Apart from that, given that recovery and work–family issues take place in domains where the employee relates to other people, there is also a possibility of a daily crossover such that the employee's detachment from work can have an impact on the spouse's performance or well-being. Future research should include data from multiple sources, such as colleagues or family-members to explore work and family dynamics on a daily basis. For instance, Bakker and Xanthopoulou (2009) have examined the crossover of work engagement among colleagues through daily surveys, and found that there exists bidirectional crossover.

The second limitation is related to the data collection procedure. Although other daily studies have also used survey packages (e.g. Xanthopoulou et al., 2008), we are aware that handheld computers provide reliable results since participants know exactly when they have to fill in the questionnaires. Although participants received specific instructions and were asked to complete the questionnaire in the appropriate range of hours, by using more advanced devices we can know the exact time in which the survey was filled in.

The way in which we contacted the participants makes it difficult to generalize the results to the Spanish working population. We must point out that participants were younger, higher educated, and had fewer children compared with the general Spanish working population. Given these sociodemographic characteristics, it could be argued that among young people without children we may have found higher work role salience, which may have affected the results. However, as was shown, participants reported medium or high levels of both types of salience, with a higher mean for home role salience. Other studies focusing only on women or on employees who were married and had one or more child(ren) have found a similar pattern (e.g. Greenhaus et al., 2001; Noor, 2004). It has also been discussed that variables such as the level of education or the job position can affect levels of work–family conflict and well-being, but the specific relationships between these variables have not as yet been elucidated (Weigt and Solomon, 2008). Moreover, the use of the snowball technique allowed us to find participants interested in taking part of this diary study despite the demanding procedure (three measurement points per day), as well as collecting data from different professional backgrounds. In any case, future studies should include other types of samples to test whether our findings generalize across different populations.

Finally, we examine role salience as a trait aspect assuming that roles have relatively established boundaries and content, so that they are stable rather than being in flux (Ashforth et al., 2000). However, individuals also have to engage in daily role transitions

moving from the work to the home domain (Clark, 2000), so that different roles may become more or less salient during the day. It might imply the existence of momentary enhancement of home–work role salience. In this sense, examining role salience as a state could be interesting for future research.

Practical implications

Our findings suggest that it is important to help employees to perform better at work by providing them with recovery experiences such as detaching from non-work related issues. Specific training programs about detachment and time management should be developed, making employees aware of the importance of separating work life from non-work life (Sonnentag et al., 2008b). Apart from that, it is also important that organizations provide individuals with opportunities for internal and external recovery. Internal recovery takes place during short breaks at work, so that providing employees with autonomy to organize their working time and taking time for a coffee break could help them to restore resources. Regarding external recovery that takes place after work, organizations may offer activities for leisure time, such as sports, cultural, or social activities. Another possible intervention at the organizational level could be related to the development of work role salience. Providing control and support, as well as including employees in decision-making processes, may help individuals to develop a higher sense of identification with the organization in which they work (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). Finally, from an organizational point of view, the implementation of family-friendly policies could be considered an important tool in helping employees to balance work and family roles. Allowing employees to call home to see how their sick child is doing, giving people autonomy to reschedule tasks that require full concentration, or the opportunity to do part of their job tasks from home if necessary are some examples of time and space flexibility.

Apart from the interventions at the organizational level, individuals can also take action to promote their well-being by making decisions related to how to live one's life (Mickel and Dallimore, 2009). Our study reflects that there are different recovery experiences to increase well-being depending on how important the work or the home role is for the individual. Thus, employees have to decide which role is central for them, and accordingly choose the most appropriate recovery experience in order to increase performance and well-being, which implies a process of decision-making.

First, people have to identify personal values and role preferences. However, we consider that it is difficult for individuals to identify which role is more important if they work in a culture in which the ideal worker is expected to place the work role ahead of the family role. For this reason, Kossek et al. (2010) remarked on the importance of promoting cultural work–life support, so that individuals perceive that being involved in work and family roles are both fully valued.

Second, individuals have to choose the recovery experiences that may be most beneficial for them. Detachment from work and home are important experiences that employees should take into account. For instance, disconnecting from home may be helpful to focus on a specific job task and attend family issues if necessary only during a specific work break. In the case of work detachment, individuals may engage in activities

different from those related to job issues, choosing from a wide range of activities those which help them to feel recovered (e.g. taking a walk or learning a new hobby).

Individual and organizational strategies should be combined, so that helping people to identify personal values and strategies to recover should be a priority for modern organizations. As Kossek et al. (2010) pointed out, some employees need work–life support to help them to learn to separate boundaries between work and family.

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