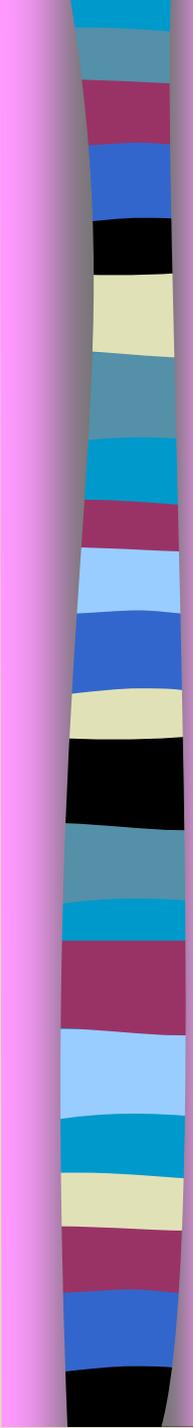


The Influence of the Work Environment on Perceived Organizational Support to Work-Family Articulation , *the case of the social economy sector vs others*

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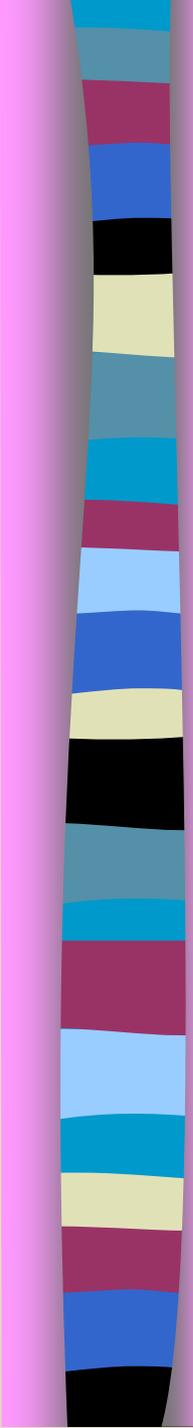


Brief litt review

- Several researchers stress the importance of the organisational culture and of the attitudes and behaviours of colleagues and managers in the analysis of work-family conflict (Haas et al., 2002, Lewis, 2001).
- the Families and Work Institute (1998) showed that occupying a demanding employment added to the lack of organisational support, tend to make employees more stressed, less apt to face difficulties, ill-tempered and less energetic after work, which can reduce personal and family wellbeing + work performance.
- Organisational support to work-family balance is a key element to increase both organisational performance and employees' wellbeing.
- The sector and the professional category thus appear to be variables that can influence work-family conflict, but research has not yet differentiated organisations according to their management mode. i.e. comparing for example participative or more democratic organisations, vs traditional hierarchical organisations, which we will do here looking at social economy organisations vs large public organisations.

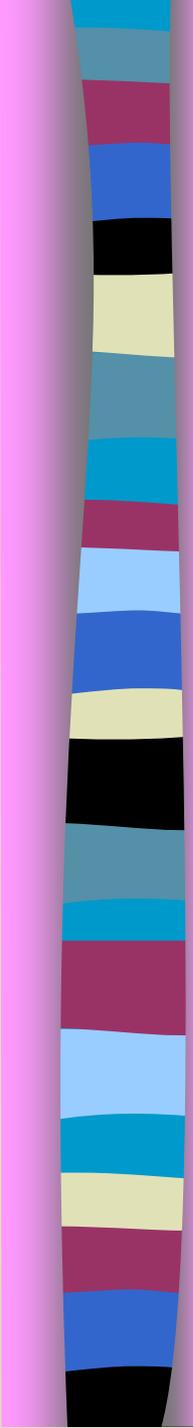
The organizational variable ?

- most research has been concentrated on private firms; it is only recently that the public sector has been the object of research (Secret and Swanberg, 2008) in WLB.
- Some research has highlighted the fact that large firms and public organizations might be more favourable to work-life balance
- Guerin *et al.* (1997) observed that organisational culture does influence the degree of work-family conflict.
- it seems that organisations can play a favourable or unfavourable mediating role in the development and implementation of family-friendly practices and policies (Fusulier *et al.*, 2008, Fusulier *et al.*, 2006).
- However, while some comparisons have been done between organisations, we have seen no attempt to test the idea that *more participatory and democratic mission-derived management style* (particularly in the social economy) may have an influence on the way the issue of work-family reconciliation is managed.



Management style and WLB

- We wanted to investigate the incidence of organisational culture on the perceptions of work-life balance in different sectors, some more masculine (police) and some more feminine (nursing, social work) and another, mixed but with a more democratic management and different mission , i.e., an organisation in the social economy sector.
- We decided to study the social economy sector in Québec to see if the social economy mission and culture of participatory management has an influence on the organisational support and the perceptions related to work-family balance.
- It seemed that human resources managers of social economy organisations were likely to pay more attention to work-life balance issue, given their “social” mission + more participatory or democratic management.



Methodology

- investigation of the social economy sector was conducted in 2009 using mixed (quanti-quali) methodologies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2006; Patton, 1990);
- Other sectors (social services, police, nursing) were studied in 2007-8, with same questionnaire and interview guides

More preoccupation for family life constraints in the social economy sector and social work ++

(23a. Ce n'est pas au milieu de travail de prendre en compte les contraintes de la vie familiale

| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Totally disagree | 95 24,87% | 58 32,04% | 166 39,71% | 51 32,48% | 370 32,51% |
| Rather disagree | 164 42,93% | 68 37,57% | 136 32,54% | 50 31,85% | 418 36,73% |
| Neutral | 45 11,78% | 33 18,23% | 85 20,33% | 20 12,74% | 183 16,08% |
| Agree | 57 14,92% | 10 5,52% | 21 5,02% | 23 14,65% | 111 9,75% |
| Totally agree | 21 5,50% | 12 6,63% | 10 2,39% | 13 8,28% | 56 4,92% |
| Total | 382 100,00% | 181 100,00% | 418 100,00% | 157 100,00% | 1138 100,00% |

Secteur $p < 0,05$ (taille d'effet faible, $r^2 = 0,021$) différence SIG entre TS et ES, TS et INF

Less agreement that men have to be the main breadwinner, especially so in social work and social economy

23c. Il est plus naturel que les hommes assurent le revenu du ménage

| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| Totally disagree | 114 | 55 | 154 | 26 | 349 |
| | 29,84% | 29,73% | 36,84% | 16,56% | 30,56% |
| Rather disagree | 121 | 42 | 108 | 35 | 306 |
| | 31,68% | 22,70% | 25,84% | 22,29% | 26,80% |
| Neutral | 92 | 47 | 129 | 63 | 331 |
| | 24,08% | 25,41% | 30,86% | 40,13% | 28,98% |
| Agree | 39 | 30 | 26 | 24 | 119 |
| | 10,21% | 16,22% | 6,22% | 15,29% | 10,42% |
| Totally agree | 16 | 11 | 1 | 9 | 37 |
| | 4,19% | 5,95% | 0,24% | 5,73% | 3,24% |
| Total | 382 | 185 | 418 | 157 | 1142 |
| | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% |

Secteur $p < 0,05$ (taille d'effet faible, $r^2 = 0,038$) différence non SIG entre INF et SPVM, SPVM et ES

But still a little more natural for women to take parental leave, in the social economy sector as elsewhere (less in social work)

23b. Il est plus naturel que les femmes prennent le congé parental

| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Totally disagree | 76 | 33 | 99 | 17 | 225 |
| | <i>19,95%</i> | <i>17,84%</i> | <i>23,68%</i> | <i>10,83%</i> | <i>19,72%</i> |
| Rather disagree | 101 | 32 | 97 | 20 | 250 |
| | <i>26,51%</i> | <i>17,30%</i> | <i>23,21%</i> | <i>12,74%</i> | <i>21,91%</i> |
| Neutral | 72 | 34 | 128 | 40 | 274 |
| | <i>18,90%</i> | <i>18,38%</i> | <i>30,62%</i> | <i>25,48%</i> | <i>24,01%</i> |
| Agree | 98 | 60 | 82 | 54 | 294 |
| | <i>25,72%</i> | <i>32,43%</i> | <i>19,62%</i> | <i>34,39%</i> | <i>25,77%</i> |
| Totally agree | 34 | 26 | 12 | 26 | 98 |
| | <i>8,92%</i> | <i>14,05%</i> | <i>2,87%</i> | <i>16,56%</i> | <i>8,59%</i> |
| Total | 381 | 185 | 418 | 157 | 1141 |
| | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> |

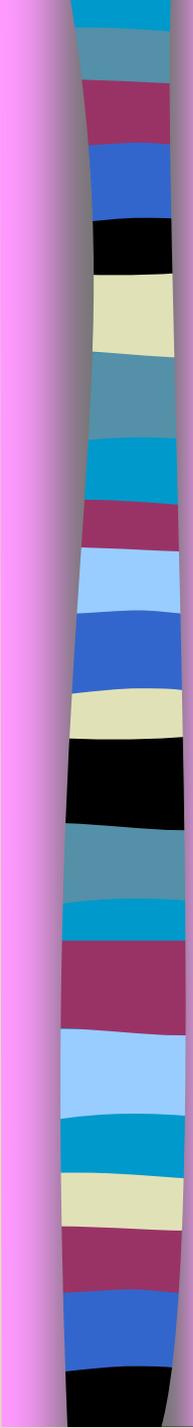
Secteur $p < 0,05$ (taille d'effet faible, $r^2 = 0,047$)

Less agreement on the fact that managers should not take leaves , in Social economy vs others (nursing and social work are more traditional)

23d. Si je suis gestionnaire, prendre des congés pour des raisons familiales est peu concevable

| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| Totally disagree | 116 | 55 | 100 | 40 | 311 |
| | 30,61% | 30,05% | 23,92% | 25,81% | 27,40% |
| Rather disagree | 150 | 55 | 99 | 41 | 345 |
| | 39,58% | 30,05% | 23,68% | 26,45% | 30,40% |
| Neutral | 57 | 33 | 97 | 27 | 214 |
| | 15,04% | 18,03% | 23,21% | 17,42% | 18,85% |
| Agree | 42 | 27 | 77 | 33 | 179 |
| | 11,08% | 14,75% | 18,42% | 21,29% | 15,77% |
| Totally agree | 14 | 13 | 45 | 14 | 86 |
| | 3,69% | 7,10% | 10,77% | 9,03% | 7,58% |
| Total | 379 | 183 | 418 | 155 | 1135 |
| | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% |

Secteur $p < 0,05$ (taille d'effet faible, $r^2 = 0,031$) différence SIG entre ES et TS, ES et INF, SPVM et TS



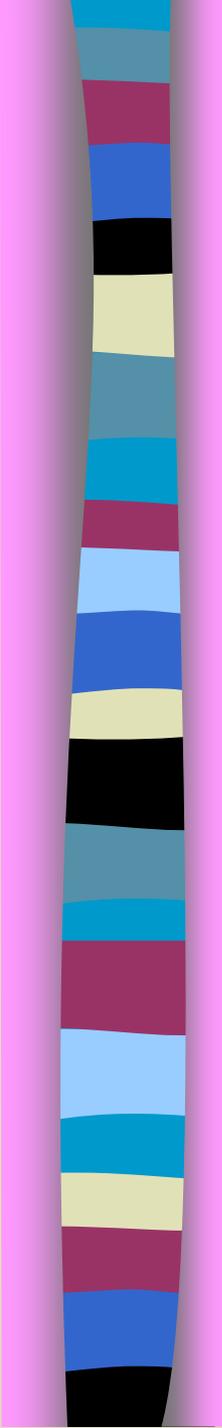
Results on WFB difficulties

- the social economy sector respondents present the strongest agreement in managing work-life articulation :
- they are 73 % (the highest percentage of all groups) indicating that they do manage the issue of work-family articulation to their satisfaction (addition of agree and totally agree)

Table 1

I have the feeling that I manage to reconcile well my professional and family life

| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Totally disagree | 12 | 5 | 14 | 7 | 38 |
| | <i>3,03%</i> | <i>2,67%</i> | <i>3,35%</i> | <i>4,61%</i> | <i>3,30%</i> |
| Rather disagree | 51 | 31 | 69 | 41 | 192 |
| | <i>12,88%</i> | <i>16,58%</i> | <i>16,51%</i> | <i>26,97%</i> | <i>16,65%</i> |
| Neutral | 42 | 33 | 136 | 36 | 247 |
| | <i>10,61%</i> | <i>17,65%</i> | <i>32,54%</i> | <i>23,68%</i> | <i>21,42%</i> |
| Agree | 204 | 79 | 116 | 56 | 455 |
| | <i>51,52%</i> | <i>42,25%</i> | <i>27,75%</i> | <i>36,84%</i> | <i>39,46%</i> |
| Totally agree | 87 | 39 | 83 | 12 | 221 |
| | <i>21,97%</i> | <i>20,86%</i> | <i>19,86%</i> | <i>7,89%</i> | <i>19,17%</i> |
| Total | 396 | 187 | 418 | 152 | 1153 |
| | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> |

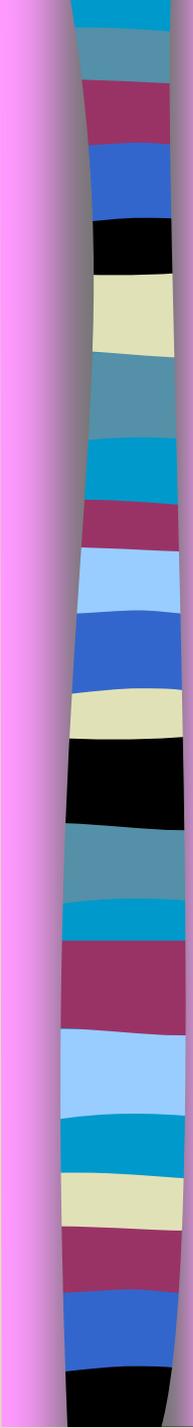


Results on WFB difficulties and necessity to sacrifice one's family life

- The statistical analysis does not reveal significant differences, except with the nursing sector, who are more to feel they are sacrificing their family life;
- it appears that in the three other sectors (police, social work and social economy), it is not necessary to sacrifice one's family life for the professional life.
- Still some 23 % do feel this in the social economy sector, some 23 % as well in the police sector and 19 % in social work, while it is **48 % in the nursing sector** (totals of agree and totally agree). A good percentage of individuals are neutral on this issue, mainly in the police and social work sectors.

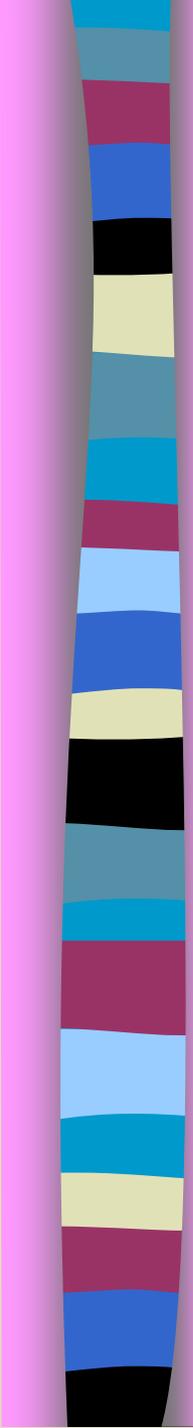
I have the feeling that I am sacrificing my family life for my professional life

| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Totally disagree | 95 | 51 | 120 | 23 | 289 |
| | <i>23,99%</i> | <i>27,72%</i> | <i>28,71%</i> | <i>15,03%</i> | <i>25,11%</i> |
| Rather disagree | 125 | 33 | 101 | 28 | 287 |
| | <i>31,57%</i> | <i>17,93%</i> | <i>24,16%</i> | <i>18,30%</i> | <i>24,93%</i> |
| Neutral | 84 | 58 | 119 | 30 | 291 |
| | <i>21,21%</i> | <i>31,52%</i> | <i>28,47%</i> | <i>19,61%</i> | <i>25,28%</i> |
| Agree | 77 | 34 | 57 | 58 | 226 |
| | <i>19,44%</i> | <i>18,48%</i> | <i>13,64%</i> | <i>37,91%</i> | <i>19,64%</i> |
| Totally agree | 15 | 8 | 21 | 14 | 58 |
| | <i>3,79%</i> | <i>4,35%</i> | <i>5,02%</i> | <i>9,15%</i> | <i>5,04%</i> |
| Total | 396 | 184 | 418 | 153 | 1151 |
| | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> |



Organisational support to WFB

- a number of studies draw attention on the **importance of organisational culture and the behaviour or attitude of colleagues or managers (or supervisors)** when problems arise in balancing professional and personal responsibilities (Haas *et al.*, 2002; Lewis, 2001).
- Guérin *et al.* (1997) found that **organisational culture can affect work-family conflict**;
- **Conflicts are reduced when the employee believes that his manager or supervisor expresses empathy or accepts accommodations or arrangements** that help balancing professional activities and family life.
- Caussignac (2000) indicates that **organisational support contributes significantly to lessen work-family conflict**.
- Chenevier (1996) identifies three studies that underline the influence of non receptive attitudes or lack of flexibility of the supervisor toward employees and work-family conflicts.

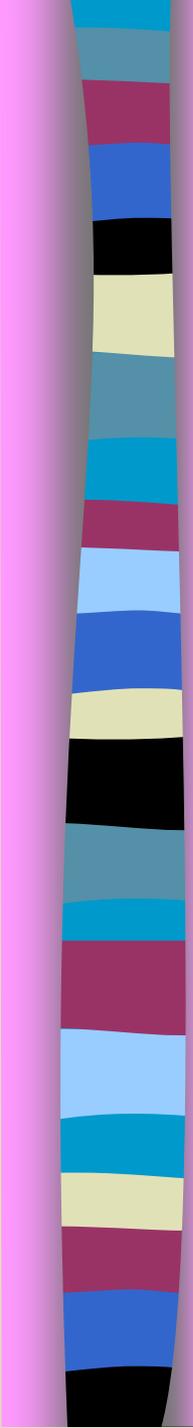


More support from superiors

- significant differences between all the groups and the effect size is high, which means that the differences are here clearly confirmed, and there are important differences, i.e. between social economy and each of the other groups. ($p < 0,05$ large size effect, $r^2 = 0,220$).
- **Support is clearly higher in the social economy group.** We can see that over **71 % support the proposition**, while levels of support are lower in the police sector (57 %) and definitely much lower in the two other groups : 33 % only in the social work sector and 24 % in the nursing sector.
- This clearly shows that the **social economy sector is more supportive and the fact that it is significantly different from the other sectors** leads us to think that **the social economy mission and mode of management would be the explanation (interviews).**

I have the feeling that my superior (manager, coordinator) is supportive in terms of work-family balance (fewer disagree in social economy)

| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| Totally disagree | 12 | 7 | 69 | 45 | 133 |
| | 3,02% | 3,78% | 16,51% | 29,22% | 11,52% |
| Rather disagree | 26 | 23 | 89 | 46 | 184 |
| | 6,53% | 12,43% | 21,29% | 29,87% | 15,93% |
| Neutral | 78 | 49 | 121 | 26 | 274 |
| | 19,60% | 26,49% | 28,95% | 16,88% | 23,72% |
| Agree | 139 | 67 | 116 | 35 | 357 |
| | 34,92% | 36,22% | 27,75% | 22,73% | 30,91% |
| Totally agree | 143 | 39 | 23 | 2 | 207 |
| | 35,93% | 21,08% | 5,50% | 1,30% | 17,92% |
| Total | 398 | 185 | 418 | 154 | 1155 |
| | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% | 100,00% |

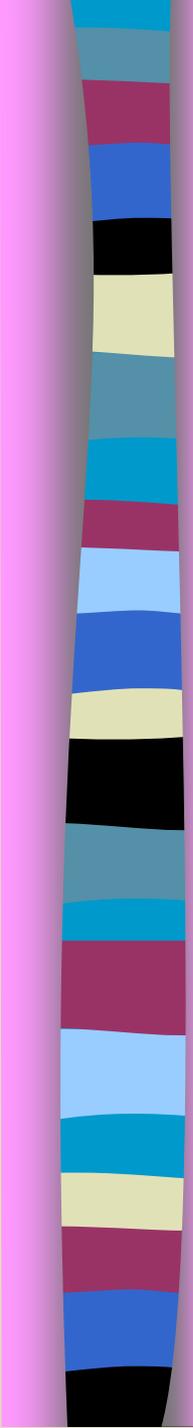


More support from colleagues

- The **social economy sector** again appears to differentiate itself here: levels of support from colleagues are higher in this sector : **43 % agreeing and 36 % totally agreeing** for a total of **79 % in agreement**.
- The **police sector** comes next with **65 % agreement**, then **60 % in social work** and **58 % in nursing**.
- In the **interviews**, it does come out that **colleagues are quite supportive, offering to change schedules in order to accommodate a colleague, finishing up some work** for a colleague who has to leave for family reasons and the like.
- In some cases, it was mentioned to us that **colleagues' support can compensate for the lack of superior's support**, since it can happen that a manager may not be supportive even if the environment is generally supportive.
- However, **20 % of nurses indicate that their colleagues are not supportive, about 12 % in social work and police sector, and only 6 % in the social economy sector**.

I have the feeling that my colleagues are supportive in terms of work-family balance

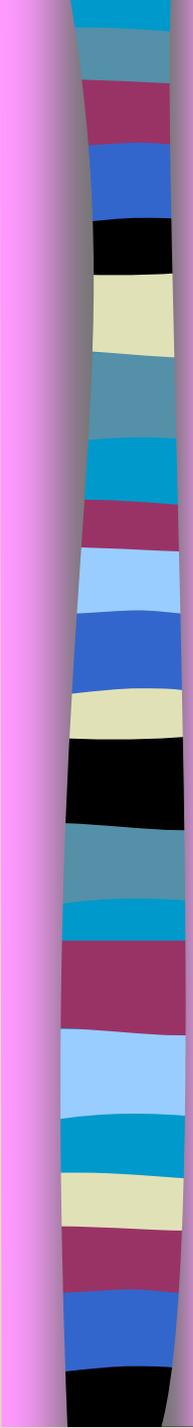
| | Social economy | Police | Social work | Nursing | Total |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Totally disagree | 6 | 5 | 13 | 13 | 37 |
| | <i>1,51%</i> | <i>2,70%</i> | <i>3,11%</i> | <i>8,39%</i> | <i>3,20%</i> |
| Rather disagree | 20 | 20 | 39 | 19 | 98 |
| | <i>5,04%</i> | <i>10,81%</i> | <i>9,33%</i> | <i>12,26%</i> | <i>8,48%</i> |
| Neutral | 54 | 41 | 115 | 33 | 243 |
| | <i>13,60%</i> | <i>22,16%</i> | <i>27,51%</i> | <i>21,29%</i> | <i>21,04%</i> |
| Agree | 172 | 89 | 160 | 71 | 492 |
| | <i>43,32%</i> | <i>48,11%</i> | <i>38,28%</i> | <i>45,81%</i> | <i>42,60%</i> |
| Totally agree | 145 | 30 | 91 | 19 | 285 |
| | <i>36,52%</i> | <i>16,22%</i> | <i>21,77%</i> | <i>12,26%</i> | <i>24,68%</i> |
| Total | 397 | 185 | 418 | 155 | 1155 |
| | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> | <i>100,00%</i> |



The explanation of organizational support in the social economy

(+ quotes in paper; report online)

- **Work-family balance in continuity with a history of caring and solidarity:** the connection between this history of activism, social struggles, individual needs and the existence of good organisational support to WLB for employees is only logical.
- **A mission, with principles of democracy, equity, and respect for individuals :** The respondents believe that the employers' openness to WLB stems from that social mission which in turn shapes how personnel management is streamed.
- **Managers' support to work-family balance :** *“— that there is a belief in the central importance of human values in the organisation. [...] administrative processes are centered on the employee. And while we focus on employee needs, we listen to them and try to implement solutions that are supportive”*
- *“it's also that the person can count on her employer. So, whatever is happening in her life, whether she needs one week off, or two weeks, or if she needs six months, if that's the priority for her or him, we'll try to help out. “*



Conclusion

- The social economy sector is not a work environment where people need to sacrifice family for work, and the majority do feel that the professional environment takes into account the work-family issue
- **The mission and values of the sector appear to influence HRM and attitudes towards WLB and parental leave**
- Also police sector seems to be more supportive than more feminized sectors such as nursing and social work, but differences exist between those who took parental leave !
- **Considering these results and our research question: do the professional milieu and the employer organisation have an important mediation impact ...YES...**
- **But we need to determine if *this is because this is the social economy sector, or because of participative and + democratic management styles here* (and possibly in private participative firms...)**