### Abstract:
Increasing attention is being paid to the impacts of country-level contexts on the work-life interface. However, lack of theoretical clarity as well as operationalization challenges are significant roadblocks for comparative work-life research. This article provides guidance for cross-national work-life research by conducting a systematic interdisciplinary review of conceptual and empirical work on the country-level cultural impacts (i.e., the values, assumptions and beliefs shared by individuals with common historical experience) and structural impacts (i.e., the rules and constraints produced by legal, economic and social structures) on individual experiences of the work-life interface and organizational support for nonwork. Regarding culture, we offer an organized review of work-life research drawing on cultural dimensions, from the most researched dimensions such as individualism-collectivism and gender egalitarianism to the least researched. We also point to ways to locate scales and country scores. Concerning structure, we explain how legal (e.g., public policies), economic (e.g., industrialization) and social (e.g., actual gender equality) factors are operationalized with indicators or typologies, and review the related work-life research. We carve out a research agenda pointing out untapped cultural dimensions and structural factors, under-researched work-life constructs, and calling for more systemic and integrative cross-national work-life research.
Cross-National Work-Life Research:

Cultural and Structural Impacts for Individuals and Organizations

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CROSS-NATIONAL WORK-LIFE RESEARCH: CULTURAL AND STRUCTURAL IMPACTS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Country-level contexts influence individuals’ and employers’ experiences of the work-life interface in many ways (Kossek & Ollier-Malaterre, 2013; Powell, Francesco, & Ling, 2009). However, the contextualization of work-life research is hampered by the complexity of identifying and operationalizing country-level variables (Lewis & den Dulk, 2008; Ollier-Malaterre, Valcour, den Dulk, & Kossek, 2013). So many potentially interesting theoretical frameworks and variables can be drawn upon to design comparative research that it can be difficult for scholars to choose among them (Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007). In addition, these frameworks originate in many different disciplines, such as cross-cultural and social psychology (Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1992; Triandis, 1995), political studies (Inglehart, 1997), sociology (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Pfau-Effinger, 1998), industrial relations (Maurice & Sellier, 1979; Visser, 2009) and organizational studies (Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges, & De Luque, 2006; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998); thus, empirical comparative research is quite scattered (Powell et al., 2009).

The goal of this review is to provide theoretical and operational guidance to scholars in the work-life field by conducting a systematic review of conceptual and empirical work on the country-level cultural and structural factors that impact the work-life interface at the individual level (e.g., work-family and work-life life conflict, enrichment and balance, work investment/centrality, boundary management between work and life roles) and at the organizational level (e.g., policies and programmes pertaining to workplace flexibility and leaves, organizational work-life culture, supervisor and coworker support).

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We ground our review in a broad interdisciplinary literature search including cross-cultural management, psychology, sociology, industrial relations, political science, economics, human resources management and organizational studies. To identify the articles included in this review, we used keywords combining country-level variables such as “culture” (and cultural dimensions)/“public policies”/“economy” (and other structural factors) and work-life constructs such as “work-family”/“work-life”/“flexible work”. We then reviewed the articles to complete our list of country-level variables and work-life constructs, and ran additional searches until we reached saturation. We included studies that were comparative and that explicitly referred to elements of culture (e.g., one or several cultural dimensions) or structure (e.g., one or several structural factors). We included studies that measured culture and structure directly as well as indirectly (i.e., with country scores or country clusters). A total of 92 articles were considered.

Our review is intended to facilitate effective research designs and thus to pave the way for more contextualized and enlightened work-life research. Cultural and structural factors comprising country context can be included as country-level variables in multi-level research that either (a) examines the impact of country-level contexts on organizational or individual dependent variables, (b) controls for variations in country-level contexts, or (c) uses country-level variables as moderators (Allen, 2013; Spector, Liu, & Sanchez, 2015). Another important purpose of understanding these factors is sampling, to ensure that the contexts included in a research design represent a variety of cultures or institutional regimes and have good variance in the different country-level factors (for more information, see Spector et al., 2015; Yu, 2015).

There have been helpful reviews of cross-national organizational behavior (OB) research (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007; Lytle et al., 1995; Tsui et al., 2007) and reviews and meta-analyses of specific frameworks (e.g., Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006; Taras, Kirkman, &
Steel, 2010, on Hofstede’s cultural values). However, the field of comparative work-life research has grown quickly in the last decade in response to the globalization of work (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014; Ollier-Malaterre, Valcour et al., 2013) and therefore there is need for a review that provides clarity on the theory that can guide the work-life field as well as on empirical research. Within this field, we identified only three prior reviews (Annor, 2015; Ollier-Malaterre, Valcour et al., 2013; Ollier-Malaterre, 2015); we go beyond these reviews by emphasizing the cross-national theoretical rationales that work-life scholars have proposed (whereas these three reviews primarily focused on empirical studies), by proposing an overarching framework accounting for country-level impacts on the work-life interface, and by providing operational guidance regarding measures and typologies – both lacking in prior reviews. In addition, our review encompasses the impacts of country-level factors on work-life outcomes at the individual and organizational levels, whereas Annor (2015) focused specifically on work-family conflict and Ollier-Malaterre (2015) on work-life outcomes at the individual level only. Importantly, we do not focus on methodological and epistemological challenges of comparative research since there are excellent recent reviews for these (Davidov, Meuleman, Cieciuch, Schmidt, & Billiet, 2014; Hantrais, 2014; Kirkman et al., 2006; Spector et al., 2015; Tung & Verbeke, 2010; Yu, 2015).

This review makes five main contributions. First, we provide an organized perspective on the impact of culture and structure on work-life social practices; such clarity had been lacking in the field, particularly in regard to structural factors where research is quite scattered. Second, we provide a review of theoretical rationales about cultural and structural impacts on the work-life interface for individuals and organizations. We explain how concepts (e.g., power distance, family structures) translate into variables that can be included in research models (i.e., the cultural dimensions comprising comparative cultural frameworks, the indicators capturing
structural factors, and the country clusters derived from systemic institutional typologies). Third, we offer a systematic review of the empirical studies that have used these concepts and variables. Fourth, we provide operational guidance for future research, explaining where the scales, country scores, and country data for these variables can be found. Lastly, we identify the concepts and variables that have been largely ignored by existing work-life research, thus pointing to an untapped potential of prediction and explanations for future work-life research.

THE IMPACT OF CULTURE AND STRUCTURE ON WORK-LIFE PRACTICES

Two approaches that are causally and ontologically related (Schooler, 1996) have been taken in country-level work-life research: the culturalist and structuralist approaches (Haas, 2005). Culture is a set of beliefs, values and norms about what is good, right, and desirable in life that are shared by individuals who have a common historical experience (Hofstede, 1980; Schooler, 1996). Examples of cultural beliefs relevant to the work-life interface pertain to men’s and women’s roles in the work and care realms (i.e., gender role ideology); to the relationships between individuals and groups (i.e., individualism vs. collectivism); and to time horizon in a society (Hofstede, 1980; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Structure refers to institutions or systems that produce rules and norms that organize and constrain human interactions, such as kinship and economic relationships (Turner, 1997). Examples relevant to the work-life interface are legal structures, such as labor laws regulating working times and leaves and public policies pertaining to leaves, childcare and education (Gornick & Heron, 2006); economic structures, such as the degree of industrialization of a country (Turner, 1997); and social structures, such as family structures (Turner, 1997).

The fact that most cross-national work-life research relies on either the culturalist or the structuralist approach stems from a disciplinary specialization (Haas, 2005; Hofstede, 1980).
Sociologists, political scientists, economists and industrial relations scholars tend to favor structural explanations (e.g., welfare state regimes that is the extent to which social rights are granted to citizens and the mechanisms through which these rights are granted; Esping-Andersen, 1990) whereas psychologists and anthropologists mostly rely on cultural explanations (e.g., cultural dimensions) of cross-national differences. In management as well, institutional studies focus on structure while cross-cultural studies examine culture (Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003).

However, prominent scholars have argued that national context includes both culture and structure (Hofstede, 1980; Schooler, 1996). Some of the most interesting cross-cultural work accounts for structural considerations (e.g., Triandis, 1989) and some of the most developed structural accounts discuss culture (e.g., Pfau-Effinger, 1998). Both systems can be conceptualized as mechanisms of social incentives and sanctions that organize stable patterns of human behavior in a society (Olsen, 1991; Turner, 1997), and both are theoretically sound. Furthermore, including both is a step towards capturing the polycontextuality (Von Glinow, Shapiro, & Brett, 2004) of country-level contexts – that is, the interactions of multiple layers of context. Empirically, it has been shown that, although they share some variance, culture and social institutions are independent predictors of variables such as work centrality (Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003) and the provision of employer-driven programs (den Dulk, Groeneveld, Ollier-Malaterre, & Valcour, 2013). In the work-life field of research, culture and structure are often framed as being in tension with institutions lagging behind or being ahead of cultural change (Pfau-Effinger, 1998). For instance, Pocock (2005) notes that the interplay between the cultural and structural factors that make up work/care regimes does not necessarily produce mutually reinforcing dynamics. This explains why, in the range of existing work-life typologies, the same
country may be classified into different clusters depending on whether the classification is
mainly culturalist or structuralist (Haas, 2005).

Therefore, this review addresses both factors, culture and structure, to explain social
practices regarding the work-life interface. Based on Pfau-Effinger’s (1998) work, we define
social practices as the ways in which the coexistence of multiple domains of life is experienced
by individuals and by organizations, and the behaviors and decisions that they enact to address
this coexistence. We focus on the impacts of culture and structure on social practices at two
levels which are the individual level (e.g., work-family and work-life conflict, enrichment,
balance, work investment/centrality, boundary management behaviors) and the organizational
level (e.g., policies and programs such as workplace flexibility and leaves, organizational work-
life culture, supervisor and coworker support).

An example of cultural impact is how the primary involvement of men in work and
women in nonwork roles in Italy and Portugal (social practice) originates in a culture of
breadwinner-homemaker gender roles (Lewis, 2009). An example of structural impact is how the
high proportions of both men and women working full-time in France (social practice) is enabled
by structural factors such as long legal parental leaves, government-subsidized childcare and tax
cuts for large families (Letablier & Jšnsson, 2005). Social practices enacted by individuals and
organizations may, in turn, engender structural changes in a country (e.g., the institutionalization
of same-sex marriage) and even cultural changes over time (Haas, 2005). Figure 1 illustrates the
interplay between culture, structure and individual and organizational social practices.

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CULTURE’S IMPACT ON THE WORK-LIFE INTERFACE

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In this section, we review the empirical work-life research that builds on cultural dimensions as well as the emerging theoretical rationales regarding the impact of cultural dimensions on work-life constructs (e.g., the work of Powell et al. (2009) and of Ollier-Malaterre (2015)). The review is organized by cultural dimensions, from the most researched dimensions that is those of Hofstede (1980) and GLOBE (House et al., 2004), to the least researched that is those of Triandis (Triandis, 1989; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998), Inglehart (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart-Welzel, 2010) and Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1993). Table 1 below summarizes the cross-cultural work-life empirical studies reviewed in this section. To clarify how these studies have measured cultural dimensions, Table 2 provides operational guidance on the cultural dimensions’ scales and country scores.

Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here

**Individualism-Collectivism (I-C)**

I-C is the most studied cultural dimension in the work-life field, as in cross-cultural OB in general (Gelfand et al., 2007). It refers to the extent to which the individual is emphasized over the group in a culture. In individualist cultures (e.g., the U.S.), behaviors and beliefs are mostly determined by the person, whereas, in collectivist cultures (e.g., Indonesia), loyalty to the group has an important influence on individuals’ behaviors (Hofstede, 1980).

Theoretical predictions of the main effects of I-C at the individual level state that members of collectivist (vs. individualist) cultures should experience less work-family conflict (WFC) and greater work-family enrichment (WFE) (Powell et al., 2009), as well as greater integration of their work and life roles (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000). To our best knowledge, only the effects on WFC have been tested. Empirical findings suggest that I-C in fact
impacts the two directions of WFC differently: employees in collectivist cultures report more family-to-work conflict and less work-to-family conflict than employees in individualist cultures (Allen, French, Dumani, & Shockley, 2015; Galovan et al., 2010; Ng & Feldman, 2014; Syed, Arain, Schalk, & Freese, 2015). A number of arguments about collectivist cultures have been put forth to explain these results: (1) work in collectivist cultures brings honor to the family and can be seen as self-sacrifice for the family, thus lowering perceptions of work-to-family conflict (Galovan et al., 2010); (2) stronger family ties in collectivist cultures make up for more family-to-work interruptions, thus increasing family-to-work conflict (Allen et al., 2015); (3) the focus on in-group harmony may discourage direct expression of feelings and thus decrease reported family-to-work conflict (Ng & Feldman, 2014).

I-C also acts a moderator: the relationships between work-family demands and WFC (Lu et al., 2010; Spector et al., 2004; Spector et al., 2007) and between WFC and depression (Fackrell, Galovan, Hill, & Holmes, 2013) are stronger in individualist than in collectivist cultures. The same pattern prevails for the relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and job and life satisfaction (Haar, Russo, Sune, & Ollier-Malaterre, 2014). Furthermore, decision latitude is a stronger moderator of the relationship between WFC and psychological strain in individualistic than in collectivistic cultures (Billing et al., 2014).

At the organizational level, the benefits of formal work-family organizational support (i.e., work-family programs) on employees’ job satisfaction are stronger in individualist cultures (i.e., U.S. and India) than in collectivist cultures (China; Stock, Strecker, & Bieling, 2015). This may be because employees in collectivist cultures can rely on the help of extended family members to achieve home duties, while employees in individualist cultures receive less tangible support from their smaller nuclear families and, thus, may appreciate work-family programs.
more (Stock et al., 2015). Furthermore, part-time (Masuda et al., 2012; Raghuram, London, & Larsen, 2001), flextime and telecommuting (Masuda et al., 2012) work are more prevalent in individualist than in collectivist cultures, perhaps because these practices align better with autonomy values and with transactional employment relationships.

**Institutional I-C**

Breaking Hofstede’s I-C into two dimensions, GLOBE introduced the construct of collectivism I-institutional (i.e., individuals in a society receive institutional and societal rewards for collective action and distribution of resources) as distinct from collectivism II-in group (i.e., individuals show loyalty, pride and cohesiveness towards in-group members compared with out-group members; House et al., 2004). Only one study examined the impact of institutional I-C, with WFE as the dependent variable: in seven European countries, WFE was associated positively with I-C practices (culture defined as a set of ‘as is’ practices and artefacts in project GLOBE) and negatively with I-C values (culture defined as a set of ‘should be’ values and beliefs in project GLOBE; Beham, Drobníč, Prág, Lewis, & Baierl, 2014). These findings are in line with the observation that GLOBE’s practices and values scores are often negatively correlated (Yeganeh, Su, & Sauers, 2009).

**Gender egalitarianism**

Gender egalitarianism, a construct put forth in cross-cultural research by the project GLOBE, is the extent to which gender role differences and discrimination are minimized in a society (Javidan et al., 2006). Powell et al. (2009) theorized that gender differences in levels of WFC and WFE are greater in low than in high gender egalitarianism cultures. We found only three studies testing this proposition: gender egalitarianism did not predict WFC for men or women (Allen et al., 2015; Ollo-López & Goñi-Legaz, 2015), however, gender differences in
WFE were smaller in countries with higher gender egalitarianism practices (Beham et al., 2014). Other findings indicate that women report longer childcare hours than men in low gender egalitarianism countries (Kossek, Chang, & Zhao, 2014); and that supervisors rate women’s WLB lower than men’s in low gender egalitarianism countries but not in high gender egalitarianism countries, reflecting gender stereotypes in low gender egalitarianism countries (Lyness & Judiesch, 2014).

**Masculinity-femininity**

Masculinity-femininity is one of Hofstede (1980)’s original five cultural dimensions and distinguishes between masculine cultures, focused on achievement, heroism, recognition and material success, and feminine cultures, focused on collaboration, modesty, job security and quality of life. Snir and Harpaz (2009) found that men’s workaholism and devotion to work are more common in masculine (e.g., Mexico) than in feminine (e.g., Norway) cultures. In the same vein, Mexican and Chinese workers (masculine cultures) experienced great stress regarding women’s growing desires to have a career (Joplin, Shaffer, Francesco, & Lau, 2003). On another note, it has been theorized that role integration would be more frequent in feminine (vs. masculine) cultures in which roles are less compartmentalized and gendered (Ashforth et al., 2000). At the organizational level, telework was found to be more likely in feminine than in masculine cultures (Raghuram et al., 2001).

**Power distance**

Power distance refers to the degree of hierarchical inequality between powerful and less powerful individuals (e.g., a supervisor and a subordinate) that people in a culture view as acceptable (Hofstede, 1980). At the individual level, Ollier-Malaterre (2015) theorized that individuals may experience greater work-life conflict in low (vs. high) power distance cultures in
which they may be more empowered at work, have more autonomy, and thus internalize work pressures more. She also proposed that individuals may experience greater work-life enrichment in low (vs. high) power distance cultures because the greater empowerment may lead to more rewarding jobs. However, Ollo-López and Goñi-Legaz (2015) found no significant relationship between power distance and WFC. Another proposition, which has to our knowledge not been tested yet, argues that low power distances cultures enable greater role integration because of their lesser emphasis on status, power ad differentiated social roles (Ashforth et al., 2000).

At the organizational level, studies found that employees in low power distance cultures are more likely to work part-time than employees in high power distance cultures, perhaps because part-time work reduces supervisors’ control over their subordinates (Raghuram et al., 2001). In addition, supervisory support reduced WFC more for Taiwanese employees (a high power distance culture) than for American employees (a low power distance culture), perhaps because supervisory support is more strongly perceived by Taiwanese people as being humanistic (Lu et al., 2010). Peters and den Dulk (2003) also theorized that managers in low power distance cultures are more likely to grant telework request than managers in high power distance cultures; this proposition has, to our knowledge, not been tested yet.

**Horizontal and vertical I-C**

Two studies built on Triandis and Gelfand (1998)’s constructs of *horizontal I-C* and *vertical I-C* which combine the PDI and the I-C dimensions: in *horizontal-individualist* cultures, individuals want to “do their own thing” and differentiate themselves from groups but are not necessarily looking for higher status; in *vertical-individualist* cultures, people want to be recognized as the best and compete for higher status; in *horizontal-collectivist* cultures, individuals encourage similarities and interdependence between group members but do not
submit easily to authorities; and in vertical-collectivist cultures, people emphasize in-group integrity and submit more easily to authority. Both studies examined WFC as the dependent variable. One study found no difference in WFC across Ukraine, Iran (both horizontal-collectivist cultures), and the U.S. (a horizontal-individualist culture) but had low reliability for these scales in their samples (Mortazavi et al., 2009). The other study found that vertical individualism is an important predictor of WFC, perhaps because social competition encourages individuals to spend more time in work-related activities in order to improve their status (Billing et al., 2013).

**Uncertainty avoidance**

Uncertainty avoidance pertains to the extent to which people feel comfortable or threatened when they have to deal with the unknown (Hofstede, 1980). Ollier-Malaterre (2015) theorized that individuals should experience greater work-life conflict in low (vs. high) uncertainty avoidance cultures in which there may be less transition rituals between life domains and greater permeability and flexibility of roles, which may foster work-life conflict. Likewise, she suggested that individuals should experience greater work-life enrichment in low (vs. high) uncertainty avoidance cultures because the greater permeability and flexibility of roles may enable more transfer of resources and affect between the roles. Since individuals are more likely to live by flexible rules in low (vs. high) uncertainty avoidance cultures, it has also been argued that they are more likely to integrate work and life roles (Ashforth et al., 2000).

At the organizational level, empirical findings indicate that organizational work-family programs are positively associated with employees’ ability to balance their work and family roles (Lucia-Casademunt, Garcia-Cabrera, & Cuéllar-Molina, 2015) and to reduce WFC (Ollo-López & Goñi-Legaz, 2015) in high uncertainty avoidance but not low uncertainty avoidance cultures.
In addition, organizations in high (vs. low) uncertainty avoidance cultures are more likely to rely on shift work and fixed-term contracts, which ensure predictability of outputs (Raghuram et al., 2001). Peters and den Dulk (2003) argued that managers in low uncertainty avoidance cultures are more likely to grant telework request than managers in high uncertainty avoidance cultures; these propositions have, to our knowledge, not been tested yet.

**Humane orientation**

Humane orientation has been identified by Powell et al. (2009) as a dimension of interest to the work-life interface. Humane orientation is the extent to which fairness, altruism, and generosity are encouraged in a society (Javidan et al., 2006). Partially in line with Powell et al. (2009)’s argument that members of high humane-oriented cultures experience less WFC and greater WFE than members of low humane-oriented cultures, Ollo-López and Goñi-Legaz (2015) found that men, but not women, report less WFC in high than in low humane-oriented cultures. Regarding WFE, Beham et al. (2014) found a direct positive effect between humane orientation practices and developmental WFE and a moderating effect in the opposite direction than the one posited by Powell et al. (2009), such that job variety was more strongly associated with WFE in low (vs. high) humane-oriented cultures.

**Performance orientation**

GLOBE’s performance orientation dimension captures the extent to which a culture encourages and rewards innovation, high standards, excellence, and performance improvement (House et al., 2004). It has been proposed, however not tested, that individuals may experience greater WLB in low performance orientation cultures that tend to value quality of life and relationships and to emphasize who you are more than what you do, than in high performance
orientation that tend to be competitive, to value materialism and to emphasize what you do more than who you are (Ollier-Malaterre, Sarkisian, Stawiski, & Hannum, 2013).

**Specificity vs. Diffusion**

Specificity vs. diffusion (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993) is another dimension that Powell et al. (2009) identified as promising for developing culture-sensitive work-life research. Powell et al. (2009) theorized that individuals should experience greater WFC and WFE in diffuse cultures, in which others are judged in a holistic manner, than in specific cultures in which individuals discriminate between various aspects of a person when making a judgment (e.g., liking a person while disliking their work). Additionally, it has been argued that individuals in diffuse (vs. specific) cultures are more likely to integrate their work and life roles (Ollier-Malaterre, 2015).

**Survival – self-expression cultures**

Lastly, our search identified a study drawing on Inglehart-Welzel’s (2010) cultural map and more specifically on the distinction between *survival* (emphasis on economic security and order) vs. *self-expression* (emphasis on subjective well-being, quality of life and freedom of self-expression) cultures. The study highlighted that heavy work investment stemming from external predictors such as financial needs was more common in survival cultures, while heavy work investment stemming from dispositional predictors (e.g., passion for work) was more common in self-expression cultures (Snir & Harpaz, 2009).

Having discussed the impact of culture, we now turn to the impact of structure.

**STRUCTURE’S IMPACT ON THE WORK-LIFE INTERFACE**

The social structures that organize and guide human behavior in a society often lag behind or are ahead of cultural beliefs (Hofstede, 1980; Schooler, 1996). Structures encompass
formal or informal rules and norms made by governments, organizations and individuals (Ingram & Clay, 2000). A web of structures regulates the economic, kinship, religious, political, legal and educational systems (Olsen, 1991; Turner, 1997). We identify three sets of core country-level structures that impact individual and organizational social practices regarding the work-life interface: (1) legal structures governing work, industrial relations and the tax system; (2) economic structures, and in particular industrialization and the state of the economy; and (3) social structures pertaining to gender, kinship and stratification.

In the absence of an overarching theoretical framework on the impact of structure on the work-life interface, we first review how structure is operationalized using indicators that can be found in large international databases or through the use of country typologies. We then explain how structure impacts the work-life interface and review related empirical research.

**Operationalization of Structure at the Country-Level**

To operationalize structural impacts, research has taken two avenues: (1) the use of country indicators as variables and (2) a systemic approach based on typologies of countries.

**Indicators.** Much comparative work has been done in sociology, social policy and other fields that facilitate the collection of established indicators. Table 3 below indicates the sources that we have identified for legal, economic and social structures, as well as the number of countries and years for which data are available.

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**Systemic approaches: Typologies.** Gender regimes, industrial relations (IR) systems and welfare state regimes typologies are among the most relevant typologies for work-life research. Regarding gender regimes, Pfau-Effinger’s (1998, 2000) work is perhaps the most cited by
work-life scholars. Analyzing both cultural systems and structural “gender orders”, she
distinguished between six gender arrangements in Europe: family economic, male
breadwinner/female home carer, male breadwinner/female part-time carer, dual
breadwinner/state carer, dual breadwinner/dual carer and dual breadwinner/marketized female
carer (Pfau-Effinger, 2000). Concerning IR systems, we call attention to Visser’s (2009)
typology on European industrial relations which can shed light on the role of IR in organizations’
provision of work-life programs. Regarding welfare state regimes, the most famous is Esping-
Andersen (1990)’s. Based on a historical analysis of 18 Western countries, he argued that
countries differ in the degree to which they grant social rights to their citizens independently of
the market (decommodification) and of the family (defamilialization). He pointed out three
worlds of welfare capitalism: the liberal (as opposed to regulated), the conservative, and the
social democratic. This typology was then extended to include Mediterranean radical, Eastern
European and East Asian clusters (see Arts & Gelissen, 2002; Ferrara, 1996; Lee & Ku, 2007).
Although Esping-Andersen’s work has been criticized (Orloff, 1993), and despite the confusion
created by the existence of 17 other typologies of welfare regimes (Bambra, 2007), it has sparked
a prolific stream of research in comparative social policy and political economy (Scruggs &
Allan, 2008). Three articles based on this typology are particularly useful for work-life scholars:
Léon (2005) described important work-life characteristics (e.g., women in paid employment, state
support for childcare) for each cluster; Tomlinson (2008) analyzed welfare state and gender
regimes theories in a systemic way that explains why the U.S. and the U.K., although both
liberal, have different patterns of full-time and part-time employment for women; and Abendroth
and den Dulk (2011) quantified state, workplace and family support for work-life in eight
European countries.
Legal Structures

We identify three main country-level legal structures that impact the work-life interface: (1) public policies and provisions, (2) the industrial relations system, and (3) the tax system.

Public policies and provisions. Public policies and provisions shape the work-life interface in several ways. They encompass labor laws, which determine work hours, leaves (e.g., paid vacations, sick leave and parental leave), and the availability of flexible work arrangement (e.g., right to request part-time employment and to return to full-time employment). In addition, provisions consist of benefits such as children’s allowances and of in-kind provision of goods or services such as subsidized daycare centers (Hegewisch & Gornick, 2012). At the individual level, public policies and provisions explain why a parent in Sweden can take a fully paid, job-protected leave and request a part-time schedule until his or her child is eight, while a parent in the U.S. would have to take an unpaid leave of absence and negotiate a part-time position (Gornick & Heron, 2006). Variations may occur within countries; for example, some states and cities in the U.S. provide paid family and medical leave beyond federal regulations.

The bulk of the research at the individual level has examined whether public policies and provisions alleviate WFC. Findings on these relationships are mixed. On the one hand, a 10-country study based on International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) data found that expansive family leaves were associated with lower WFC for parents of young children (Ruppanner, 2013). On the other hand, research based on European Union datasets suggests that public policies alone have little or no alleviating effect on WFC (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006; Steiber, 2009; Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006; Van der Lippe, Jager, & Kops, 2003). Further, Allen et al. (2014) found little evidence across 12 countries of a relationship between parental leave or paid annual leave and WFC; in fact, they found a slightly significant positive relationship between duration of paid
annual leave and work interference with family. The only public policy that seemed to alleviate WFC was paid sick leave (Allen et al., 2014). Taken together, these findings suggest that there may be a disconnection between public policies at the national level and the daily experiences of individuals (Yerkes, Standing, Wattis, & Wain, 2010). Other factors such as achieved gender equality may intervene in this relationship, as we discuss below.

Still at the individual level, a theoretical paper argued that rapidly changing macro systems, such as former socialist countries transitioning to capitalism, have both positive (e.g., favorable comparisons with prior generations) and negative (e.g., choice overload) impacts on individuals’ work-life conflict, satisfaction with work-life balance and work-life enrichment (Trefalt, Drnovsek, Svetina-Nabergoj, & Adlesic, 2013). Another theoretical paper theorized that labor laws and other regulative institutions may help individuals to enact their boundary management preferences, such as by enabling them to take leaves (Piszcek & Berg, 2014).

At the organizational level, the main question that has been examined so far is whether public policies in the work-family domain are associated with greater or less provision of work-life support by organizations. On the one hand, public policies leave less room for employers to provide useful work-family policies, while on the other they constitute a floor of rights for citizens, whose sense of entitlement may increase as a result (Lewis & Smithson, 2001), and they signal to employers that work-family is an important domain where support is needed. Some studies (Beham, Drobnič, & Präg, 2014; Berg, Kossek, Baird, & Block, 2013; den Dulk & Groeneveld, 2013; den Dulk et al., 2013; den Dulk, Peters, & Poutsma, 2012) found a positive relationship between public policies and employer support, while others (den Dulk, Peters, Poutsma, & Ligthart, 2010; Ollier-Malaterre, 2009) found a negative one. Recent work reconciled these perspectives by showing that, in countries where public provisions are high,
organizations tend to offer programs reinforcing areas in which public provisions are limited, such as flexible work arrangements (den Dulk et al., 2012).

**The industrial relations (IR) system.** IR systems have been much less examined so far than public policies and provisions, although they influence working time regulations and employers’ provision of work-life support. More specifically, an IR system in which employers negotiate with employee representatives ensures greater coverage of employees than a unilateral system in which employers control working time (Berg, Bosch, & Charest, 2014). In addition, a strong collective bargaining system can entice employers to provide flexible scheduling and leaves beyond public policy standards (Berg et al., 2013). Conversely, lesser employer support has been observed in IR systems characterized by union/employers antagonism, by a fragmentation between different levels of elected union bodies, or by as lack of interest for work-life issues on the part of the unions (Ollier-Malaterre, 2009). These findings offer a potential avenue for work-life improvement in countries with limited state support (Berg et al., 2013).

**The tax system.** The tax system has not been much studied in work-life research, despite evidence of its impacts. A recent systematic comparison of work-family policies in Japan, France, Germany and the U.S. revealed that, at the individual level, the tax system can encourage people to have more children by reducing taxes for larger families and offering tax credits for hired nannies and domestic help (Boling, 2015). In addition, the tax system can encourage or discourage dual-income households: when couples cumulate their income in a common tax return (e.g., in France and in Germany), the additional income of the person with the lesser salary is taxed at the marginal rates, which undermines its economic contribution (Ben Jelloul & Schaff, 2012; Blau & Kahn, 2007). At the organizational level, tax cuts can encourage employers
to promote flexible work arrangements or childcare supports, as in France, for instance (Ollier-Malaterre, 2007).

**Economic Structures**

Alongside legal structures, country-level economic structures impact the work-life interface. Below, we review work on (1) industrialization and (2) the state of the economy.

**Industrialization.** The degree of development or industrialization (i.e., where a country stands in the transition from agriculture to manufacturing to information and services; Turner, 1997) influences the nature of work-family needs, as it affects employees’ demands (e.g., nature of the work, number of children, and health conditions) as well as resources (e.g., income, access to quality food, housing, health care, and education; Spector et al., 2004). Since most research has been conducted in Western and Northern societies, some scholars have called attention to the more basic work-life needs in developing countries, such as poverty alleviation. For instance, employer-driven programs in Brazil offer food baskets, build schools, create garden projects in elementary schools and fund school lunches; conversely, intangible incentives such as workplace flexibility are more likely to matter for employees above the poverty level in developed countries (Lobel, 2013). In fact, in more developed economies, work weeks tend to be shorter (Lyness, Gornick, Stone, & Grotto, 2012), and it is easier to reduce one’s work hours (Uunk, Kalmijn, & Muffels, 2005). In addition, industrialization is associated with greater provision of paid leave for new mothers as well as paid annual or vacation leave for all employees (except in the U.S.; Earle, Mokomane, & Heymann, 2011). However, a study of 48 countries found no differences in the relationships between job characteristics, family characteristics and work-family fit between West-Developing and West-Affluent countries, suggesting that industrialization may impact the
nature of demands and resources rather than the relationships between them and work-life outcomes (Hill, Yang, Hawkins, & Ferris, 2004).

**State of the economy.** Whether an economy is growing, stagnating or recessing has implications for individuals’ work-life experiences. A focus group study in five countries found that job security influenced strain-related WFC, particularly in country contexts characterized by uneven economic growth and inflation (Joplin et al., 2003). Individuals in European countries reported slightly more WFC before and after an economic crisis (McGinnity & Russell, 2013). In fact, an economic recession may generate stress reactions among employees, since the increased number of hours worked, as well as more precarious employment contracts, threaten or actually decrease valued resources (Richter, Näswall, & Sverke, 2010; Ünal-Karagüven, 2009). Interestingly, rapid growth may also engender stress reactions in the family domain, since employees need to work additional hours (Joplin et al., 2003). Lastly, the effects of family-supportive supervisory behaviors on turnover intentions and performance are stronger as unemployment rises (Las Heras, Trefalt, & Escribano, 2015).

At the organizational level, many employers view work-family support as a luxury they can no longer provide during an economic recession (Lu & Antoniou, 2013). A large-scale study confirmed that employers provided less flexible work arrangements in 2009 than in 2006 (Sweet, Besen, Pitt-Catsoupes, & McNamara, 2014), as illustrated by the telework ban at Yahoo! and Best Buy’s termination of the Results Only Work Environment (ROWE) initiative. In the same vein, there is evidence in the U.S. (Kinman & McDowall, 2009) and Taiwan (Lu & Antoniou, 2013) that work-life programs are not organizational priorities when unemployment rates are high. In fact, employees and unions have greater negotiation power in tight external labor
markets (Poelmans & Sahibzada, 2004), especially in public sector and large organizations (Berg et al., 2013).

**Social Structures**

Lastly, social structures – in particular, (1) achieved gender equality, (2) family structures, and (3) social stratification systems (i.e., the way opportunities are distributed across social classes) – impact the work-life interface at the individual and organizational levels.

**Achieved gender equality.** In contrast with gender role attitudes, which reflect beliefs about the roles of men and women, achieved gender equality captures the actual norms and rules pertaining to the ways in which men and women allocate paid and unpaid work – that is, the rules and norms governing whether they are able to choose their degree of involvement in work and family roles (Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006). A gap may lie between gender role attitudes and achieved gender equality. For instance, Crompton and Lyonette (2006) computed an index of domestic division of labor based on the 2002 ISSP survey and concluded that, despite fairly liberal gender role attitudes in France, the division of labor in households remains largely unequal; thus, gendered societal effects explain that support for childcare does not preclude high levels of WFC in France as it does in Finland and Norway. Likewise, the high levels of WFC expressed by Swedish women might stem from the fact that Sweden has not been as successful in ensuring a fair division of household work as in raising the rates of female employment (Cousins & Tang, 2004; Strandh & Nordenmark, 2006). Thus, WFC appears to be more prevalent for women in countries where achieved gender equality is low (Korabik, Lero, Bardoel, & Hammer, 2014; Lyness & Judiesch, 2014; Ruppaner & Huffman, 2013), despite family policies supporting child rearing (Steiber, 2009; Van der Lippe et al., 2003). In the political sciences literature, this tension has been conceptualized as *work/care institutions*.
lagging behind *work/care culture*, such that gender equality is not achieved in terms of actual *behaviors and preferences* (Pocock, 2005).

The impact of achieved gender equality on the work-life interface may differ for men and women. Gender empowerment (i.e., the percentage of parliamentary seats held by women, the rate of female-to-male employment and the ratio of female-to-male earned income) increases men’s vulnerability to nonwork-to-work conflict and decreases the gap between men’s and women’s work-to-nonwork conflict (Ruppaner & Huffman, 2013). However, the gap between men’s and women’s WFE is greater in countries with a higher Gender Inequality Index, which is the opposite effect than that of GLOBE’s GE practices as reviewed above (Beham et al., 2014).

At the organizational level, Lyness and Brumit Kropf (2005) found that the gender equality culture in the country in which multinationals’ headquarters were located was positively associated with the adoption of formal flexible work policies in the host country, while the host country’s national gender equality was positively associated with the local organization’s work-family culture (informal practices and norms). This may reflect multinationals’ propensity to implement formal HR policies globally, while informal practices are influenced by managers’ national culture. On another note, national gender equality is positively associated with employees’ use of flexible work arrangements (Kassinis & Stavrou, 2013).

**Family structures.** The main impacts of family structures are twofold. First, the size and composition of typical families as well as kinship and paid help impact fertility rates, which leads to greater or lesser childcare responsibilities (Pocock, 2005; Turner, 1997). Second, whether families tend to be nuclear or extended influences family demands and the social support available to meet them (Lu, Gilmour, Kao, & Huang, 2006; Somech et al., 2013).
Empirical research on these impacts is scarce. Although domestic help was found to lower work interference with family for Hong-Kong Chinese employees (Luk & Shaffer, 2005), a study in 20 countries found that the more negative relationship between work demands and work interference with family in individualist (vs. collectivist) countries was not explained by the amount of domestic help (Spector et al., 2007).

On another note, specific country regulations such as the one-child policy in China have drastic consequences for families that are not fully understood: while the one-child policy as well as the great involvement of grandparents in the child’s education may reduce family demands (Yang, Chen, Choi, & Zou, 2000), this policy makes parenting a rare experience and therefore may heighten WFC (Lu, Siu, Spector, & Shi, 2009).

Social stratification. Social stratification systems (Olsen, 1991) – that is, the distribution of opportunities within societies – are also relevant to the work-life interface (Sweet, Pitt-Catsouphes, Besen, & Golden, 2014). Therefore, gender, race, social class, citizenship status and human capital may be important variables to consider in stratified countries. In the U.S., female (vs. male), non-white (vs. white), and less (vs. more) educated employees are less likely to have access to flexible schedules (Golden, 2008). In addition, low-skilled Latino migrants in the U.S. have less access to work-life support than the general population due to their illegal status and their struggles with English (Kossek, Meece, Barratt, & Prince, 2005). At the organizational level, firms with more highly skilled employees provide greater work-family support than firms with less skilled workforces, in a logic of talent attraction and retention that penalizes low-skilled employees (Seeleib-Kaiser & Fleckenstein, 2009).

DISCUSSION
This article aimed at providing a systematic review of conceptual and empirical work on the cultural and structural factors that impact the work-life interface, in a context where the knowledge on such work is scattered across several disciplines and where an abundance of theoretical frameworks hinders the design of comparative research projects.

To achieve this aim, we conducted an extensive review of theoretical rationales and empirical studies in cross-cultural management, psychology, sociology, industrial relations, economy and organizational studies journals. We proposed to distinguish between cultural and structural impacts on work-life social practices (Figure 1). Regarding culture, we provided a review of work-life research drawing on cultural dimensions, from the most researched dimensions, in particular individualism-collectivism and gender egalitarianism, to the least researched. We also provided guidance on the operationalization of these dimensions. Regarding structure, we explained how the main legal (e.g., public policies), economic (e.g., industrialization) and social (e.g., actual gender equality) factors that impact the work-life interface are operationalized, and reviewed related work-life research.

Our review is intended to serve as a synthesis and classification of cultural and structural factors that are often isolated in current research. Given its broad scope, it serves as an orientation platform and does not delve into the rich nuances of each conceptual work, nor does it address methodological challenges. However, it does contribute a precise and organized review of theoretical and empirical work and ways to embed country-level factors into research designs.

Research Agenda for Cross-National Work-Life Research

We note a striking disconnection between work that provides cross-national work-life theoretical rationales on the one hand and empirical studies on the other hand. Much of the propositions that have been put forth have not been tested, while empirical studies often
investigate relationships using piecemeal theories, particularly at the organizational level. This disconnection results in important gaps.

First, work-life scholars have only begun to tap into the rich potential of cross-cultural frameworks. Empirical studies have accumulated on the I-C dimension, reflecting the broader OB field’s interest in this dimension (Gelfand et al., 2007). Yet, only 11 cultural dimensions have been examined empirically, out of a greater number of dimensions that represent an important untapped potential. Therefore, we call for an investigation of the other dimensions.

Powell et al. (2009) called attention to power distance, a dimension identified both by Hofstede and GLOBE but which is still under-researched and which we believe may be particularly explanatory regarding the organizational provision of flexible work arrangements, supervisors’ support of these arrangements and employees’ access to them. Powell et al. (2009) also pointed out the explanatory potential of Schwartz (1992, 2006)’s and of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993)’s work. Powell et al. (2009) argued that mastery vs. harmony, that is the extent to which individuals in a society want to control their environment vs. the extent to which people try to avoid change and self-assertion because they want to fit harmoniously into nature and society (Schwartz, 1992), may have important predictive power for the work-life interface. They also identified universalism (people are treated on the basis of universal criteria) vs. particularism (people are treated on the basis of who they are; Trompenaars &Hampden-Turner, 1993) as an important dimension. We concur with Powell and colleagues’ assessment and would like to suggest that there are more dimensions that need to be explored in the work-life field. For instance, we believe that Triandis’ work is also underused in work-life research. We call attention, in particular, to cultural complexity: Triandis distinguishes between complex societies, where several subcultures coexist such that individuals have to make a number of career and
lifestyles choices, and *simple societies*, where behaviors are more strongly guided by dominant norms (Triandis, 1993). We believe that cultural complexity has potential to explain individuals’ work-life decisions and resulting outcomes, such as work-life conflict and work-life balance, since more complexity entails more choices and possibly more stress.

Second, we urge scholars to go beyond the study of public policies and to consider other facets of structural context. We call for research on the industrial relations and on the tax systems, as well as on family structures and social stratification, which are largely under-examined in work-life research and yet have a great potential to predict and explain individual experiences of the work-life interface and organizational support for life outside of work.

Third, we call for more systemic research. Regarding culture, we urge scholars to consider cultural configurations – that is the interaction of several cultural dimensions as experienced by individuals and employers in practice (Tsui et al., 2007) – rather than cultural dimensions independently from one another. The same imperative to combine several factors holds for structural impacts. Furthermore, we call for research integrating both culture and structure to enable the polycontextualization (Von Glinow et al., 2014) of work-life research. Such integration is a frontier in comparative work-life research, much as in cross-cultural OB (Gelfand et al., 2007). The most consistent attempt to examine tensions and interactions between culture and structure pertains to work-care regimes and is primarily qualitative (Haas, 2005; Pfau-Effinger, 1998; Pocock, 2005; Tomlinson, 2008). A handful of studies include selected cultural dimensions and structural factors (e.g., Poelmans and Sahibzada, 2004), yet none except the on-going 3535 project has offered an integrative framework (see Korabik, Lero, & Ayman, 2003). The major roadblocks to effective polycontextualization of country-level context are the lack of theoretical clarity (which we hope this review will help to alleviate) and the great number
of variables that need to be included in the analysis, requiring either careful systemic qualitative analyses or rich datasets across many countries, as well as multilevel analyses.

Fourth, we encourage scholars to consider several layers of context, which may include broader supra-national levels (e.g., European Community, Southeast Asia) and finer levels accounting for within-country heterogeneity (Ollier-Malaterre, Valcour et al., 2013).

Fifth, we call for research going beyond WFC, WFE and WLB and examining cultural and structural impacts on important other work-life constructs such as boundary management between work and life roles (Ashforth et al., 2000) for which much has been theorized but little tested, and work and family roles investment/centrality (Kossek, Ruderman, Braddy, & Hannum, 2012).

CONCLUSION

We conclude this review by calling for more systematic theory work and more comprehensively designed work-life research. Achieving this will require interdisciplinary acumen and solid cross-national collaborations. It is our hope that this review will be effective in opening new avenues both for research focused on specific cultural and structural factors and for integrative interdisciplinary projects.
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# Table 1

Empirical Studies on the Impact of Cultural Dimensions on Work-life Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimensions</th>
<th>Work-life variables</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>Haar et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work-family programs</td>
<td>China et al. (2015), Stock et al. (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible employment</td>
<td>Masuda et al. (2012), Raghuram et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional (I-C)</td>
<td>Work-family enrichment</td>
<td>Beham et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work-family enrichment</td>
<td>Beham et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childcare hours</td>
<td>Kossek et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>Lyness &amp; Judiesh (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work investment and family investment</td>
<td>Snir and Harpaz (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible employment</td>
<td>Raghuram et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible employment</td>
<td>Raghuram et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horizontal &amp; vertical (I-C)</td>
<td>Work-family conflict</td>
<td>Billing et al. (2013), Mortazavi et al. (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>Lucia-Casademunt et al. (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible employment</td>
<td>Peters and den Dulk (2003), Raghuram et al. (2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work-family enrichment</td>
<td>Beham et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survival vs. self-expression</td>
<td>Work investment and family investment</td>
<td>Snir and Harpaz (2009)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2

Availability of Measures and Scores for Cross-Cultural Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hofstede</th>
<th>Triandis</th>
<th>GLOBE</th>
<th>Inglehart</th>
<th>Hampden-Turner &amp; Trompenaars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measure:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Culture Compass</strong></td>
<td><strong>HI-HC/VI-VC:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Measures:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Measure:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country scores:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Culture Compass</strong></td>
<td><strong>Attitudinal measure (INDCOL)</strong></td>
<td>available on GLOBE website</td>
<td><strong>Intercultural Awareness Profiler</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural complexity:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Culture Compass</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cultural complexity:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Country scores:</strong> available on GLOBE website and</td>
<td><strong>Country scores:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both at <a href="http://geert-hofstede.com/cultural-survey.html">http://geert-hofstede.com/cultural-survey.html</a> (upon request)</td>
<td>GNP, size of settlements, number of roles available for individuals and size of communities are proxies. See also Murdock and Provost (1973) for country scores</td>
<td>(House et al., 2004)</td>
<td><strong>Culture Compass Online</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tight and loose:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Culture Compass</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tight and loose:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Both at <a href="http://www2.thtconsulting.com/tools/#webtoolsindividualsecrets">http://www2.thtconsulting.com/tools/#webtoolsindividualsecrets</a> (upon request)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both at <a href="http://geert-hofstede.com/cultural-survey.html">http://geert-hofstede.com/cultural-survey.html</a> (upon request)</td>
<td>Measure as well as country scores available in Gelfand et al. (2011)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other cultural syndromes:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Other cultural syndromes:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No existing scale to our knowledge</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3

Indicators That Can be Used to Operationalize Country-level Structural Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEGAL STRUCTURES</th>
<th>Databases</th>
<th>Country scope</th>
<th>Years available</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Public policies and provisions</strong></td>
<td>Establishment Survey on Working time and Work-Life Balance (ESWT) and Working Time Developments</td>
<td>21 countries: former EU15 + Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Slovenia</td>
<td>Since 1997 depending on the indicator</td>
<td><a href="http://www.europfound.europe.eu/areas/worklifebalance/ewst.htm">http://www.europfound.europe.eu/areas/worklifebalance/ewst.htm</a> and <a href="http://www.europfound.europe.eu/eiro/comparative_index.htm">http://www.europfound.europe.eu/eiro/comparative_index.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OECD Social Expenditure Database (SOCX)</td>
<td>40 countries (OECD + Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, and South Africa)</td>
<td>Various data points starting 1970</td>
<td><a href="http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/expenditure.htm">http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/expenditure.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World Economic Forum, Global Competitiveness Index</td>
<td>142 countries</td>
<td>Since 2005</td>
<td><a href="http://www.weforum.org/gcr">http://www.weforum.org/gcr</a> Request databases from <a href="mailto:gcp@weforum.org">gcp@weforum.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Tax system</strong></td>
<td>PWC and World Bank</td>
<td>189 countries</td>
<td>Since 2000</td>
<td>PriceWaterhouseCoopers &amp; WorldBank/IFC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3
Indicators That Can be Used to Operationalize Country-level Structural Factors (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ECONOMIC STRUCTURES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Databases</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Source</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Actual gender equality</strong></td>
<td>UNDP Human Development Reports</td>
<td>138 countries</td>
<td>Since 2010</td>
<td>For a comparison of the five gender indices, see Van Staveren (2011) <a href="http://www.genderindex.org">www.genderindex.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Institut. and Gender Index</td>
<td>World Economic Forum</td>
<td>134 countries</td>
<td>Since 2006</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eiu.com">www.eiu.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Gender Gap Index</td>
<td>Economic Intelligence Unit</td>
<td>184 countries</td>
<td>Since 2010</td>
<td><a href="http://www.issl.nl">www.issl.nl</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Economic Opportunities Index</td>
<td>Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam</td>
<td>184 countries</td>
<td>Since 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality Index</td>
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</tbody>
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2. **Family structures**
   - Family size and composition, fertility, marriage and divorce rates, family violence and living conditions of children
   - OECD | 40 countries (the OECD and Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, and South Africa) | Since 1970 | [http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm](http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm) |

3. **Social stratification**
Figure 1

Cultural and Structural Impacts on the Work-Life Interface for Individuals and Organizations

**CULTURE**

*Definition:* Beliefs, values and norms about what is good, right, and desirable in life that are shared by individuals with a common historical experience.

*Examples of cultural beliefs relevant to the work-life interface:*
- Gender roles ideology
- Relationships between individuals and groups
- Emphasis on material success vs. quality of life
- Time orientation

**STRUCTURE**

*Definition:* Legal, economic and social structures producing rules that organize and constrain human interactions.

*Examples of structures relevant to the work-life interface:*
- Legal structures e.g., Labor laws regulating working times and leaves
- Economic structures e.g., Industrialization
- Social structures e.g., Family structures

**SOCIAL PRACTICES**

- Individual level: Work-family and work-life conflict, work-life enrichment, work-life balance, work investment/centrality, boundary management behaviors
- Organizational level: Policies and programmes (e.g., workplace flexibility, leaves), organizational work-life culture, supervisor and coworker support