

“The Right to Disconnect”:
Work and Non-Work Conflicts of Portuguese-Based Employees

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Abstract

Employees in Portugal have long had issues regarding conflicts and tensions between their work and personal spheres. Long working hours and work-related matters interfering with employees' personal time have become normalized, increasing national reports of work/non-work conflicts. The precarious working and living conditions in Portugal make it especially difficult to reduce or mitigate conflicts and tensions between employees' professional and personal domains. The current research aims to uncover which work-related factors could play a role in accentuating or diminishing work/non-work conflicts in order to establish how these factors may be adapted to promote a healthier working culture and environment which reduces work/non-work conflicts. The motives examined were centralization and ethical leadership. Job position and work arrangement were also introduced in the study as possible moderators between the examined motives and work/non-work conflicts. The chosen motives aim to represent a spectrum of different sources that could promote or impede autonomy which in turn might have mitigated or exacerbated conflicts between employees' professional and personal spheres. As a result, the current investigation aims to answer the question: To what extent do organizational centralization and ethical leadership relate to work/non-work conflicts of Portuguese-based employees? Data gathering processes were done through an online survey that relied on the answers of 162 Portuguese-based employees. Findings revealed that centralization is a positive predictor of work/non-work conflicts, revealing that the higher the level of centralization of an organization, the more conflicts emerge between employees' work and personal domains. No effect between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts was found. However, job position was found to moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts - compared to operation-level employees, middle-level managers experienced higher levels of work/non-work conflicts when exposed to ethical leadership. Results revealed no effect for the remaining moderation analyses. This research both challenges and substantiates previous literature on work/life balance theory, organizational theory, and leadership theory. While recognizing the complex interplay between motives such as centralization, ethical leadership, job

position, and work arrangement in regard to work/non-work, this study helps deepen the understanding of both work/non-work conflicts within the academic debate and work/non-work experiences in Portugal. It concludes that adopting a multi-level perspective that considers both individual and organizational contextual factors is key when analyzing work/non-work conflicts as these are extremely multifaceted.

KEYWORDS: *Ethical Leadership; Organizational Centralization; Portugal; Work/Non-Work Conflicts*

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1. Introduction

In January 2022, Portugal put into practice Law 83/2021, of 6 December 2021, called ‘duty to abstain from contact’, popularly known as ‘the right to disconnect’. This law was outlined in the Portuguese Labor Code and amended the previous Teleworking Framework, now forbidding employers from contacting employees outside of their regular working hours. This change in law was mainly triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic but also influenced by exterior factors such as the growing availability of flexible work arrangements which contributed to the increasing employee self-regulation and government regulation of work/non-work boundaries (Rothbard et al., 2005).

According to the INE (2021), Portugal scores an average of 40 working hours a week in all country’s regions except in the islands - Açores and Madeira - where the average weekly working hours round the 38 hours. Compared to the European average weekly working hours, Portugal registers values well above it (Cantante, 2018). Adding the long working hours to the unstable working and living conditions in Portugal helps paint a picture of the dimension of work/non-work conflicts in Portugal.

Work/non-work conflicts refer to conflicts and tensions between work and non-work spheres when demands and expectations from one domain, such as work, interfere with fulfilling one or more responsibilities, activities, or objectives in another realm, such as personal life. Alike this example, this study also takes into account a work-family directionality where work-related matters interfere with personal/family time (Kossek et al., 2012). Conflicts between these two domains can lead to negative individual-level outcomes such as decreased well-being, satisfaction, and performance that may ultimately influence organizational conduct and performance (Kossek et al., 2006). This study will assess whether employees experience conflict between work and non-work domains such as family, leisure, and personal interests (Kossek et al., 2012).

In Portugal, about 56.80% of employees stated they had been contacted by their employers outside of their working schedule (INE, 2019). Despite this, little research has been conducted regarding work/non-work conflicts in Portugal, with most of the studies focusing on comparative research between countries (Carvalho et al., 2022; Lyonette et al., 2007; Sinval et al., 2019) or generations (Gomes, 2016) or studies focusing on individual industries (Carvalho, 2017; Matos, 2019; Vicente & Pinto, 2022). Moreover, very few academic papers investigate

what factors might impact different levels of conflict between work and non-work domains, with most research focusing on how such conflicts negatively impact employee-wellbeing and job satisfaction (Haar et al., 2014, Reinke & Gerlach, 2021). Thus, the current study aims to fill this gap by investigating potential causes behind conflicts and tensions between the professional and personal lives of employees in Portugal through the usage of a quantitative research design by means of a survey. Two main potential causes were chosen for analysis, those being centralization and ethical leadership. These variables aim to represent a spectrum of different sources that can promote or impede autonomy within the workplace which in turn may, mitigate or exacerbate conflicts between employees' professional and personal domains.

Organizational structures, meaning the way in which legitimate power - authority - is hierarchically ordered within an organization (Mansfield, 1973), can be defined within many dimensions. Centralization is one such dimension that specifically aims to measure how much authority is exerted over the employees of an organization (Allan et al., 2007). It refers to how much decision-making authority lies at the top of an organization. In other words, the more decision-making power is concentrated at the top, the more centralized an organization is. Ethical leadership, on the other hand, refers to leaders who serve as role models, and advocate ethical conduct, fairness, social responsibility, and accountability throughout an organization (Brown et al., 2005; Den Hartog, 2015). Throughout the years the term has been defined and redefined by numerous authors (Yukl, 2006). According to Gini (1998), for example, ethical leaders are those who use their social authority in their judgments, actions, and influence over others. They behave in the best interests of their followers and do not damage them by respecting all parties' rights. Such leaders foster an environment conducive to employee well-being and work-life balance.

Two further factors were introduced, namely job position and work arrangement. Research generally supports a link between status and intra-organizational job autonomy (Campos-Castillo & Ewoodzie, 2014) as lower-ranking employees tend to be more dependent on their supervisors and have therefore less autonomy compared to higher-ranking employees. Similarly, although working outside the workplace offers greater autonomy, remote workers are still under the constant supervision and dependence of their supervisors (Duraj, 2021). Nonetheless, employees with flexible working arrangements have more control of their work schedule and allocation of time across tasks and activities. As a result, the current research also aims to investigate whether different job positions or work arrangements - seeing as these

different positions or arrangements carry to some degree implicit increased (or decreased) autonomy and flexibility that may play a role in mitigating or exacerbating work/non-work conflicts - moderate the relationship between centralization or ethical leadership, the independent variables, and work/non-work conflicts.

Conflicts between employees' work and personal spheres are greatly dependent on factors like occupation, industry, socio-economic status, and personal circumstances. Nevertheless, these conflicts might become exacerbated in Portugal due to not only its socio-economic status and precarious living and working conditions but also due to the traditional and conservative ways of conducting business in Portugal. In 2022, Portugal ranked third in the highest ratio of government debt to GDP with 120.10% (over 272 million euros) recorded debt (Eurostat, 2022). The dichotomy between the rising housing, utility, healthcare, and other essential expenses and the stagnating wages within the country, strain employees' financial and mental well-being. The at-risk-of-poverty rate in the country, meaning the proportion of the population whose equivalent income is below the poverty line defined as 60.00% of the median income per equivalent adult, was equivalent to 43.30% before any social subsidies in 2022. Furthermore, even within the workplace, employees have a hard time getting by. The lack of job autonomy within the workplace is a very real issue in Portugal, with only about a third of employees indicating they believe to have total or substantial autonomy in how they execute their job (INE, 2019). Another way in which Portugal's working culture shows to be resistant to modernism is the fact that hybrid or remote models of work were only made available to employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. This goes to show that only due to necessity and through government policy were flexible work arrangements made available. These precarious working and living conditions that entail fear of job loss and struggle to get by as well as the lack of control and voice within the workplace may exacerbate work/non-work conflicts as individuals face workplace pressures and struggle to protect their livelihoods in uncertain economic environments at the cost of well-being and family life.

Both centralization and ethical leadership may influence work/non-work conflicts as both power dynamics over employees while giving them different levels of decision-making authority, power, and voice. Thus, the present research aims to answer the following research question:

To what extent do organizational centralization and ethical leadership relate to

work/non-work conflicts of Portuguese-based employees?

The current research contributes to the understanding of work/non-work conflict in Portugal by offering insight into potential causes, such as ethical leadership and organizational centralization. This study's results may help employers and policymakers better understand the challenges individuals in Portugal face in balancing their work responsibilities with their personal lives. By examining the relationships between centralization and ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts, the research can contribute to identifying strategies and practices that promote a healthier work-life integration for employees in the future. Furthermore, this investigation may shed light on how different organizational structures and leadership styles impact employees' ability to manage work/non-work conflicts. This information can be valuable for organizations in Portugal that may want to redesign their policies, practices, and leadership approaches in a way that enhances employee well-being, satisfaction, engagement, and productivity.

Adding to the potential practical materializations of this research, the current study also contributes to academia in that it furthers work/life balance theories - specifically inter-role conflict theory and border theory - which explore the relationship between work and personal spheres and the pursuit of balance between them (Bello & Tanko, 2020). In other words, it focuses on understanding how individuals can effectively manage the demands and responsibilities of both their work and personal lives in order to achieve well-being and satisfaction in both areas. Inter-role conflict theory - also called incompatibility or opposition theory - deals with challenges, or conflicts as the name indicates, in meeting the requirements of one particular domain, such as family or non-work domains, due to dutifulness or submissiveness to the requirements of another domain, such as work (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Similarly, border theory, which has been recognized as one of the two theories that other theories within work/life balance studies are built on (Kumer & Janakiram, 2017), presupposes that work and personal are separate domains from which people constantly switch. Because individuals jump from one domain to the other, it can lead to the convergence of both spheres and ultimately lead to conflicts between both domains (Bellavia & Frone, 2005). By examining which work-related factors may accentuate or decrease work/non-work conflicts this study contributes to the theories mentioned above. Lastly, because the investigation at hand focuses on Portuguese-based

employees, it offers insights specific to the Portuguese context that help expand the understanding of work/non-work dynamics in different cultural contexts, while simultaneously filling the gap in Portuguese academia which investigates work/non-work conflicts - a relevant and ongoing issue in Portugal.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, literature on the most crucial theories and concepts will be discussed and reviewed. As the current study examines how various aspects of an employee's working environment and arrangement relate to potential conflicts between their personal and professional domains, it is important to define key concepts surrounding the subject. The following concepts will be defined: (2.1) work/non-work conflicts, (2.3.1) organizational centralization, and (2.3.2) ethical leadership. Then, (2.2) implications surrounding work/non-work conflicts will be discussed, namely the effects of work/non-work conflicts on individual and organization-wide levels. Lastly, the moderating effect of different job positions as well as (2.3.3) different working arrangements such as remote or hybrid forms of work will be reviewed. Throughout this chapter relevant context to Portuguese society will be given and, while embedded in the previous research, this study's hypotheses will be drawn out.

2.1 Work/Non-Work Conflicts and the Portuguese Context

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) were among the first to define work/non-work conflicts as a form of interrole conflict that occurs when individuals have to balance their work and non-work roles. According to the authors, conflicts between work and non-work spheres occur when resources required by one role (e.g., work) - such as time, energy, and psychological effort - interfere with the resources necessary to fulfill the demands and expectations of another role such as family, community, or self-care. The negative outcomes of such tensions between the two spheres can impact individuals, their relationships, and their organizations. Further information on the causes and consequences of work/non-work conflicts will be discussed in the following sub-chapter.

Several studies have since investigated the topic of work/non-work conflicts with definitions slightly varying according to each author. According to Netemeyer et al. (1996), work and non-work conflicts take the name of work-family conflicts and are defined as a form of interrole conflict where the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. Throughout their study, the authors differentiate work-family conflicts (WFC) from family-work conflicts (FWC), distinguishing the directionality of which sphere interferes with the other.

For the purposes of this study, a more inclusive definition of work and non-work conflicts

will be taken as set out by Kossek et al. (2006). According to the authors, conflicts between work and non-work domains arise when demands and expectations from one domain, such as work, interfere with fulfilling one or more responsibilities, activities, or objectives in another realm, such as personal life - leading to negative individual-level outcomes such as decreased well-being, satisfaction, and performance that may ultimately influence organizational conduct and performance. This study takes into account a work-family directionality where work-related matters interfere with personal/family time (Kossek et al., 2012). This directionality is especially interesting as this issue with work interfering with non-work reached such heights that legal action had to be put in place at the end of 2021 through Law 83/2021. Moreover, this issue might have become exacerbated over the years due to Portugal's socio-economic status. Work/non-work conflicts vary greatly for individuals based on factors like occupation, industry, socio-economic status, and personal circumstance; nevertheless, there are some macro-factors across Portuguese society which make this directionality especially relevant.

Portugal has long been known for its long working hours culture (Cantante, 2018), standing with an average of almost 40 weekly working hours (INE, 2023) - about a 9.00% increase in comparison to the average weekly working hours within the European Union (Eurostat, 2023). Therefore, balancing work commitments with personal and family responsibilities may prove challenging, often leading to conflicts between working roles and non-work responsibilities (Yu, 2014). Furthermore, the precarious working and living conditions within the country may also accentuate work/non-work conflicts in that they may increase employee stress levels due to fear of job loss and forced overtime work. Due to limited job security in an increasingly competitive labor market, individuals may feel anxiety and fear about replacing or facing unemployment, increasing workplace pressures significantly (Lovati, 1976). This may lead to an imbalance between work and non-work domains that exacerbate conflicts between the two spheres more strongly as individuals struggle to protect their livelihoods in uncertain economic environments at the cost of well-being and family life.

Alongside Portugal's precarious working conditions, another factor that may be contributing to intensified work/non-work conflicts is the rising costs of living coupled with stagnating wages. Rising housing, utility, healthcare, and other essential expenses strain employees' financial well-being; yet wages often don't keep pace with such increased costs, leading to real income decline for many individuals. A recent study by HelloSafe (2023)

stated that 66.00% of the minimum wage in Portugal is committed to a person's monthly expenses, excluding housing rent. This is based on an average of 14 salaries per year. When divided, the equivalent is €886.10 per month. The problem is that this value is not the monthly amount received. Those who can organize and divide this income throughout the year can guarantee this monthly income, otherwise, the amount received is €760. In other words, there is even less left over for rent and living expenses, about €168. When taking into account the average salary in Portugal - about €1.082,8 in 2021 (Pordata, 2023) - this scenario looks less bleak. However, it is important to emphasize that 56.00% of employees in Portugal earn less than €1000, this percentage increases to 65.00% for young professionals under 30 years old (Lusa, 2023). As financial pressures become greater and employees struggle to meet expenses and keep up with rising living costs, employees may feel forced to work longer hours or take on extra jobs in order to alleviate stress and anxiety levels and find balance in both work and non-work responsibilities. To combat such difficulties and maintain their standard of living, employees may become compulsively hard-working - further aggravating work/non-work conflicts.

2.2 Understanding Work/Non-Work Conflicts

Although work/non-work conflicts may be treated as common and even normalized within certain societies or work environments, it is important to highlight that conflicts between an employee's work and non-work domains can have serious implications both on an individual and organization-wide level. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize how these conflicts and tensions can penetrate other spheres as well as highlight the importance of healthy boundaries between employees' professional and personal life.

2.2.1 Sources of Work/Non-Work Conflicts

Work/non-work conflicts can arise from a number of factors related to the individual, to one's particular work context and situation, and even to countrywide, macro-level factors.

Previous studies have demonstrated the relationship between heavy job demands, including workload and insecurity, and work/non-work conflicts (Ashford et al., 1989; Demerouti et al., 2009; Powell & Greenhaus, 2006). Ashford et al's. (1989) study suggests an even stronger correlation that found that emotional exhaustion mediated the relationship between job insecurity and work/non-work conflict; individuals experiencing job insecurity were more likely to be

emotionally depleted, leading them into greater work/non-work conflicts. Adding to the precarious working and living conditions mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, job insecurity in Portugal also takes form in factors such as the at-risk-of-poverty rate and the current economic instability. Portugal's at-risk-of-poverty rate - the proportion of the population whose equivalent income is below the poverty line defined as 60.00% of the median income per equivalent adult - is equivalent to 43.30%. After social subsidies, this rate equals 16.40%. As for economic instability, and adding to the previously mentioned disparity between wages and the rising cost of living, factors such as the inflation rate, and public debt help paint the current economic situation in Portugal. In 2022, Portugal's total inflation rate was 7.80%, when just the previous year it was 1.30%, contributing to even higher living costs. Portugal also has the third highest ratio of government debt to GDP with 120.10% (over 272 million euros) recorded in 2022 (Eurostat, 2022).

This goes to show that not only is the current employment situation in Portugal difficult for individual citizens, but the current economic context of the country does not look hopeful and promising for the years to come. As such, job insecurity is a very real and important factor within the Portuguese context that can contribute to negative outcomes for employees and organizations alike. Reducing job insecurity could be an effective strategy for improving employee wellness and organizational effectiveness (Ashford et al., 1989), however, due to all the above-mentioned reasons seems like an improbable outcome.

Lastly, previous research has outlined the relationship between job autonomy and work/non-work conflicts. Studies conducted among salaried workers (Voydanoff, 2004) and teleworkers (Goldstein, 2003) suggest that greater levels of autonomy at work can reduce work/non-work conflict. Conflicts could be reduced because employees believe that they possess the necessary competence and capabilities for successful job performance (Saragih 2011). Prottas and Thompson (2006) discovered that low job autonomy significantly contributed to job stress, turnover intention, and conflicts between work and family life. Job autonomy played a substantial role in regard to the chosen variables for the current research not only because it is a job-related issue - as opposed to more macro factors such as the socio-economic characteristics of Portugal - but also due to the fact that the amount of job autonomy one has is highly malleable from the structural and inter-personal characteristics of one's work situation and context (Naqvi et al., 2013; Owoyemi & Ekwoaba, 2014). Job autonomy also plays into factors such as 'decision-

making autonomy’, ‘task autonomy’, and ‘time autonomy’ that can help manage or undermine work/non-work conflicts. The aspect of job autonomy will be elaborated upon in the next sub-chapter, ‘*Bridging the Gap Between Autonomy and Work/Non-Work Conflicts*’.

2.2.2 Consequences of Work/Non-Work Conflicts

Conflicts between work and non-work domains negatively affect employee well-being and overall quality of life (Powell & Greenhaus, 2006; Reinke & Gerlach, 2021), job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Ashford et al. 1989).

Work/non-work conflicts have also been linked to a range of negative mental health outcomes leading to serious ramifications on mental well-being. Protracted struggles between work and life management often lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, unhappiness, and decreased overall life satisfaction (Haar et al., 2014). Furthermore, work/non-work conflicts often create significant stress as individuals try to balance both professional and family responsibilities at once. Constant demands and pressures from both domains create chronic stress, leading to feelings of anxiety, irritability, and overwhelmedness. If these feelings are prolonged, they may even contribute to burnout - exhaustion caused by emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion; when people must regularly deal with conflicting demands without finding balance, it depletes energy and motivation leading them down a path that ultimately leaves them exhausted with feelings of cynicism, detachment and reduced job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2000; Frone et al., 1992). More than half of employees in Portugal say they have already suffered or are close to suffering burnout, due to the state of high emotional tension and stress originating from stressful working conditions (STADA, 2022). Moreover, work/non-work conflicts are also a promoter of workaholism (Clark et al., 2016) - an unhealthy behavioral pattern characterized by excessive and compulsive work behavior with no ability to stop. Tensions and conflicts between employees’ work and personal spheres can impede individuals’ abilities to detach themselves from work and engage in adequate recovery activities outside the office. Constant demands and conflicts at work make it challenging to fully disengage from it all and relax and recharge effectively, further reinforcing workaholism's cycle.

2.2.3 Practicing Psychological Detachment

Authors investigating implications and outcomes surrounding work/non-work conflicts

have expressed the importance of psychological detachment which refers to the process by which individuals mentally disconnect from work during their leisure time or outside of work hours. This allows individuals to disengage from work-related stressors and demands, and to engage in activities that promote relaxation, recovery, and well-being (Ashford et al., 1989). According to Sonnentag and Fritz (2007), practicing psychological detachment during leisure time is related to lower levels of exhaustion and higher levels of job satisfaction. Other research has also suggested that it can help individuals manage work stress more effectively and maintain a healthier work-life balance, as well as prevent burnout, and promote recovery and well-being (Demerouti et al., 2009; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). It is therefore important to keep work life at work and enjoy personal time accordingly.

2.3 Bridging the Gap Between Autonomy and Work/Non-Work Conflicts

According to Hackman and Oldham (1976), job autonomy is defined by the degree to which an occupation provides its members with freedom and independence to organize, plan, and direct procedures themselves.

Job autonomy (or the lack thereof) is particularly important within the Portuguese context. 46.90% of the Portuguese-employed population claims to have some autonomy while 13.50% claim to have little to no autonomy within the workplace. Just over a third of the employed population (34.10%) claims to have total or substantial autonomy to decide the order and way in which they carry out their tasks or work. Furthermore, Portuguese employees seem to have little to no say in determining their work schedule. For 64.70% of the employed population, working hours are decided by the employer, customers, or legal provisions, and not by themselves. (INE, 2019), demonstrating very limited work schedule flexibility.

In 2019, 80.90% of employees worked exclusively in their companies' offices with remote opportunities only available to 2.50% of employees. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, flexible work opportunities have increased. Now 75.00% of companies in Portugal offer employees remote access to work-related information and services (INE, 2022, p. 1). It is important to highlight that this change, however, was made due to necessities and through government intervention and not by the will and choice of organizations. This points to the traditional, conservative, and almost unchanging ways of Portuguese work culture that strip employees from their power and autonomy.

Autonomy within the workplace is highly dependent on numerous factors - some structural and systemic, others dependent on the employees' situation and role. An organization's way of being has a significant impact on shaping employees' motivations (Thokozani, 2017), learning and development (Kissack & Callahan, 2010), creativity and innovation (Martins & Terblanche, 2003), and work-life balance efforts (Bond, 2004).

The values, beliefs, and vision the founders and leaders of an organization have set (Collins, 2001), the industry and market in which it is set (Barney, 1991), its commitment to corporate social responsibility (Carroll, 1991), and its organizational structure (Janićijević, 2013) are just some of the few elements which help shape an organization's way of being - which consequently generates different levels of job autonomy. As a result, there are many ways in which an employee can have autonomy within the workplace.

For the current investigation, four factors have been chosen for analysis. They aim to represent a spectrum of different sources that can promote or impede autonomy which in turn may mitigate or exacerbate conflicts between employees' professional and personal domains.

Firstly, the organizational structure of the participants' companies will be taken into consideration as the way in which an organization's hierarchy is designed highly affects the conduct of that same organization and its employees. 'Centralization' - which reflects a more hierarchical structure that can lead to a more formal and structured culture (Dedahanov et al., 2017) - was particularly chosen as a subject within this research as centralization has been proven to be negatively related to job autonomy (Katsikea et al., 2011). Centralization can therefore systemically limit the decision-making autonomy as well as the task autonomy of employees. As a result, employees within centralized organizations may face difficulties in making decisions related to their work or feel limited in regard to discretion and freedom when making decisions on how they perform their job duties. Consequently, this may affect the overall decision-making autonomy of employees in regard to their work/non-work conflicts. Therefore, the current research aims to analyze the direct relationship between centralization and work/non-work conflicts.

Secondly, leadership styles despite being less systemic and more dependent on the individual can still have a significant impact on employees. Leaders who prioritize employee well-being and work-life balance, for example, are more likely to mitigate these conflicts, while leaders who are less attentive to these issues may exacerbate them (Tromp & Blomme, 2014).

‘Ethical leadership’ which was chosen as a subject of analysis, corresponds to the former type of leadership style. As opposed to centralization, ethical leadership can offer employees a greater sense of job autonomy (Piccolo et al., 2010). When managed by ethical leaders, employees have an equal voice in decision-making and are open to hearing their ideas and concerns (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008) - an aspect referred to as 'power sharing'. Resick et al. (2006) highlighted an empowering aspect of ethical leadership by noting how shared power gives subordinates more control over their work and decreases dependence on leaders (Yukl, 2006). This means that under ethical leaders, employees have a greater sense of task and decision-making autonomy. Furthermore, ethical leaders recognize the importance of reasonable work expectations, realistic deadlines, and appropriate workloads. They prioritize fairness and equity in distributing work assignments and providing resources, which can help mitigate work/non-work conflicts and promote a healthier integration of work and personal life. The current study will therefore analyze the direct relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts.

Lastly, the relation between the two above-mentioned variables and work/non-work conflicts will also be analyzed while keeping in mind the potential moderating effect of job positions and work arrangements.

Despite the fact that the relationship between job position - that is the rank or level in which an employee is established within an organization - and job autonomy is not linear, meaning that the higher someone climbs the corporate ladder does not implicit a higher job autonomy; research generally supports a link between status and intra-organizational job autonomy (Campos-Castillo & Ewoodzie, 2014). This is due to the fact that lower-ranking employees are more dependent on their supervisors and have therefore less autonomy compared to higher-ranking employees. Consequently, this lack of autonomy and dependence on the supervisor may inhibit lower-ranking employees from expressing their work/non-work conflicts, ending up exacerbating them. The current study will therefore evaluate whether there is a moderating effect of job position. As finding a structured division of different job positions that fit across all organizations in Portugal, proved to be impossible, the current analysis will take into account two broad dimensions: ‘operational level employees’ - which represent lower-ranking employees within an organizational hierarchy - and ‘middle-management employees’.

Lastly, ‘work arrangements’ was also chosen as a moderator for the current research. According to Duraj (2021), although working outside the workplace offers greater autonomy,

remote workers are still under the constant supervision and dependence of their supervisors. Nonetheless, the time and decision-making autonomy of hybrid or remote workers is indisputable. Organizational policies and practices which support employees' work/life balance through flexible arrangements like remote or hybrid forms of work may reduce work/non-work conflicts (Allen et al., 2000; Kossek et al., 2001). Employees with flexible working arrangements have more control of their work schedule and allocation of time across tasks and activities. As a result, they may have greater freedom over when and for how long they complete certain tasks, making their life simpler while fulfilling both work obligations as well as personal obligations more effectively. Working remotely also alleviates or minimizes commute times and associated stressors. These extra hours can be utilized for personal activities, relaxation, or spending quality time with loved ones. This research will take into consideration two different work arrangements - namely 'hybrid workers' and 'exclusively office workers'.

2.3.1 Organizational Centralization

Organizational structures can be defined as ways in which legitimate power - authority - is hierarchically ordered (Mansfield, 1973). Centralization is one of five dimensions that help define an organization's structure and therefore distribution of power and authority. The five dimensions are specialization, standardization, formalization, centralization, and configuration (Pugh et al., 1968). According to the authors who proposed this framework for depicting organizational structures, centralization indicates the average hierarchical rank at which a variety of organizational choices are made. It does not, however, assess the rigor of the rules controlling the allocation of jurisdiction for distinct types of decision-making, as this lies within the 'formalization' dimension. Allan et al. (2007) propose a similar yet less rigorous definition. According to them, centralization aims to portray the bureaucratic structure while measuring how much authority is exerted over the employees of an organization. Most definitions of the concept of centralization follow a similar pattern to the ones previously mentioned. Jaworski and Kohli (1993) defined it as the "inverse of the amount of delegation of decision-making authority throughout an organization and the extent of participation by organizational members in decision-making".

Keeping all the above-mentioned definitions in mind, one can relate the level of centralization of a particular organization to the hierarchical level within said organization at

which decisions are made (Child, 1973).

Centralized organizations typically feature hierarchical structures with power concentrated among a few individuals at the top - it refers to both the participation in decision-making and the hierarchy or authority (Hage & Aiken, 1967). In other words, the more decision-making power is concentrated at the top, the more centralized an organization is. Centralization impacts various aspects of organizational functioning including decision-making processes, work policies, and employee autonomy (Hage & Aiken, 1967); it can have both positive and negative ramifications on organizational effectiveness as well as employee outcomes (Andrews et al., 2009).

On one hand, centralization may help coordinate and control organizational activities (Ouchi, 1980); yet on the other hand it could impede flexibility and responsiveness to changes in the environment (Niskanen, 1971). Centralized organizations often have rigid policies and procedures that limit employees' ability to manage their work and personal responsibilities effectively. This can lead to employees feeling overwhelmed and stressed, as they struggle to balance competing demands. In contrast, decentralized organizations distribute decision-making authority throughout the organization, giving employees greater autonomy and flexibility (Andrews et al., 2009).

On an individual level, centralization often limits the decision-making authority of lower-level employees and can erode autonomy to the point that individuals feel disempowered (Kakabadse, 1986; Katsikea et al., 2011) and may find it harder than expected to make choices that align with both work and non-work commitments, leading to work/nonwork conflicts. Centralized organizations may also impose more rigid work arrangements that do not accommodate employees' personal or non-work obligations, leading them to struggle to manage a healthy work/non-work balance, creating conflicts between these domains. Without effective flexibility in scheduling, remote work options and leave policies employees will find it harder than necessary to effectively balance both aspects of their lives resulting in discord between both domains (Radcliffe & Cassell, 2015).

According to the literature on organizational behavior, delegating decision-making power to lower-level employees promotes their perceptions of fairness (Greenberg & Baron, 2000; Tyler, 2000). This is due to the fact that employees who participate in decision-making processes believe they have more control over decisions and therefore regard the decision-making process

to be more fair (Thibaut & Walker, 1978). When employees have decision-making authority, they represent their interests more effectively, which strengthens employees' perceptions of fairness in the process and outcomes (Thibaut & Walker, 1978). As a result, perceived fairness is predicted to deteriorate in highly centralized businesses: previous studies have found that centralization is a negative predictor of organizational justice (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001; Schminke et al., 2000; Schminke et al., 2002).

Circling back to the current study, centralization undermines employee participation in decision-making processes and hinders opportunities for them to voice concerns or offer suggestions. So, employees that have little to no decision-making authority within centralized organizations may have no way of representing and voicing their needs or concerns regarding work/non-work balance, potentially leading to unaddressed conflicts that lead to dissatisfaction and disengagement from employment. Therefore it is hypothesized that:

H1: Organizational centralization is a positive predictor of work/non-work conflicts.

Consequently, job positions or levels within an organizational hierarchy may also be an influential factor that can shape how work/non-work conflicts play out. Centralized organizations have a clear chain of command, with decisions being made by top-level management and then cascading down to lower-level employees (Sting & Loch, 2016). As a result, centralization may not have an equally negative or positive impact on work/non-work conflicts across all positions within an organization. Different positions face unique challenges, levels of control, resources available to them, and policy influence which all affect how centralization influences work/non-work conflicts.

Higher-level positions usually come with increased workload, expanded duties, and greater expectations, however, higher-level positions also have a higher autonomy (Campos-Castillo & Ewoodzie, 2014) and may therefore have more control over their work/non-work conflicts. Adding to this, higher-level positions often have greater access to resources, including administrative support, technology solutions, and training opportunities (White et al., 2007) that may reduce work/non-work conflicts by giving better tools and assistance for managing workload demands. Employees in lower-level positions may face limited access to resources and more difficulty in balancing work with non-work obligations; potentially leading to greater work/non-

work conflicts. It is therefore predicted that:

H2: The relationship between organizational centralization and work/non-work conflicts is moderated by job position. The relationship is expected to be stronger for operation-level employees than for middle-level management employees.

2.3.2 Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership refers to the practice of leading in accordance with moral and ethical principles and that promotes ethical behavior among employees. Ethical behavior is described as an action that is morally acknowledged as "good" and "right", as opposed to "bad" or "wrong" (Sims, 1992). Within an organizational environment, it has most frequently been articulated in terms of senior executives' (CEOs') ethical standards and the culture to which they largely contribute (DeGeorge, 1986). Ethical leaders serve as role models, encouraging ethical conduct, fairness, and accountability throughout an organization (Den Hartog, 2015). Ethical leadership appears to be a nebulous concept that encompasses a wide range of characteristics (Yukl, 2006). It can largely be identified by traits such as honesty, transparency, trustworthiness, and the promotion of ethical decision-making processes (Brown et al., 2005). According to Gini (1998), ethical leaders are those who use their social authority in their judgments, actions and influence over others. They behave in the best interests of their followers and do not damage them by respecting all parties' rights.

Research demonstrates positive correlations between ethical leadership and several desirable results at both individual and organizational levels. At an organizational level, ethical leadership has been associated with increased levels of employee engagement, customer satisfaction, financial performance (Mayer et al., 2012) as well as the reputational enhancement of an organization (Brown & Mitchell 2010).

At an individual level, ethical leadership has been associated with increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall well-being (Brown et al., 2005; Mayer et al., 2012). Ethical leaders support self-care, stress reduction, and work/life balance initiatives as a way of creating a healthier work environment where employees are better equipped to balance both professional and non-professional demands more easily. They also recognize and value employees' non-work commitments such as family obligations, personal pursuits, and community

participation (Zhang & Tu, 2018). By acknowledging this aspect of employee lives they foster an inclusive work-life integration environment that may decrease conflicts between employees' work and non-work domains. While recognizing that individuals may have diverse responsibilities outside the work context, it is not uncommon for ethical leaders to implement measures such as flexible schedules, remote working options, or family-friendly policies in order to help balance the professional and personal lives of employees. Overall, ethical leaders usually advocate the establishment of clear boundaries between work and non-work domains. They encourage employees to develop personal work-life integration plans and ensure that work-related demands do not interfere unduly with personal/family time (Resick et al., 2011).

Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H3: Ethical leadership is a negative predictor of work/non-work conflicts.

Adding to this, this study will also analyze the relationship between ethical leadership and different job positionings in order to investigate whether they moderate work/non-work conflicts.

Lower-level employees often possess less power and influence in an organization than higher-level ones (Hrebiniak, 1974), so ethical leadership that prioritizes work/non-work balance and supports personal lives can have a more dramatic effect on lower-level employees compared to high-management positions. Lower-level employees often lack autonomy in decision-making (Sting & Loch, 2016) and may therefore face stricter job requirements or protocols, making ethical leadership that promotes work/non-work balance more powerful in helping these employees manage both work and personal obligations more easily. Empowering lower-level employees through ethical leadership helps decrease conflicts caused by limited autonomy or rigid work structures by giving the flexibility that empowers lower-level staff more efficiently (Pucic, 2015). Ethical leaders who proactively communicate and engage with employees at all levels can have a dramatic effect on lower-level employees, since these lower-level employees may only interact with higher-level leaders indirectly. Therefore, by providing channels of open communication and engagement employees have the ability to address work/non-work conflicts more quickly while creating an atmosphere conducive to teamwork and support within an office environment. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H4: The relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts is moderated by job position. The relationship is expected to be stronger for operation-level employees than for middle-level management employees.

2.3.3 Working Arrangement

Different working arrangements have emerged in response to evolving work environments and employee needs. Working arrangements refer to variations in how and where work is completed. The most commonly utilized working arrangements include exclusively office work - where employees primarily perform their work in traditional office settings -, hybrid work (combining remote with on-site work), which allows flexibility when choosing work location and schedule, and remote work where employees work exclusively from home (Sokolic, 2022).

Studies made during the recent COVID-19 pandemic focused solely on work/non-work conflicts related to remote work (Allen et al., 2021) as the pandemic bridged work and non-work spheres for employees. The current research aims to include three different models of working arrangement - office, hybrid, and remote as mentioned above - as well as introduce these as moderators. Now that remote or hybrid work is not a necessity or obligation demanded by governments due to the pandemic, this study aims to fill a gap in research by investigating whether different working models moderate the relationship between centralization or ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts.

2.3.3.1 Moderating the Role Between Organizational Centralization and Work/Non-Work Conflicts

As previously mentioned, working through a hybrid arrangement empowers employees by granting them greater autonomy and flexibility over managing their professional as well as personal commitments (Boccoli et al., 2022). Hybrid employees have access to both an office setting as well as remote locations which grants them ample opportunities for alternating through diverse tasks according to what best suits them while also ensuring they can accommodate non-professional responsibilities seamlessly within this framework. This flexibility enables hybrid workers to better integrate work- and non-work responsibilities while adapting schedules according to personal needs - they can designate certain periods for focused work while making

time available for personal/family obligations or prioritizing tasks more efficiently, giving more control in managing potential conflicts that result from centralization than exclusive office workers who may experience greater centralization on both fronts. Hybrid workers also enjoy greater flexibility in their working arrangements, enabling them to divide their time between working remotely and physically present at the office.

Employees who strictly adhere to traditional organizational structures' norms such as just working from offices might face limitations linked with hierarchical decision-making processes or rigidity around schedules imposed due to these centralized organizations (Terry, 2022). Such structural limitations could limit these employees' ability to balance work-related and non-work-related demands effectively, leading to heightened levels of work/non-work conflicts. Therefore, exclusively office-centered jobs are likely to experience greater conflicts with regard to balancing their professional and personal commitments in the face of organizational centralization than hybrid employees, whose work arrangement equips them with the tools necessary for managing this balancing act effectively. Hybrid work's inherent flexibility and autonomy may allow for a more even integration between work and non-work domains, lessening centralization-induced work/non-work conflicts compared to exclusively office workers. As such, the following hypothesis is drawn out:

H5: The relationship between organizational centralization and work/non-work conflicts is moderated by work arrangement. The relationship is expected to be weaker for hybrid workers than for exclusively office workers.

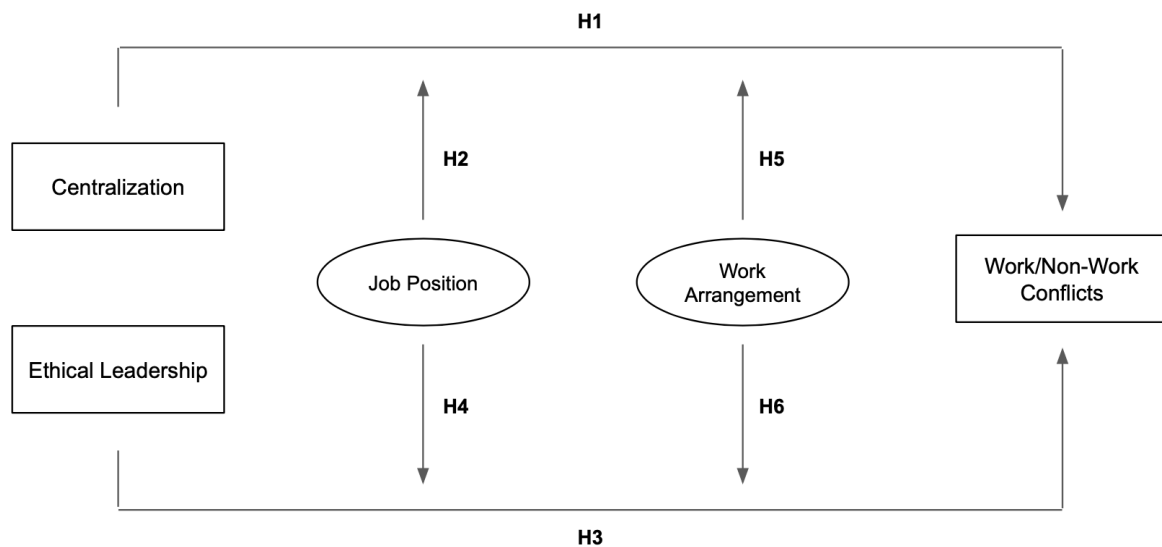
2.3.3.2 Moderating the Role Between Ethical Leadership and Work/Non-Work Conflicts

Work arrangements such as exclusively office work and hybrid work play an essential part in managing conflicts between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts. Exclusively office work typically follows a more traditional and centralized approach, where employees primarily work on-site in traditional office settings; hybrid or remote work, on the other hand, provides flexible options to employees (Boccoli et al., 2022). Due to their structured work schedules and clear boundaries between work and non-work domains, exclusively office workers may experience less of a correlation between their supervisor's commitment to ethics (fairness, trustworthiness, and work-life balance promotion) and work/non-work conflict reduction. This

means that, while exclusively office workers may be more restricted by their organizations' conditions, protocols, and procedures, perhaps hybrid or even remote workers, as they are not as constricted by the physical and metaphorical boundaries of their organizations, they may benefit more from their ethical leaders. Ultimately, ethical leaders tend to foster work/life equilibrium by offering flexible working arrangements and supportive policies that accommodate employees' personal needs and non-work commitments (Resick et al., 2011; Zhang & Tu, 2018). Thus, work arrangements may act as a moderator in the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts. During the current research, the following hypothesis will be tested:

H6: The relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts is moderated by work arrangement. The relationship is expected to be weaker for exclusively office workers than for hybrid workers.

Figure 1. Visual representation of the theoretical model



3. Methodology

After reviewing previous research on work and non-work conflicts, this chapter focuses on the methodology of this research. Firstly, the research design is discussed and the choice of the research method, namely a survey, is explained. Secondly, the sample, the sampling method, and the sampling size are described. In the third section, the operationalization of the measurements is described. This section includes all analyzed variables including the dependent variable, namely work/non-work conflicts, and independent variables - ethical leadership and organizational centralization - which are described. In the fourth section, the procedure of the survey is explained.

3.1 Research Design

The present inquiry employs a quantitative approach, seeking to numerically gauge and scrutinize the interplay between ethical leadership, organizational centralization, and work/non-work conflicts amidst Portuguese-based employees. This methodology procures numerical data that can be statistically analyzed, empowering the researcher to yield objective conclusions and establish generalizations about the population of interest (Babbie, 2014). In addition, this study embraces a deductive approach, where hypotheses are deduced from existing theories and prior research (Bryant & Charmaz, 2019). These hypotheses are rooted in the literature on ethical leadership, organizational centralization, and work/non-work conflicts, furnishing a theoretical foundation for the investigation. By employing a deductive approach, the study seeks to test these hypotheses and enrich the existing knowledge in the field.

To effectively tackle the research question, "To what extent do ethical leadership and organizational centralization relate to work/non-work conflicts of Portuguese-based employees?", a survey was deemed the most fitting data collection method. Surveys enable efficient data gathering from a vast sample size, augmenting the generalizability of the findings within social research (Muijs, 2011). The utilization of a survey empowers the researcher to capture the participants' perspectives on ethical leadership, organizational centralization, and work/non-work conflicts through standardized measurement scales. This strategy facilitates the compilation of quantitative data that can be statistically analyzed to evaluate the extent of the relationships between the variables under inquiry.

3.2 Operationalization and Measurements

To answer the research question, the following section will discuss the operationalization and measurements of the variables. Firstly, the dependent and independent variables - namely 'work/non-work conflicts', 'centralization', and 'ethical leadership' - will be discussed. Here the moderators 'job position' and 'work arrangement' will also be reviewed. Then, the research's control variables will be described. Lastly, the operationalization of all other measurements present within the survey will be explained.

Work/Non-Work Conflicts. Work/non-work conflicts were used as the research's dependent variable (DV) and were measured according to the 5-item subscale, 'work interrupting nonwork behaviors', from Kossek et al. (2012). Questions were formulated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree) that asked participants how much they agreed with statements such as 'I regularly bring work home' and 'I allow work to interrupt me when I spend time with my family or friends'. This scale measures how much work-related issues interfere with employees' personal lives. A factor analysis using Direct Oblimin rotation was then utilized on all 5 Likert-scale items and demonstrated that one factor explained 69.23% of variance in work/non-work conflicts ($KMO = .87$, $\chi^2 (N = 160, 10) = 427.59$, $p < .001$). Reliability analysis revealed high internal consistency levels ($\alpha = .89$).

Centralization. Centralization was taken from John's (1984) 5-item Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree) and included items such as 'any major decision that I make has to have this company's approval' and 'I can take very little action on my own until this company or its reps approve it'. This variable was used as one of the research's independent variables (IV) and it aims to portray the bureaucratic structure while measuring how much authority is exerted over the employees of an organization. A factor analysis using Direct Oblimin rotation was then utilized on all 5 Likert-scale items and demonstrated that one factor explained 67.35% of variance in centralization ($KMO = .83$, $\chi^2 (N = 160, 10) = 429.03$, $p < .001$). Reliability analysis revealed high internal consistency levels ($\alpha = .86$).

Ethical Leadership. Ethical leadership was adapted from the 10-item scale by Brown et al. (2005) and used as another independent variable in this research. Questions were formulated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree) that asked participants how much they agreed the provided statements reflected their direct supervisor's actions and approach

to leadership. Statements such as ‘has the best interests of employees in mind’ and ‘makes fair and balanced decisions’ were included. This variable aims to measure the (un)ethical behavior of participants’ supervisors according to their perception. A factor analysis using Direct Oblimin rotation was then utilized on all 10 Likert-scale items and demonstrated that one factor explained 67.63% of variance in ethical leadership ($KMO = .94$, $\chi^2 (N = 159, 45) = 1349.23$, $p < .001$). Reliability analysis revealed high internal consistency levels ($\alpha = .95$).

Job Position. Participants were asked to check one of three categories that best classified their level within the organization’s hierarchy. The given categories were ‘Top Level Management’ (includes positions such as administrator, president, vice-president, CEO, CFO, etc), ‘Middle-Level Management’ (includes director, manager, head of...), and ‘Operation Level Employees’. This variable was introduced into the research as a potential moderator between the independent and dependent variables. Due to the limited sample within the ‘top-level management’ category, the current research will only take into account middle-level management and operational employees.

Work Arrangement. Participants were asked to check one of three categories that best classified their working situation. The given categories were ‘I work exclusively at the company's office(s)’, ‘I work exclusively at home (remote work)’, or ‘I follow a hybrid working model which allows me to work both at home and at the company's office(s)’. This variable was also introduced into the research as a potential moderator. Similarly, due to the limited sample size of exclusively remote workers, the current research will only take into account hybrid and exclusively office workers.

3.2.1 Control Variables

In order to enhance the internal validity of the current research, limit the influence of other variables, and avoid research bias, this investigation will control three different variables.

Gender. Participants were asked to select their gender identity among the categories of ‘men’, ‘women’, and ‘non-binary’. A fourth category named ‘prefer not to disclose’ was added for individuals who did not wish to specify their gender identity. As gender has been proven to have an impact on leadership styles as well as employees’ perception of leadership styles associated with certain genders (Appelbaum et al., 2003), ‘gender’ was used as a control variable.

Age. Participants were asked to state their ages. Age, similarly, was also controlled due to its impact on leadership profiles (Oshagbemi, 2004) as well as on job positions, as younger individuals represent a smaller percentage of middle and upper management positions (Marchant et al., 2009).

Segmentation Preferences. Segmentation preferences were used to distinguish participants who were hindered by work/life conflicts from those who enjoyed doing work-related activities outside of their work schedule. Kreiner's (2006) 4-item scale was used to measure segmentation preferences and included items such as 'I prefer to keep work life at work' and 'I like to be able to leave work behind when I go home'. Questions were formulated on a 7-point Likert scale that asked participants how much they agreed or disagreed with the provided statements (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree). Utilizing segmentation preferences as a control variable enables the analysis to account for differences in how individuals handle managing the boundaries between work and life. By accounting for this additional control variable in the analyses, it is possible to ensure more robust understandings regarding the effects of centralization and ethical leadership on work/nonwork conflicts without confounding effects from individual variations on segmentation preferences. The 4 Likert-scale items were entered into factor analysis based on Principal Components extraction with Direct Oblimin rotation, confirming that a single factor explained 71.63% of variance in ethical leadership ($KMO = .81$, $\chi^2 (N = 158, 6) = 293.76$, $p < .001$). Reliability analysis indicated a very high internal consistency ($\alpha = .86$).

3.2.2 Background Variables

Lastly, the following sub-chapter includes variables that were not used for analyses, but rather used to describe the sample and give further context to the participants' responses.

Nationality. Participants were asked to state their nationality.

Job Tenure. Participants were asked to estimate the amount of time (in years) they had been working in their current organization.

Sector. Participants were asked to select what sector they worked in. The list included the following sectors: 'administrative', 'financial', 'fiscal', 'human resources', 'commercial', 'marketing', 'legal', 'information technologies (IT)', 'customer services', 'operational or production', and 'other' for participants who worked outside of the above-mentioned corporate

sectors.

Open-Ended Working Contract. Participants were asked whether or not they had an open-ended working contract in their company. The given categories were ‘yes’, ‘no’, and ‘prefer not to disclose’.

Portuguese Working Contract. Participants were asked whether their working contract was drawn under Portuguese law. The given categories were ‘yes’, ‘no’, and ‘prefer not to disclose’.

3.3 Procedure

For the current research, respondents were asked to fill out a 6-minute survey which was available in both Portuguese and English. At the beginning of the survey, a short introduction informed participants that the aim of the current research was to ‘investigate potential causes behind conflicts and tensions between the professional and personal lives of employees in Portugal’. Adding to this, respondents were made aware that all research data was collected anonymously and remained completely confidential. Participants could also cease cooperation at any time, without giving reasons. Then if participants understood the information and freely consented to participate in the study by clicking on the “I agree” button to start the questionnaire, they were moved on to the second part of the survey which entailed questions regarding the participants’ work and work environment. In the survey’s last section, participants were asked to fill in information about their identity - such as age, gender, and nationality - as well as complementary information about their work such as job position, work sector, job tenure, and whether they had an open-ended working contract drawn under the Portuguese law.

Finally, a text box at the end of the survey was made available for respondents to write potential questions or additional comments regarding the investigation. The lead investigator’s email was also provided in the introduction for this purpose.

3.4 Data Collection and Sample

The data collection took place in April 2023. To answer the research question and the hypotheses at least 150 participants were needed. As the following research aims to analyze work/non-work conflicts in Portugal, the target population for this study were employees with a work contract drawn under Portuguese law, therefore, the data collection process was done via

non-random sampling methods. Firstly, through purposive sampling, the survey reached its target audience. Nonetheless, snowball sampling also had its place within the sampling method, as respondents distributed the survey to their friends and family members who met the participation requirements. Both purposive and snowball sampling were chosen due to their innate advantages such as representativeness and efficiency. By deliberately deciding on individuals who possess particular characteristics or meet precise standards, purposive sampling can bring about a sample that is extra representative of the target populace. This increases the probability of obtaining applicable and significant facts. In this case, purposive sampling was used to target specifically Portuguese employees with a contract that was drawn under Portuguese law. Adding to this, snowball sampling is a method that capitalizes on existing relationships and networks by spreading the survey through referrals from initial participants. This can foster trust between participants and researchers, leading to higher participant engagement, cooperation, and more candid responses while being a time-efficient method.

However, it is also important to keep in mind the potential disadvantages of such sampling methods. Since participant choice is predicated on the researcher's judgment and assumptions, there may be a potential for bias in the pattern composition. This subjectivity may also limit the generalizability of the findings to the wider population. Purposive sampling may additionally bring about a sample that lacks variety. Certain people or groups may be overrepresented or underrepresented, decreasing the sample's representativeness. Similarly, snowball sampling may also introduce bias in participant selection. Participants have a tendency to refer to other individuals who are much like them in characteristics or studies. This can lead to a sample that isn't always representative of the wider populace, again, proscribing the generalizability of the findings.

Within the data collection process, a total of 194 responses were recorded. After deleting all invalid responses, 162 responses remained. The percentage of women is 53.10% and the male share is 42.60%. 4.30% of participants did not disclose their gender. The participants' average age was 40.30 ($SD = 11.55$). Due to the study's nature, the most prominent nationality was Portuguese (96.30%). 0.60% were Spanish and the remaining 3.10% did not disclose their nationality.

It is relevant to highlight that 61.10% of participants scored above the mean of the 'work/non-work conflicts' scale, while 38.90% scored below the mean. This means that more than

60.00% of participants suffer from substantial work/non-work conflicts. In regard to centralization, 55.60% scored above the mean and 44.40% below, meaning more than half of the participants currently work in significantly centralized organizations.

For the purpose of this research, it is also relevant to highlight that the most prominent corporate sectors were commercial (14.20%), marketing (13.60%), information technologies (11.70%), and human resources (11.10%). Lastly, in regard to participants' job positioning, only 3.70% of participants belonged to top-level management, while 42.00% were middle-level management and 51.90% were operation-level employees. 2.50% of participants did not disclose their job position.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

To address the research question, a quantitative research design was employed. Data were collected through an employee-focused structured questionnaire with scales previously validated within the relevant literature presented in the previous chapter.

Reliability measures the consistency and stability of research instruments. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each construct measured in the questionnaire, with values greater than .70 considered acceptable as recommended by DeVellis (2003). As previously mentioned, all alpha values in this study were shown to be reliable and ranged between .81 and .95 - work/non-work conflicts ($\alpha = .89$), centralization ($\alpha = .86$), ethical leadership ($\alpha = .95$), and segmentation preferences ($\alpha = .86$). No changes were demonstrated to enhance scale internal consistency significantly, so all scales were judged reliable and suitable for further examination (Appendix B).

By assessing content validity, face validity and construct validity as well as the reliability of a questionnaire, this study sought to generate reliable and valid findings that contribute to existing knowledge in organizational behavior and human resource management.

4. Results

In this section, centralization, and ethical leadership will be examined to test whether these factors play a role in exacerbating or mitigating employees' work/non-work conflicts.

In order to investigate whether there is a relation between the variables, two hierarchical linear regressions were conducted with work/non-work conflicts as criterion - one with (4.1) centralization as the independent variable and another with (4.2) ethical leadership as the independent variable. Job position and work arrangement were introduced as moderators into a hierarchical multiple regression analysis in order to investigate whether they have a moderating effect on the relationship between (4.1.1) centralization and work/non-work conflicts or between (4.2.1) ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts.

4.1 Organizational Centralization and Work/Non-Work Conflicts

A hierarchical linear regression analysis was conducted with work/non-work conflicts as criterion. Age, gender, and segmentation preferences were included in the first block, and centralization was added in the second block in order to identify whether higher levels of organizational centralization played a role in increasing employees' work/non-work conflicts while controlling for age, gender, and segmentation preferences.

Seeing as gender is a categorical variable, a dummy variable was computed with one (1) coded as 'male' and zero (0) as 'female'.

When age ($\beta = .44, p < .001$), gender ($\beta = -.032, p = .831$), and segmentation preferences ($\beta = -.17, p = .021$) were used as predictors the model reached significance, $R^2 = .25, F(3, 15) = 16.65, p < .001$. However, when adding centralization ($\beta = .14, p = .047$) the significance of the model decreased, $\Delta R^2 = .02, F(1, 15) = 4.00, p = .047$. Gender remained not significant ($\beta = -.02, p = .772$) while age ($\beta = .42, p < .001$) and segmentation preferences remained significant ($\beta = -.20, p = .008$). Thus, H1 has to be accepted.

4.1.1 Moderating Effect of Job Position and Work Arrangement

A hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the effects of centralization, job position, and their interaction on work/non-work conflicts. To conduct this analysis a dummy variable for job position was computed in order to include the categorical variable in regression analysis. This dummy variable divided the 'middle-level management employee' condition (1)

from the 'operational-level employee' condition (0). The dummy variable for gender was again used for the moderation analyses.

Age ($\beta = .44, p < .001$), gender ($\beta = -.02, p = .831$), and segmentation preferences ($\beta = -.17, p = .021$) were included as control variables in the first block, centralization, and work arrangement were added in the second block and in the third block the interaction term was entered.

When the control variables were used as predictors the model reached significance, $R^2 = .25, F(3, 15) = 16.65, p < .001$.

When adding centralization ($\beta = .09, p = .163$) and job position ($\beta = .39, p < .001$) the significance of the model remained high, $\Delta R^2 = .15, F(2, 15) = 18.49, p < .001$. Gender remained not significant ($\beta = -.07, p = .302$) while age ($\beta = .32, p < .001$) and segmentation preferences remained significant ($\beta = -.17, p = .013$).

After the entry of the interaction term ($\beta = -.02, p = .794$) in block 3, the model showed not to be significant, $\Delta R^2 = .00, F(1, 15) = .07, p = .794$. This means that job position as a moderator - meaning the interaction between job position and centralization - was not significant despite having shown significance when introduced as a main effect variable in block 2.

A second hierarchical multiple regression was used in order to assess the effects of centralization and work arrangement on work/non-work conflicts. Once again, a dummy variable for work arrangement was computed in order to include the categorical variable in regression analysis. This dummy variable divided the 'exclusively office workers' condition (1) from the 'hybrid workers' condition (0). The dummy variable for gender was once again introduced.

Age, gender, and segmentation preferences were included as control variables in the first block, centralization, and work arrangement were added in the second block, and in the third block the interaction term was entered.

When the control variables, age ($\beta = .44, p < .001$), gender ($\beta = -.02, p = .831$), and segmentation preferences ($\beta = -.17, p = .021$), were used as predictors the model reached significance, $R^2 = .25, F(3, 15) = 16.65, p < .001$.

When adding centralization ($\beta = .15, p = .047$) and work arrangement ($\beta = -.02, p = .829$) the model showed not to be significant, $\Delta R^2 = .02, F(2, 15) = 2.01, p = .138$. After the entry of the interaction term ($\beta = -.05, p = .585$) in block 3, the model showed to be not significant as well, $\Delta R^2 = .00, F(1, 15) = .30, p = .585$. As a result, hypotheses H2 and H5 have to be rejected.

4.2 Ethical Leadership and Work/Non-Work Conflicts

A hierarchical linear regression analysis was conducted with work/non-work conflicts as criterion. Age, gender, and segmentation preferences were included in the first block, and ethical leadership was added in the second block in order to identify whether ethical leaders played a role in decreasing their employees' work/non-work conflicts while controlling for age, gender, and segmentation preferences.

Seeing as gender is a categorical variable, a dummy variable was computed with one (1) coded as 'male' and zero (0) as 'female'.

When age ($\beta = .44, p < .001$), gender ($\beta = -.02, p = .831$), and segmentation preferences ($\beta = -.17, p = .021$) were used as predictors the model reached significance, $R^2 = .25, F(3, 15) = 16.65, p < .001$. However, when adding ethical leadership ($\beta = .08, p = .290$) the model showed to be not significant, $\Delta R^2 = .01, F(1, 15) = 1.13, p = .290$, while gender remained not significant ($\beta = -.01, p = .885$) and age ($\beta = .45, p < .001$) and segmentation preferences remained significant ($\beta = -.15, p = .042$). Thus, H3 has to be rejected.

4.2.1 Moderating Effect of Job Position and Work Arrangement

Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the effects of ethical leadership, job position, and their interaction on work/non-work conflicts. To conduct this analysis, once again, dummy variables for job position and age were computed. Job position was computed as one (1) for 'middle-level management employee' and zero (0) for 'operational-level employee'. Age was coded with one (1) coded as 'male' and zero (0) as 'female'.

Age ($\beta = .44, p < .001$), gender ($\beta = -.02, p = .831$), and segmentation preferences ($\beta = -.17, p = .021$) were included as control variables in the first block, centralization, and work arrangement were added in the second block and in the third block the interaction term was entered.

When the control variables were used as predictors the model reached significance, $R^2 = .25, F(3, 15) = 16.65, p < .001$.

When adding ethical leadership ($\beta = .07, p = .275$) and job position ($\beta = .40, p < .001$) the significance of the model remained high, $\Delta R^2 = .15, F(2, 15) = 18.01, p < .001$. Gender remained not significant ($\beta = -.06, p = .353$) while age ($\beta = .34, p < .001$) and segmentation preferences remained significant ($\beta = -.13, p = .048$).

After the entry of the interaction term ($\beta = -.17, p = .030$) in block 3, the model decreased in significance, $\Delta R^2 = .02, F(1, 15) = 4.78, p = .030$. This means that job position ($\beta = .40, p < .001$) plays a significant role in moderating the relationship between ethical leadership ($\beta = .17, p = .032$) and work/non-work conflicts. Gender remained not significant ($\beta = -.07, p = .290$) while age ($\beta = .35, p < .001$) and segmentation preferences ($\beta = -.14, p = .040$) remained significant.

A second hierarchical multiple regression was used in order to assess the effects of ethical leadership and work arrangement on work/non-work conflicts. Once again, dummy variables for work arrangement and age were used.

Age, gender, and segmentation preferences were included as control variables in the first block, ethical leadership and work arrangement were added in the second block, and in the third block the interaction term was entered.

When the control variables, age ($\beta = .44, p < .001$), gender ($\beta = -.02, p = .831$), and segmentation preferences ($\beta = -.17, p = .021$), were used as predictors the model reached significance, $R^2 = .25, F(3, 15) = 16.65, p < .001$.

When adding ethical leadership ($\beta = .08, p = .291$) and work arrangement ($\beta = .00, p = .973$) the model showed to be not significant, $\Delta R^2 = .01, F(2, 15) = .56, p = .572$. After the entry of the interaction term ($\beta = .16, p = .085$) in block 3, the model showed to be not significant as well, $\Delta R^2 = .02, F(1, 15) = 3.00, p = .085$.

As a result, hypothesis H4 has to be accepted while H6 has to be rejected.

5. Conclusion

Conflicts arising from work-related matters intruding on employees' personal, off-work time have been a recurring topic within Portuguese society. Both the data gathered for this investigation as well as the statistics provided by the Portuguese National Institute of Statistics point to this reality - 61.10% of this study's participants reported suffering from conflicts regarding the overlapping of their work and personal spheres and about 56.80% of employees in Portugal stated they had been contacted by their employers outside of their working schedule in 2019 (INE, 2019). The current research was focused on analyzing which work-related factors could play a role in accentuating or diminishing work/non-work conflicts. The motives examined in the study were centralization and ethical leadership. Job positions and work arrangements were introduced within the investigation as potential moderators. These motives were chosen as a way to represent a spectrum of different sources that could promote or impede autonomy which in turn might have mitigated or exacerbated conflicts between employees' professional and personal domains. This research relied on the importance of job autonomy as extensive previous research has found a strong negative relationship between job autonomy and work/non-work conflicts (Goldstein, 2003; Prottas & Thompson, 2006; Voydanoff, 2004). Furthermore, the level of job autonomy is highly influenced by the structural, cultural, and inter-personal characteristics of an employee's work situation and context (Naqvi et al., 2013; Owoyemi & Ekwoaba, 2014), providing a bridge between potential work-related causes and work/non-work conflicts. The results indicated a positive relationship between centralization and work/non-work conflicts, whereas ethical leadership was shown to be not significant. However, job position did moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts. The remaining conducted moderations were not significant indicators of work/non-work conflicts.

In this section, the key findings of the research will be interpreted. Then, the theoretical as well as the practical implications will be discussed. Lastly, the limitations of the investigation will be addressed and proposals for future research will be given.

5.1 Key Findings

The current research was able to establish a relationship between centralization and work/non-work conflicts. Centralization was found to be a positive predictor for work/non-work conflicts, revealing that the higher the level of centralization of an organization, the more

conflicts emerge between work and personal domains. This relation goes to confirm the conceptualization within the theoretical framework. Centralization limits the decision-making autonomy of employees (Kakabadse, 1986; Katsikea et al., 2011). As a result, employees have limited autonomy in making decisions related to their work schedules, tasks, and overall work/life balance. Thus, employees struggle to manage their work and personal responsibilities effectively, leading to increased conflicts between the two domains. Moreover, centralized organizations often lack flexibility (Niskanen, 1971). The rigid structures, processes, and procedures can limit employees' ability to have flexible work arrangements or flexible hours. The lack of flexibility can therefore make it challenging for employees to accommodate personal commitments, leading to conflicts between work and non-work responsibilities.

Furthermore, no moderation effect was found for job positions or work arrangements in relation to centralization and work/non-work conflicts. This is perhaps due to the fact that while job positions may offer higher-ranking employees greater levels of decision-making authority and autonomy, highly centralized organizations may still overpower and thus restrict individual employees' discretion and influence in managing work/non-work issues, regardless of status. The same argument can be made for flexible work arrangements, despite the fact that it challenges previous studies that conclude that hybrid or remote models of work enhance work-life balance and reduce conflict (Golden et al., 2006). While a hybrid model of work may offer more flexibility and autonomy, it may not be enough to overshadow the power and control centralized organizations have over their employees.

No effect of ethical leadership on work/non-work conflicts was found. Previous research has drawn the link between work/non-work conflicts and job satisfaction with ethical leadership as a moderator (Freire & Bettencourt, 2022). Although ethical leadership may play a role in work/non-work conflicts in other aspects, there seems to be no direct relation. The reason for this may lie in multiple factors. Ethical leadership, as discussed in the theoretical framework, promotes ethical behavior, decision-making, and integrity within the workplace. While these factors may play a role in promoting a healthier work environment, they do not directly address the specific dynamics that contribute to work/non-work conflicts, such as workload, time pressures, or conflicting role expectations (Bellavia & Frone, 2005) - meaning ethical leadership alone may not have a direct and significant influence on work/non-work conflicts. Furthermore, the concept of 'ethical leadership' is highly subjective as pointed out by Eisenbeiß and Brodbeck

(2014) - the concept raises questions such as ‘ethical for whom?’ and ‘what constitutes ethical success or failure?’. The subjectivity of the variable, therefore, entails various contextual factors such as cultural, or social considerations which individually may help explain the relationship to work/non-work conflicts, but when generalized under ‘ethical leadership’ may go unnoticed. Adding to this argument, work/non-work conflicts are extremely multifaceted, making it hard to pinpoint which factors are relevant to their increase or decrease. As a result, despite the fact that some transformational leadership styles, an umbrella term under which ethical leadership is in, have been proven to have positive outcomes regarding employees’ well-being (Arnold et al., 2007) and work/non-work conflicts (Eng et al., 2010), ethical leadership itself may not be the most relevant perspective when analyzing work/non-work conflicts.

Nonetheless, job position was found to moderate the effect of ethical leadership. This indicates that, similarly to what was discussed in the theoretical framework, the relationship between ethical leadership and work/nonwork conflicts varies depending on the job position of employees. Ethical leadership has a weaker impact on reducing work/non-work conflicts for middle-level managers compared to operation-level employees. In other words, middle-level managers experience higher levels of work/non-work conflicts when exposed to ethical leadership compared to operation-level employees. As discussed in the theoretical framework, operation-level employees often possess less power, influence, and autonomy in decision-making (Hrebiniak, 1974; Sting & Loch, 2016), making them more dependent on their supervisors. Therefore, having ethical leaders who prioritize work/non-work balance and support personal lives may have a more dramatic effect on lower-level employees compared to high-management positions who are less dependent on their supervisors and thus are less influenced by them. This finding supports Pucic’s (2015) claim that ethical leadership gives flexibility that empowers lower-level staff more efficiently and decreases conflicts that are ultimately caused by limited autonomy or rigid work structures.

Lastly, work arrangements were shown to have no significant effect on moderating the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts. A study by Yang et al. (2022) reported that collaboration among remote workers was shown to be more static and siloed, increasing asynchronous communication. This same argument can be used to (partially) explain why hybrid working models may not have an effect on amplifying or reducing work/non-work conflicts. The physical space which separates employees and leaders within flexible working

arrangements simultaneously creates a divide in their emotional and human connection, ultimately rendering ethical leadership irrelevant when combating conflicts between employees' professional and private domains. Within the Portuguese context, hybrid working models have also been normalized across industries and may therefore not be relevant anymore in reducing work/non-work conflicts, as stated by Golden et al. (2006). In fact, they may instead be slowly reinforcing the already-existing culture of long working hours and workaholism in Portugal as theorized by Felstead and Henseke (2017). In regard to exclusively office workers, which is the standard working arrangement in most cultural and academic settings, the same argument applies when analyzing the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts; that is the subjective aspect of 'ethics' may play little to no role in mitigating, or accentuating for that matter, work/non-work conflicts.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The main theoretical implications of this study are twofold. Firstly, as the focus of the present research focuses on work/non-work conflicts, it aligns with work/life balance theory. Work-life balance refers to a psychological construct that focuses on satisfaction - 'an overall level of contentment resulting from an assessment of one's degree of success at meeting work and family role demands' (Valcour, 2007, p. 1512) - across roles (Kalliath and Brough, 2008). By examining the role of centralization and ethical leadership, the study provides empirical evidence of a factor that influences this balance, namely centralization. Previous research on the topic had hypothesized the significance of organizational structures on shaping work/non-work conflicts (Dixon & Bruening, 2005; Dixon & Sagas, 2007) which relied on Kanter's (1977) theory which stated that top-down workplace processes were able to shape employees. This study's finding not only adds to these previous theories and studies, confirming the relevance of centralization on work/non-work conflicts but also highlights the importance of considering contextual factors such as organizational structure, in understanding work-life balance, suggesting that work-life balance is not solely an individual-level phenomenon but is also influenced, by organizational characteristics. It also contributes to the understanding that characteristics surrounding structure and consequently decision-making processes within an organization can impact employees' ability to achieve balance between their work and personal life, expanding the knowledge base of work-life balance theory by highlighting the relevance of organizational structures in shaping

individuals' work-life experiences. In a similar way, this insight also contributes to organizational theory (Mansfield, 1973) in that it explores the relationship between centralization and work/non-work conflicts and outlines how organizational structures and decision-making processes play a role in regard to employees' work/non-work conflicts.

Secondly, the study's contribution to academic research also lies in the established moderating effect of job position on the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts, showing that middle-level managers experienced higher levels of work/non-work conflicts when exposed to ethical leadership compared to operation-level employees. This finding highlights the role of power and authority in the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts. It suggests that employees in different job positions may have varying levels of power and decision-making authority (Hrebiniak, 1974; Sting & Loch, 2016), which, in turn, can influence their experiences of work/non-work conflicts. As a result, this finding contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between factors such as leadership, power, and authority and work/non-work experiences. It also calls for a more nuanced understanding of leadership theory in general by incorporating contextual factors into leadership theories and research designs, highlighting the significance of adopting a multi-level perspective within work-life research. For example, previous research has shown that work-related contextual factors such as job control, enriched job characteristics, and job social support are significant in relation to work/non-work conflicts (Abendroth & Den Dulk, 2011; Wayne et al., 2020). Moreover, other studies which focused on what personal characteristics play a role in conflicts between employees' personal and professional spheres determined that neuroticism, resilience, and proactive health behavior (Wayne et al., 2020) were relevant factors that should be taken into account. Overall there are many factors on a personal and systemic level that are crucial in determining one's perception of balance and conflict (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Wayne et al., 2016). Similarly to the finding regarding centralization, this finding emphasizes the importance of examining how individual-level factors (ethical leadership) and contextual factors (job position) interact to influence work/non-work conflicts.

Overall, the moderating effect of job position on the relationship between ethical leadership and work/non-work conflicts opens up avenues for theoretical development by emphasizing the role of job position, power dynamics, job demands/resources, and contextual factors. It prompts further investigation into the specific mechanisms and contextual conditions

that shape the relationship between ethical leadership and work-life outcomes, contributing to the advancement of theories and models related to leadership, work-life balance, and organizational dynamics.

Finally, the contents of this research help fill in a considerable gap in research concerning work/non-work conflicts in Portugal. Since this research targets employees that work within the Portuguese context, the study can explore how organizational centralization and ethical leadership relate to work/non-work conflicts within the Portuguese culture. The insights drawn throughout the investigation take into consideration the influence and context of cultural and socio-economical factors as well as work-related specifications of typical Portuguese work environments and conditions. It is important to highlight the cultural context in order to understand work/non-work conflicts and the effectiveness of organizational structures and leadership styles.

5.3 Practical Implications

This study aimed to provide insights for both employees and organizations as a whole. First and foremost, this research has provided an understanding of the dimension of work/non-work conflicts in Portugal as well as highlighted relevant predictors of it. Understanding that certain mental health challenges can be derived from work/non-work conflicts is of value to employees as they are able to pinpoint the cause of the problem and accordingly search for help or develop their own methods to establish healthy boundaries between their professional and private spheres. Employees should not only be aware of how many people face challenges regarding tensions between their work and private domains but also be able to identify characteristics of their work environment that might exacerbate those same conflicts. Knowing that centralization plays a significant role in accentuating work/non-work conflicts, gives employees perspective on their (future) situation. When faced with highly centralized organizations, employees can be more conscious that higher work/non-work conflicts may follow and prepare accordingly by either mentally preparing for such challenges or by using tools and methods in order to establish healthy boundaries such as practicing psychological detachment (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2007), searching for support systems or indulging in individual interests (Roth & Moore, 2009).

This research is also valuable for organizations as it gives a better understanding of how

organizations can exacerbate or mitigate work/non-work conflicts, depending on how they foster company identity and environment (King et al., 2012). During a time when companies are demanded by the public to foster positive working cultures and advocate for employee-focused measures, it is important to be aware of their negative - or perhaps positive - influence on employees and draw impactful organizational policies and practices as well as relevant leadership development and training initiatives accordingly.

The findings of this research hope to make organizations more inclined to adopt more decentralized policies, practices, and overall decision-making processes to provide employees with more autonomy and flexibility (Andrews et al., 2009). Similarly, and despite the fact that ethical leadership did not seem to play a significant role in work/non-work conflicts, having leadership development and training initiatives that allude to this problem can positively impact both employees and organizations in the long run (Mazzetti et al., 2019) and consequently foster supportive work environments. Especially as other types of leadership such as transformational leadership have been linked to perception improvements of work/non-work conflicts (Munir, 2012), allowing training initiatives to derive ideas from such leadership styles.

Furthermore, the finding that middle-level managers experience higher levels of work/non-work conflicts when exposed to ethical leadership compared to operational-level employees can have several practical implications within a workplace setting. While it is expected of middle-level managers to be less dependent on their leaders, organizations should implement measures and processes that can compensate for middle managers' less accessible leaders while protecting them from facing major work/non-work conflicts. Necessary resources such as time management and workload assessment tools, as well as support networks (Bruening & Dixon, 2007), should be therefore made available to middle-level managers, allowing them to navigate work/life balance and work/non-work conflicts. These tools can help foster a healthy and supportive organizational culture where employees of all job positions can feel comfortable with seeking assistance. Moreover, changing an organization's culture top-down into one that is conscious of work/life balance can help promote a trickle-down effect that positively impacts lower-level employees, although a more holistic approach that takes into account sub-cultures within the workplace is preferable according to Meek (1988). Providing targeted support may help enhance middle-level managers' skills in integrating ethical principles while minimizing work/non-work conflicts.

Although having access to helpful tools is a first step in navigating work/non-work conflicts, having regular evaluations and feedback is equally important. Organizations should therefore seek regular feedback from employees to understand their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement (Jalali et al., 2017). This feedback can inform adjustments to leadership strategies, policies, and practices, fostering a more adaptive and supportive work environment. Having open and transparent communication channels may also help destigmatizing seeking assistance within the workplace, promoting, once again, a healthier work environment.

Middle-level managers, as well as top-level management, play a crucial role in implementing and operationalizing leadership practices within an organization (Fairholm, 2004). While through this study operational employees were proven to benefit from ethical leadership in regard to work/non-work conflicts, the current research highlights the importance of taking into account contextual factors, such as job position, when implementing leadership styles and evaluating whether a specific leadership approach is beneficial to all employees. It is important for organizations to evaluate whether additional support and training is necessary to combat intrinsic issues arriving from specific leadership styles.

Lastly, the findings of the current study hope to inspire organizations to design employee support and assistance programs as a resource to assist employees in voicing or managing their work/non-work conflicts. Promoting work-life balance initiatives, and offering resources such as counseling services, childcare support, wellness programs, time management and workload assessment tools as well as support networks and feedback systems could help decrease work/non-work conflicts. By addressing work/non-work conflicts, organizations can enhance employee well-being, satisfaction, and productivity, thus building a healthier working culture and environment within the workplace.

5.4 Limitation and Future Research

Although the current research has provided new insights into work/non-work conflict motives, some limitations can be observed. To begin, as the study relied mainly on Portuguese participants, all measurements had to be translated into Portuguese. To some degree, previously verified scales from well-known studies might have become less clear or perhaps less reliable even though efforts were put into the translation in order for it to come as close to the original

meaning. Meaning there is a risk of measurement non-equivalence, where the translated items may not capture the same underlying construct.

Furthermore, as data collection processes were done partly through convenience sampling methods, namely snowball sampling, the representativeness of the study may have been affected (Benajiba & Eldib, 2018). This can result in the underrepresentation of certain groups or perspectives, leading to a limited understanding of the population being studied. As a result, the sample within the current study may be susceptible to bias, leading to a lack of diversity within the sample. This can limit the generalizability of the findings and introduce biases in the resulting data.

Consequently, these limitations could pave the way for future research on the investigated topic. Little research regarding work/non-work conflicts has been done within the Portuguese context. Thus, there is still a need to further fill the gap in research in regards to which work-related factors may play a role in work/non-work conflicts within this specific context. In regard to organizational structure, future research should keep in mind further dimensions such as specialization, standardization, formalization, centralization, and configuration (Pugh et al., 1968). This may help to get a more complete picture of which dimensions exactly affect work/non-work conflicts. Furthermore, while ethical leadership was analyzed as a general variable, as proposed by Kanungo and Mendonca (1998), ethical leadership can be understood through three dimensions - the leader's motives for action, the leader's moral character formation, and the leader's influence strategy. Before ruling out whether ethical leadership is a predictor of work/non-work conflicts, future research should take into account these three dimensions as they help form a more solid definition of 'ethical leadership', reducing the generability and subjectivity of the concept.

While continuing to keep in mind the factors analyzed within this study, future research could analyze job position and work arrangement as independent variables instead of moderators. While the current research only analyzed two dimensions of each factor - 'middle-level management' and 'operation-level employees' for job position and 'hybrid workers' and 'exclusively office workers' for work arrangement -due to sample size restrictions, the three dimensions proposed within the methodology section should be kept in mind while elaborating upon this investigation. Adding 'top-level management' and 'remote workers' could perhaps change the significance of the outcomes reported in this research, especially when regarding them

as independent variables since previous research has shown a positive correlation between remote work and work/non-work conflicts (Eddleston & Mulki, 2017) as well as a negative correlation between decision-making and schedule control and work/non-work conflicts (Glavin & Schieman, 2012) - characteristics typically associated to top management positions.

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Appendix A: Survey

Dear respondent,

This questionnaire is part of a research project within the framework of a Master's thesis in Media & Business, carried out at Erasmus University Rotterdam. **The aim of this study is to investigate potential causes behind conflicts and tensions between the professional and personal life of employees in Portugal.**

The questionnaire will take approximately **6 minutes** to complete. Please answer all questions spontaneously and honestly. In most of the questions, you will only have to mark with a cross your answer choice. There are no right or wrong answers. All research data remains **completely confidential** and is collected **anonymously**. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with participation in this research. You may cease cooperation at any time, without giving reasons.

If you have questions about this research, in advance or afterward, you can contact the investigator in charge, João Pedro Pinote, by e-mail: jppinote@gmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation!

If you understand the information above and freely consent to participate in this study, click on the “I agree” button below to start the questionnaire.

I agree

I do not agree

Section 1/5

In this first section please keep in mind your professional life as well as your personal life and how these might interact.

Please select the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I regularly bring work home.							
I respond to work-related communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) during my personal time away from work.							
I work during my vacations.							
I allow work to interrupt me when I spend time with my family or friends.							
I usually bring work materials with me when I attend personal or family activities.							

Section 2/5

In this next section please reflect on your current working environment, specifically your relationship with the company as well as your direct supervisor (e.g. boss, manager, director...).

Please select the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Any major decision that I make has to have this company's approval.							
In my dealings with this company, even quite small matters have to be referred to someone higher up for a final answer.							
My dealings with this company are subject to a lot of rules and procedures stating how various aspects of my job are to be done.							
I have to ask company reps before I do almost anything in my business.							

I can take very little action on my own until this company or its reps approve it.							
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

According to your perception, how likely or unlikely is it for your direct supervisor to have the following characteristics?

	Highly unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Likely	Highly likely
Listens to what employees have to say.							
Disciplines employees who violate ethical standards.							
Conducts his/her personal life in an ethical manner.							
Has the best interests of employees in mind.							
Makes fair and balanced decisions.							
Can be trusted.							
Discusses business ethics or values with employees.							
Sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics.							
Defines success not just by results but also by the way that they are obtained.							
When making decisions, asks "what is the right thing to do?".							

Section 3/5

Next, please answer the following questions in regard to your work arrangement and working preferences.

Please select the working model which best describes your situation.

I work exclusively at the company's office(s)

I work exclusively at home (remote work)

I follow a hybrid working model which allows me to work both at home and at the company's office(s)

Please select the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I don't like to have to think about work while I'm at home.							
I prefer to keep work life at work.							
I don't like work issues creeping into my home life.							
I like to be able to leave work behind when I go home.							

Section 4/5

Please fill in some extra details about your work.

Is your work contract drawn under Portuguese law?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

Please select your current work sector within the company.

Administrative

Financial

Fiscal

Human Resources

Commercial

Marketing

Legal

Information Technologies (IT)

Customer Services

Operational or Production

Other

How many years have you been working in your current company? (please answer numerically, e.g. 5)

Do you have an open-ended contract at your current company?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

Please select the category which best describes your level within your current company.

Top-Level Management (ex. Administrador, presidente, vice-presidente, CEO, CFO, etc...)

Middle-Level Management (ex. manager, head of..., director)

Operation Level Employee

Section 5/5

Lastly, please answer the following questions in regard to your identity.

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Non-Binary

Prefer not to disclose

What is your age? (please answer numerically, e.g. 18)

What is your nationality?

If you want to leave any additional comments regarding this investigation, you can do so in the text box below.

Appendix B: Scale Reliability

Appendix B1. Cronbach's Alpha for 'work/non-work conflicts' scale (N = 152)

Item	α if item were to be deleted
I regularly bring work home.	.86
I respond to work-related communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) during my personal time away from work.	.88
I work during my vacations.	.85
I allow work to interrupt me when I spend time with my family or friends.	.81
I usually bring work materials with me when I attend personal or family activities.	.89
Cronbach's Alpha	.89

Appendix B2. Cronbach's Alpha for 'organizational centralization' scale (N = 151)

Item	α if item were to be deleted
Any major decision that I make has to have this company's approval.	.89
In my dealings with this company, even quite small matters have to be referred to someone higher up for a final answer.	.85
My dealings with this company are subject to a lot of rules and procedures stating how various aspects of my job are to be done.	.86
I have to ask company reps before I do almost anything in my business.	.85
I can take very little action on my own until this company or its reps approve it.	.84
Cronbach's Alpha	.88

Appendix B3. Cronbach's Alpha for 'ethical leadership' scale (N = 150)

Item	α if item were to be deleted
Listens to what employees have to say.	.95
Disciplines employees who violate ethical standards.	.96
Conducts his/her personal life in an ethical manner.	.95
Has the best interests of employees in mind.	.94
Makes fair and balanced decisions.	.94
Can be trusted.	.94
Discusses business ethics or values with employees.	.94
Sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics.	.94
Defines success not just by results but also by the way that they are obtained.	.94
When making decisions, asks "What is the right thing to do?".	.94
Cronbach's Alpha	.95

Appendix B4. Cronbach's Alpha for 'segmentation preferences' scale (N = 149)

Item	α if item were to be deleted
I don't like to have to think about work while I'm at home.	.75
I prefer to keep work life at work.	.73
I don't like work issues creeping into my home life.	.76
I like to be able to leave work behind when I go home.	.79
Cronbach's Alpha	.81