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The importance of work-family reconciliation for job quality in Chile: New methodological and empirical contributions

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Abstract

This article examines the effect of sex, caregiving, and work-family reconciliation needs on overall job quality, as well as its objective and subjective dimensions. Using data from the 2009-2010 National Survey on Employment, Work, Health, and Quality of Life of Male and Female Workers in Chile (ENETS), valid and reliable multidimensional indexes of job quality are constructed. The model estimations indicate that being female, a sole caregiver, and having reconciliation needs exert negative effects on job quality, but with different intensities. Additionally, personal and work-related factors lend heterogeneity to the measurement of the objective and subjective dimensions, thus indicating the importance of a differential measurement to better understand this phenomenon.

Keywords: job quality; gender; care; reconciliation needs; index; Chile

Resumen. *La centralidad de la conciliación trabajo y familia en la calidad del empleo en Chile: nuevos aportes metodológicos y empíricos*

Este artículo analiza el efecto del sexo, el cuidado exclusivo y las necesidades de conciliación en la calidad del empleo global y en sus dimensiones objetivas y subjetivas. A partir de datos de la *Encuesta nacional de empleo, trabajo, salud y calidad de vida de los trabajadores y trabajadoras en Chile 2009-2010* (ENETS), elaboramos índices multidimensionales de calidad del empleo válidos y confiables. Las estimaciones del modelo indican que ser mujer, cuidador único y con necesidades de conciliación tiene efectos negativos sobre la calidad del empleo, pero con intensidades distintas. Además, los factores personales y laborales otorgan heterogeneidad a la medición de las dimensiones objetivas y subjetivas, lo que evidencia la importancia de una medición diferenciada.

Palabras clave: calidad del empleo; género; cuidados; necesidad de conciliación; índice; Chile

Summary

1. Introduction

The high unemployment rates and job insecurity in Europe at the end of the 20th century brought to the fore the notion of job quality, which was initially associated with labor policies and the creation of new jobs. Soon, the gap between employment quantity and quality became notable and even job incentives were viewed with dissatisfaction by workers in some countries due to the poor progress in terms of employment recognition and work autonomy (Díaz-Chao et al., 2015; Green, 2006). The gender wage gap, as well as lower skills development and less job authority among women in the labor market are examples of this situation.

Initially, studies on job quality focused on wage evolution but have shifted over time to include multiple indicators and cross-country analyses (Green et al., 2013; Kalleberg et al., 2000). In recent research, job quality indices have been developed that attach greater importance to the type of contract, work pressure, job insecurity, and precarious employment (Ahn & Garcia, 2004; Clark, 2005; 2015; Handel, 2005; Diaz-Chao et al., 2015). Emphasis has also been placed on objective aspects that affect job quality, such as remuneration or job stability; and on subjective aspects, such as job satisfaction or the degree of job autonomy (Kalleberg & Vaisey, 2005; Green, 2006).

Other studies have included indicators related to gender equity and work-family reconciliation, understood as the situation in which whoever works would

need to be at work and at home at the same time (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions [Eurofound], 2002, 2017; Davoine et al., 2008; European Commission, 2008), what is known as "dual presence" (Farné et al., 2012). In many cases, these variables have been incorporated as part of the job quality index, but few studies consider the objective or subjective dimensions of these variables as determinants in the probability of having worse working conditions. The evidence in this line is scarce for Latin American countries and Chile is no exception in this regard. Although studies have been carried from an objective approach, they do not consider factors associated with work-family reconciliation for both sexes in the analysis.

This article aims to analyze the effect of work-family reconciliation on overall job quality and its objective and subjective dimensions in line with the contributions of recent international literature. A validated and reliable index with a gender focus is developed centering on the working population in Chile, which could be replicable in other contexts. The study is organized as follows. In section 2, a theoretical discussion of job quality and studies that incorporate the dimensions of gender equity and work-family reconciliation is presented. In section 3, the research hypothesis is formulated based on data from the National Survey on Employment, Work, Health, and Quality of Life of Male and Female Workers in Chile (*Encuesta nacional de empleo, trabajo, salud y calidad de vida de trabajadores y trabajadoras de Chile*, ENETS 2009-2010). Section 4 presents the empirical estimation strategy, proposes a multidimensional index of job quality subjected to validity and reliability tests, and examines the effect of gender, the need for work-family reconciliation, and being a sole caregiver. Finally, the results are discussed in section 5 and the conclusions are presented in section 6.

2. Discussions on job quality

2.1. Main dimensions from a multidimensional perspective

Job quality has been defined in broad terms as "the set of factors linked to work that influence the economic, social, psychological, and health well-being of workers" (Reinecke & Valenzuela, 2000: 29). This concept has made it possible to understand the relationship between high quality jobs and better working conditions, professional development, worker training, or the reduction in unemployment. It also provides information with a view to increasing productivity, the competitiveness of economies, and social welfare (Dahl et al., 2009; Davoine et al., 2008; European Commission, 2001). The conceptualization and measurement of job quality contain elements that can be classified as objective and subjective, understood as two dimensions that include independent but related indicators. The objective dimension refers to the working environment, work autonomy and control, working conditions, and job security, while the subjective dimension refers to individual work experiences related to satisfaction, attitudes, and motivation. Depending on the information

obtained from national surveys or administrative records, studies have focused on one or both of these dimensions.

The first studies on job quality in industrialized countries focused on the objective dimension, particularly working conditions and wages. However, following the development of the theory of compensatory wage differentials, human capital and physical and contractual security were also incorporated in the analyses. Additional aspects of employment have subsequently been considered, such as job stability, social protection, and occupational health; issues related to infrastructure and equipment, such as lighting, ergonomics, technology, and management systems (Vieira & Díaz-Serrano, 2005, as cited in Díaz-Chao et al., 2015); or labor market security and the quality of the working environment (Cazes et al., 2015).

In Latin America, most job quality indexes have been developed based on a social or labor policy perspective with a focus on the objective dimension. The most recent research in this line has examined indicators associated with remuneration, stability, and job benefits (Flores & Salas, 2015), as well as working hours, unionization, training, and non-wage benefits (Weller & Roethlisberger, 2011; Ramos et al., 2015), job stability (Arriagada et al., 2018; Weller and Roethlisberger, 2011), vacation entitlement (Ramos et al., 2015), and the physical conditions of employment (Arriagada et al., 2018). Other studies have examined the relationship between aspects of mental health and various psychosocial factors and job precariousness, understood as low job quality measured by objective indicators related to working conditions (Anseloaga et al., 2016). In the most recent study, three dimensions considered important for workers and the capabilities generated by their employment situation were selected: income, job security, and employment conditions (Senhbruch et al., 2020).

In Chile, as in other countries in the region, most analyses have addressed this phenomenon from an objective perspective, with the most frequently studied variables being income, social security or social protection, and having a contract or job stability. To these, we have added the type of working day (Alarcón & Santos, 2008; Anseloaga et al., 2016), working conditions (MacClure, 2008), training (Ruiz-Tagle & Sehnbruch, 2011, 2015; Sehnbruch, 2012), job duration, intersectionality between class and gender (Aguilar et al., 2016), and access to childcare (Berthelon et al., 2020).

One of the limitations of this type of studies is that they do not take into account subjective aspects thought to be relevant for job quality (Reinecke & Valenzuela, 2000; Iglesias Fernández et al., 2011). The subjective dimension considers workers' perceptions of employment as intrinsically meaningful and challenging, the trust it generates, and as a source of job satisfaction (Kalleberg & Vaisey, 2005; Green, 2006). Also in this line, subjective rating scales have been developed to examine the relationship between work and personal life, ranging from displeasure to pleasure, from anxiety to comfort, or from depression to enthusiasm (Warr, 1999). However, they do not contemplate all relevant dimensions of work (Dahl et al., 2009; Díaz-Chao et al., 2015;

Kalleberg & Vaisey, 2005; Valenzuela, 2001). In Chile, the subjective dimension has been integrated through the study of job motivation and perceived control over the work process (Aguilar et al., 2016).

In addition to the various aspects that have been addressed in the literature, researchers have agreed on the need for a multidimensional approach to job quality that considers objective and subjective dimensions as being complementary (Davoine & Erhel, 2006; Kalleberg & Vaisey, 2005; Pineda, 2007). For example, institutional mechanisms have been analyzed in relation to the structure of job quality, thus going beyond the strict objective/subjective division to explain differences in autonomy and job security according to 1) skill specificity, 2) power of workers, and 3) employment protection (Esser & Olsen, 2011).

Therefore, the definition of job quality as a "general state of satisfaction, which includes objective aspects of material well-being, satisfactory relationships in the physical and social environment, and objectively perceived health; and subjective aspects of physical, psychological, and social well-being" (Díaz-Chao et al., 2015: 4) is more accurate to determine the level of objective and subjective well-being that workers express or have of their job. In addition, it points to perceptions about having good or bad jobs, and sheds light on the influence of these perceptions on decisions regarding labor participation.

In the last ten years, various international organizations have developed job quality indexes incorporating both objective and subjective dimensions and made important contributions to multidimensional measurements. One such index was developed by the European Commission and included intrinsic job quality, skills and professional development, health and safety, flexibility, gender equality, inclusion and access, diversity and non-discrimination, organization and work-life balance, dialogue and participation, and performance. However, this initiative was criticized for lacking a theoretical grounding and indicators that capture work effort and wages, and instead be driven by pre-existing policy objectives (Green, 2006). A new proposal considered these arguments and sought to merge administrative and survey data to include both monetary and non-monetary indicators, such as pay and fringe benefits, job security, intrinsic job rewards, work intensity, skills, and autonomy and control (Dahl et al., 2009).

Another example is the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), which uses a measurement covering 11 dimensions (Eurofound, 2017). Using data from the EWCS, Green et al. (2013) constructed an index that considered four aspects of job quality: work quality, work intensity, good physical environment, and working time quality. Crespo et al. (2017) developed another index that incorporates 11 dimensions: pay, autonomy, intensity, job security, physical working conditions, health, learning, and promotion prospects in the objective dimension; and work-life balance, intrinsic rewards, and interpersonal relationships in the subjective dimension. The influence of the EWCS has gone beyond the study of European countries and contributed to the general understanding of the phenomenon, making it a model of reference for implementation in less developed countries (Arriagada et al., 2018).

The growing body of knowledge on employment has also revealed that the concepts of job quality, quality of employment, and good jobs are often interchangeable in international discussions (Sehnbruch, 2012) when similar measurements are used. Moreover, as has been seen, there is consensus regarding the need for a multidimensional and multidisciplinary approach that considers both macro and micro aspects of labor relations, institutions, and labor market outcomes (Iglesias Fernández et al., 2011) to increase the sensitivity of measurements in each country. However, few studies have incorporated objective and subjective aspects, particularly in the case of Latin American countries, among other reasons because the databases collect only objective data (Pineda, 2007). At most, aspects such as motivation or job satisfaction, among many others, are included in some cases (Alarcón & Santos, 2008).

2.2. Gender, work-family reconciliation, and job quality

The reconciliation of different spheres of life is a phenomenon that has been conceptualized only since increasing numbers of women have joined the labor market. Work-family reconciliation can be defined as a strategy that provides men and women equal opportunities to build a society based on workers' quality of life. As a strategy, it gives priority to the use of resources to respond in parallel to family and work responsibilities under institutional and cultural logics that integrate and create conditions and dilemmas in personal and social life (Bustelo & Peterson, 2005; Oechsle & Beaufaÿs, 2017).

Following the logic of reconciling work and family, several studies have constructed an index on job quality that reflects the differentiated and unequal reality between the sexes. These studies have analyzed salaries and labor participation disaggregated by sex (Casanueva et al., 2008), the reconciliation of work with family life and childcare (Davoine et al., 2008; Eurofound, 2012; Farné et al., 2012), employability and access to parental leave and childcare services (European Commission, 2001; 2008), and the work-life balance (Eurofound, 2017).

As the previous surveys and studies indicate, although variables related to reconciliation have been incorporated only recently in job quality indexes, greater attention has been given to family and work responsibilities and the devaluation of women's unpaid work (Reinecke & Valenzuela, 2000) and an approach that incorporates the work-life balance is needed (Eurofound, 2012). However, the need for reconciliation and being a sole caregiver as determinants of men and women's labor market insertion remain to be shown.

In Latin America, there is evidence to support the relevance of gender in explaining differences in job quality, as the results point in different directions and exclusively address the objective dimension. A Mexican study (Flores & Salas, 2015) showed that women with professional studies (an area where gender gaps have begun to narrow) earn lower salaries than their male counterparts, but present a better combination of stability, time commitment, and benefits. The study also indicates the need to understand multidimensionality

in assessing the nuances of labor gaps because although young men enjoy greater job stability and receive more benefits, women have a better salary-time commitment ratio, which questions the assumption of a generalized labor disadvantage for women. A Chilean research study, like other international studies, confirmed that in conditions of labor precariousness (i.e., lower pay, shift work, less stable contracts, subcontractor employers, discontinuous work trajectories, low-skilled positions), women are more vulnerable to psychosocial risks (Anseloaga et al., 2016). An analysis of the quality of Colombian employment showed that while women workers lag behind men in income and stability, men are better off in terms of weekly working hours and social security coverage. Nonetheless, these results are not conclusive, since a proper interpretation requires that they be disaggregated into relatively homogeneous subgroups by education and occupation (Pineda, 2007).

The incorporation of a gender approach, the disaggregation of data by sex, and the inclusion of subjective aspects in job quality measurements have given greater visibility to the relationship between family and work responsibilities and the devaluation of women's unpaid work (Reinecke & Valenzuela, 2000), while at the same time highlighting the need for studies that incorporate aspects that enable analyzing the work-life balance and its relationship with job quality (Eurofound, 2012). What has not yet been shown, at least in the region, is how specific factors with a strong gender component, such as the need for reconciliation and being the sole caregiver of dependents, affect men and women's job quality.

3. Hypothesis

This study tests a hypothesis regarding the effect of certain aspects of work-family reconciliation on overall job quality and its subjective and objective dimensions.

We argue that by assuming the exclusive care of dependents, as well as engaging in both domestic work and employment, the overall job quality of women is lower. Consequently, we hypothesize that being female, a sole caregiver, and the need for work-family reconciliation have a negative influence on job quality, although the level of incidence differs depending on the dimension.

4. Data, variables and methods

4.1. Data

For the analysis, data from the National Survey on Employment, Work, Health, and Quality of Life of Male and Female Workers in Chile (ENETS 2009-2010) conducted by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Chile are used. The survey contains information on employment and working conditions, job stability, contractual arrangements,

and physical, biological, ergonomic, and chemical conditions of the work environment.

Additionally, the ENETS provides information on psychosocial aspects of control, management, hierarchy and tasks, and company characteristics. Regarding the quality of life and health of workers, it includes information on work-family reconciliation, lifestyles, quality of work life, health status, health satisfaction and self-perceived health, and access to and satisfaction with health systems. The survey also includes sociodemographic data.

The target population comprises persons 15 years of age and older residing in urban and rural areas engaged in some type of paid work. The sample design was probabilistic, stratified, and multistage, and the total national sample includes 9,503 people from the 15 regions of Chile (Ministerio de Salud, Dirección del Trabajo e Instituto de Seguridad Laboral, 2011).

4.2. Variables

We estimated a multidimensional job quality index using the information on job characteristics. The index incorporated objective and subjective dimensions (see Table 1).

The job quality indexes were constructed for dependent employees. This group has access to employment benefits and is subject to regulations on working time and conditions. The questions used to construct the job quality index (i.e., type of contract, authority, job satisfaction, etc.) were applied only to this group and enabled observing the effects of firm size and type of sector on job quality.

Although values were missing for most of the variables, firm size was imputed. For this purpose, logical validation and a subsequent logistic regression model were used (see Table 3).

To construct the subdimensions, multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) was used. This technique allows reducing the number of variables for questions referring to subjective and objective conditions captured in a measure called the "job quality subdimension." Additionally, MCA allows working with a large amount of information and a minimum of modeling assumptions. Finally, MCA is more appropriate for discrete variables and ordinal categories.

In the objective dimension, MCA was applied to the variables associated with social security access, income, working hours, and job stability to construct a synthetic indicator of working conditions that summarized the information on these variables. Table 2 shows the variables considered in each dimension and the results of the reliability analysis for the variables to which MCA was applied. Cronbach's alpha results indicate that the dimensions are acceptable.

Given that the dimensions were on different scales, they were standardized to values from 1 to 100, where a lower value indicated lower job quality. The overall job quality index (JQI) was calculated as follows:

Table 1. Dimensions of job quality

Objective dimensions	Subjective dimensions
Physical environment	Job satisfaction
Authority	Intrinsic rewards
Job stability	Opportunity for development and use of skills
Income	Job security
Access to social security	
Working hours	

$$ICE_j = \sum_{i=1}^{7} a_i * D_{ij}$$

Where D_{ij} is the value of dimension i of individual j, and corresponds to its weighting. $a_i = 1/7$ was considered because the weighting of the indexes in the international literature uses both normative and empirical criteria and there are no specific rules (Aguilar et al., 2016; Guergoat-Larivière & Marchand, 2012).

Additionally, the analysis considered three variables of relevance in gender and labor market studies that capture workers' family and caregiving responsibilities. The first variable is *gender*, which took the value of 1 if the person was female and 0 if male. The second variable captures the *need for reconciliation*. To measure this variable, an index was constructed based on questions D54a, "Are household chores left undone if the person does not do them?"; D54b, "Do you think about household and family chores?"; D54c, "Are there situations in which you would need to be at work and at home at the same time?"; D54d, "In the event of a problem at home, does the person leave work to solve it?". The index was estimated by MCA and showed a reliability of 0.7359, while the first dimension showed a principal inertia of 61.35%. The third variable captured being *in sole charge of a dependent person* (question D50, "Apart from your work, do you take care of small children, the elderly, the handicapped, or the chronically ill?"). This question refers to the burden of caregiving. In this case, the variable was recoded and took the value of 1 if the person was the sole caregiver and 0 otherwise.

The inclusion of the *gender* variable indicates a female bias in reconciliation, as the need to achieve a work-life balance is perceived in society as mainly a woman's issue (Albert et al., 2010). The last two variables indicate the level of burden assumed by employed persons: household tasks and concerns, caregiving, and dealing with dependents' health issues. These two variables were included to determine the extent to which resources are available to facilitate work-family reconciliation. (Marcenaro, 2008). Polynomials of the reconciliation needs index were considered to capture their non-linear effect on job quality.

Demographic variables were also incorporated in the model, such as age in natural logarithm to capture the idea that as age increases, job quality increases at a decreasing rate. Additionally, we included skills level (recoded as high manual skills, high non-manual skills, low manual skills, and low

Table 2. Description of dimensions and associated ENETS variables

Dimension	Variables ENETS 2009-2010	Descriptive statistics
Access to social security: pensions	A70. Are you affiliated to a pension system (for your retirement)?	
Reliability: not estimable	1. Yes, AFP 2. Yes, INP 3. Yes, Caja de Previsión de la Defensa Nacional 4. Yes, Dirección de Previsión de Carabineros 5. Yes, other	
	A71. Are you contributing or does your employer contribute to the pension system for your retirement?	
	1. Yes; 2. No	
Access to social security: health	A72. Which social security health system do you belong to, either as a contributor or as a dependent?	
Reliability: not estimable	1 to 5. FONASA public system 6. FF. AA y de Orden 7. ISAPRE 8. None	
Income	A48. Typically, out of these income brackets, how much is your monthly liquid income adding all your jobs together?	
Reliability		
Not estimable		
Working hours	A41. Last week, considering all your paid jobs, on average, how many hours per day did you work from Monday to Friday?	
Reliability		
Not estimable		
Job stability	A25. Your contract or agreement is:	
Reliability	1. Open-ended 2. Fixed term 3. For work and services	
	4. Apprenticeship/Training	
Not estimable	A27. In the last year, have you had a temporary contract, that is, a fixed-term or a work and services contract?	
	1. Yes 2. No	
Working conditions	Access to social security old age: A70, A71	x = 66.98367
Principal inertia 1st dimension: 30.69	Access to social security health: A72	s = 11.54138
Reliability	Income: A48	n = 5836
Cronbach's alpha: 0.28	Working hours: A41	
	Job stability: A25, A27	
Physical environment	B8a-B8u.	x = 77.93933
	In your current workday, how long are you exposed to...? Physical, chemical, biological and ergonomic hazards.	
Principal inertia 1st dimension: 56.61	1. All day 2. Half of the day 3. Occasionally 4. Never	s = 17.1815
Reliability		n = 5511
Cronbach's alpha: 0.8445		
Authority	In your job, are you personally involved in or at least consulted about decisions made?	x = 11.65442
Principal inertia 1st dimension: 74.12	A16. To hire or fire workers	s = 22.16489
Reliability	A17. To change the goods produced or the services provided by your company or organization	n = 5722
Cronbach's alpha: 0.84	A18. To propose changes in the way the work is organized	
	A19. About the budget	

Table 2. Description of dimensions and associated ENETS variables

Dimension	Variables ENETS 2009-2010	Descriptive statistics
	For each item answer 1. Yes, always 2. Yes, sometimes 3. No, never	
Job satisfaction	How satisfied are you with...?	x = 32.07915
Principal inertia 1st dimension: 52.11	C2a. The opportunities for promotion or improvement in your job?	s = 17.44401
Reliability	C2b. The atmosphere among the people who work with you (peers, colleagues)	n = 5611
Cronbach's alpha: 0.6937	C2c. Your working environment 1 Satisfied 2 Slightly satisfied 3 Neither satisfied or dissatisfied 4 Satisfied 5 Very satisfied	
Intrinsic rewards	You will now be asked a series of questions about some of your work experiences.	x = 77.74501
Main inertia 1st dimension: 62.74	C1q. Importance of the work	s = 28.09913
Reliability	C1r. Motivation and commitment to the job	n = 5747
Cronbach's alpha: 0.8075	1 Never 2 Rarely 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always D2a. Do you enjoy the work you do? 1 Never 2 Rarely 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always	
Opportunity for development and use of skills	C1o. Do you have the opportunity to learn new things on the job?	x = 62.45854
Principal inertia 1st dimension: 50.82	1 Never 2 Rarely 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always	s = 33.92579
Reliability	C1p. Does your job give you the opportunity to use your skills?	n = 5.700
Cronbach's alpha: 0.8299	1 Never 2 Rarely 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always	
Job security	A21. You feel your employment relationship is:	x = 66.10126
Reliability	C1p. Does your job give you the opportunity to use your skills?	n = 5700
Cronbach's alpha: 0.8299	1 Never 2 Rarely 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always A66k. Are you worried about being fired or not having your contract renewed? 1 Never 2 Rarely 3 Often 4 Always	

Note: AFP, retirement fund administrators; INP, Pension Standardization Institute; Caja de Previsión de la Defensa Nacional, National Defense Pension Fund; Dirección de Previsión de Carabineros, Carbineros Pension Directorate; FONASA, National Health Fund; FF. AA y de Orden, Armed Forces and Forces of Order; ISAPRE, private health insurance institutions.

Source: Own elaboration based on ENETS 2009-2010 data.

non-manual skills), economic sector (recoded from the OECD 2001 classification into the categories of services distribution, social services, personal services, services production, extractive sector, and productive sector), firm size (recoded into micro, small, medium-sized, and large categories), and region of residence.

4.3. Methods

To analyze the relationship between the gender variables and job quality, the following model was estimated:

$$ICE_j = \beta_0 + \beta_1\, sex + \beta_2\, caregiver + \beta_3\, reconciliaton\ needs_j + \beta_4\, reconciliaton\ needs_j^2 + \beta_5\, reconciliaton\ needs_j^3 + \gamma Z_j + e_j$$

Where is a vector of workers', firms', and geographical characteristics (age in natural logarithm, skills level, economic sector, firm size, and region of residence). We assume that is a stochastic error that distributes . Domestic service workers were excluded from the analysis because information on firm size is lacking for these employees and there is no diversity in the economic sector to which they belong.

We used an ordinary least squares regression model to estimate the relationships between job quality and the gender variables of interest: sex, sole caregiver, and need for work-family reconciliation. In addition, a two-step weighted least squares and group weighted least squares regression model was estimated to avoid problems of heteroscedasticity.

In the first step of the two-step weighted least squares model, a linear model was estimated on the errors of a homoscedastic linear model considering all the study variables. In the second step, the squared error predictions were used to weight the model to be estimated. In the group weighted least squares model, the errors of the homoscedastic model were estimated by group in a first step. The groups were constructed according to firm size, skills level, and sex. Robust estimation of the standard errors of the estimators for unspecified heteroscedasticity was applied in both models.

Outliers were detected and eliminated from a first estimation. Therefore, the final analysis was based on a sample of 4452 cases of dependent employees for whom all the information needed to construct the job quality indexes and the independent variables was available.

The variance inflation factor (VIF) scores of the independent variables in the least squares model ranged from 1.06 to 2.45, for the two-step weighted least model the VIF scores ranged from 1.06 to 2.22, and for the group weighted least model they ranged from 1.06 to 2.30 for all independent variables, except for the polynomials of the reconciliation needs index. In summary, there were no multicollinearity problems.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Descriptive statistics and bivariate relationships

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics, imputed cases, and outliers for the model variables for the sample of dependent employees. The mean of the overall job quality index is 49.71, while for the objective dimension it is 40.91 and for the subjective dimension it is 60.61. In addition, there were less women

Table 3. Descriptive data of the variables

	Total cases	Imputed cases	Outliers	Mo%	SD	Mín.	Màx.
Job quality indexes	4.452						
Overall job quality index			224	49.71	15.04	5.94	97.12
Subjective job quality index			305	60.61	18.3	5.44	100
Objective job quality index			251	40.91	13.35	1	95.79
Gender variables							
Female				32.97			
Sole caregiver				5.64			
Reconciliation needs index				29.72	26.41	1	100
Demographic characteristics							
Age				40.63	12.29	16	79
Age in logarithm				3.66	0.32	2.77	4.37
Skills level							
Low manual skills				34.48			
High manual skills				19.27			
Low non-manual skills				37.29			
High non-manual skills				8.96			
Economic sector							
Services distribution				22.93			
Social services				19.65			
Personal services				6.06			
Services production				10.04			
Extractive sector				20.69			
Productive sector				20.62			
Firm size							
Micro		250		24.46			
Small		304		24.82			
Medium-sized		111		15.23			
Large		339		35.49			
Region							
Live in Metropolitan Region				18.80			

Source: *ENETS* 2009-2010.

(32.97%) than men (67.03%) in the sample, the mean of the need for reconciliation index was 29.72, and the proportion of sole caregivers represents less than 10% of the sample (5.64%).

Figures, means tests, and simple linear correlations were used to analyze the differences and the association between job quality according to the gender variables (Figure 1).

The test of means indicated that the overall job quality of women (50.42 ±0.38) was slightly higher than that of men (49.37 ±0.28), $t = -2.18$, $p = 0.02$. Moreover, women had a 10% higher mean (43.37±0.30) than

men (39.70 ±0.26), t = 9.26, p = 0.00 in the objective dimensions. No significant differences were found in the subjective dimensions, as the mean for women was 60.20 ±0.48, while the mean for men was 60.82 ±0.40, t = 1.05, p = 0.29.

Overall job quality was lower for sole caregivers (46.67 ±0.87) than for those who were not sole caregivers (49.90 ±0.23), t = 3.31, p = 0.00. Significant differences were found in subjective job quality: sole caregivers had a mean of 56.51, ±1.13, while noncaregivers had a mean of 60.86 ±0.28, t = 3.67, p = 0.00. No differences were found for objective job quality.

Although those with a greater need to reconcile work and family showed a lower level of job quality, the linear correlation is weak. For the overall index $P_{COExNecCon}$ = –0.05, for the objective index $P_{COExNecCon}$ = –0.002, and for the subjective index $P_{CSExNecCon}$ = –0.06. Visually, this appeared to be a non-linear relationship because overall quality increases again at higher levels of need due to an increase in the subjective dimension rather than in the objective dimension.

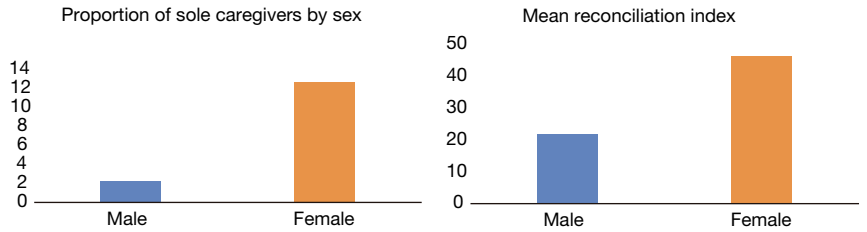
More women than men are sole caregivers – approximately one in 10 women is a caregiver (12.67%) – while there are about two female caregivers for every 100 men (2.18%). In addition, the mean reconciliation needs index for women (46.29) is twice that of men (21.56) (Figure 2).

The above results suggest that there are differences and a slight association between the sex variables and the different indexes, mainly in the subjective domain. Additionally, the analyses indicate a non-linear relationship. This is explained by the fact that when reconciliation levels are high, overall job quality is also higher due to an increase in the subjective indicators rather than

Figure 1. Descriptive statistics of means

Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 2. Descriptive statistics of means



Source: Own elaboration.

in the objective ones. A more in-depth analysis of the directions of the subdimensions of the indexes is needed.

5.2. Effects of gender and reconciliation variables on job quality

The group weighted least squares model estimated 25.6% of the variance of the overall job quality index [$F(18, 4433) = 85.44$, $p < .000$]. A negative association was found for all the gender variables and their effects were significant. The variable with the highest predictive power in the model was being female (B = –3.525, $p < .001$), followed by being a sole caregiver (B = –2.3999, $p < .01$) and the need for work-family reconciliation showed a nonlinear relationship.

This suggests that, after controlling for the rest of the variables, being female or a sole caregiver is associated with lower job quality. Family responsibilities are, to a lesser extent, determinants of employment conditions as are gender and being the only person responsible for the care of a dependent. No interaction effects were found between being female, the sole caregiver, and the need for reconciliation. Therefore, these aspects should be considered as separate within the workfamily reconciliation phenomenon.

Regarding the objective dimensions (social security, physical environment, authority, job stability, income, and working hours), the group weighted least squares model estimated 33.5% of the variance [$F(18.4586) = 127.86$, $p < .000$]. Although female gender has a negative association (B = –1.117, $p < .01$) and the need for work-family reconciliation shows significant effects (B = –0.017, $p < .01$), being a sole caregiver was not significant (B = –0.70, $p > .05$).

As for the subjective dimension (job satisfaction, intrinsic rewards, opportunities for development and use of skills, job security), the model estimated 17.9% of the variance [$F(18.4785) = 62.40$, $p < .000$]. Being female (B = –3.95, $p < .001$) has a negative association, and the need for work-family reconciliation (B = –.046, $p < .001$) has a nonlinear association. However, no significant association was found for being a sole caregiver (B = –1.494, $p > .05$).

Moreover, the importance of being female in this measurement can be explained by sociosexual theories (Anker, 1997; Nicolás Martínez et al., 2010) that highlight sex as a determinant of women's labor market situation, while

being a sole caregiver reveals that, independent of sex, it is a situation that threatens their participation in quality jobs.

As regards the effect of sex on the objective and subjective dimensions of job quality, the evidence is not conclusive. Some studies have shown that women have a slight advantage over men in the labor market, but lag behind in wages, development opportunities, job security, time autonomy, and suffer worse emotional conditions (Stier & Yaish, 2014). In contrast, other studies have shown that women earn lower wages, but have higher quality working time and intrinsic work (Eurofound, 2012). In Chile, the data show a decrease in the objective dimension of job quality for women during the first half of the 21st century (2001-2006) compared to the previous five years, but an increase for men (Alarcón & Santos, 2008).

Factors associated with the burden of reproductive work and reconciliation needs can be considered as a sociocultural barrier for men and women to access better working conditions, however, they affect women more (Montero & Rau, 2015). Evidence for Chile indicates that female workers with family responsibilities resort to part-time work to reconcile domestic tasks with employment. The transition from full-time to part-time employment is frequently associated with maternity and dependent care, which does not imply an increase in well-being (Rau, 2008). In general, international data show that these shifts are characterized by poorer working conditions, limited opportunities for development, and low wages. In Spain, the part-time employment rate is higher for workers with temporary contracts than permanent ones and is higher among women in both permanent and temporary employment than among men. These data indicate the poorer quality of part-time employment, as well as the greater temporality and precariousness of female work (Arroyo et al., 2012). Additionally, these jobs require low qualifications, which affects skills development and job satisfaction and leads to low-wage trajectories, although wages partially recover when shifting to full-time occupations (Connolly & Gregory, 2008; Hirsch, 2005).

5.3. Other factors affecting subjective and objective dimensions of job quality

The results shown in Table 4 refer to personal and labor determinants that affect job quality. As regards the personal determinants, age seems to reflect the trend observed in other studies: subjective aspects of job quality obtain higher scores after the age of 30 and the effect after the age of 40 (Clark, 2005).

Additionally, the analyses showed that skills have a positive effect on job quality, both for the overall index and for the two dimensions, although the effect is stronger for the objective dimension. Previous studies at both the national and international level have found that workers with high non-manual skills had higher job satisfaction (Iglesias Fernández et al., 2011) and higher job quality in the objective dimension (Aguilar et al., 2016).

Another factor considered in the analysis was the economic sector. Compared to social services (the baseline), the other economic sectors showed lower

Table 4. Coefficients of determinants of overall job quality and by dimension

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Variables	**Overall job quality**	**Objective dimension**	**Subjective dimension**
Gender characteristics			
Sex: female	–3.525***	–1.117**	–3.945***
	(0.513)	(0.341)	(0.622)
Sole caregiver	–2.399**	–0.702	–1.494
	(0.778)	(0.504)	(0.963)
Need for reconciliation	0.144**	0.067*	0.210***
	(0.048)	(0.031)	(0.057)
Need for reconciliation^2	–0.005***	–0.002**	–0.007***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Need for reconciliation^3	0.00004***	0.000014*	0.00005***
	(9.50e-06)	(6.20e-06)	(0.00001)
Demographic and job characteristics			
Age in logarithm	4.282***	3.150***	3.868***
	(0.632)	(0.413)	(0.764)
High manual skills	3.308***	–0.950*	5.739***
	(0.609)	(0.410)	(0.724)
Low manual skills	11.350***	9.049***	10.452***
	(0.551)	(0.356)	(0.670)
High non-manual skills	17.881***	15.590***	15.988***
	(0.766)	(0.610)	(0.871)
Firm characteristics			
Economic sector: services distribution	–4.659***	0.142	–7.001***
	(0.674)	(0.447)	(0.818)
Economic sector: personal services	–7.586***	–2.487***	–8.594***
	(0.877)	(0.561)	–1.076
Economic sector: services production	–3.505***	1.229*	–5.833***
	(0.755)	(0.497)	(0.925)
Economic sector: extractive	–4.938***	–3.257***	–5.424***
	(0.747)	(0.494)	(0.885)
Economic sector: productive	–3.709***	–2.884***	–4.635***
	(0.734)	(0.511)	(0.852)
Micro	–2.060***	–1.084**	–2.880***
	(0.557)	(0.359)	(0.662)
Small	–3.048***	–0.337	–4.143***
	(0.513)	(0.343)	(0.616)
Medium-sized	–2.148***	–0.375	–3.154***
	(0.578)	(0.394)	(0.700)
Metropolitan Region	–2.254***	1.291***	–3.262***
	(0.506)	(0.319)	(0.616)
Constant	34.690***	25.451***	49.145***
	–2,537	–1.644	–3.050
Observations	4.452	4.605	4.804
R-squared	0.256	0.335	0.179
F	85.44	127.9	62.40
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.253	0.333	0.176

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

Baseline characteristics: Firm size: large; Economic sector: social services; Sex: male; Not living in Metro-
Fuente: *Encuesta nacional de empleo, trabajo, salud y calidad de vida* (ENETS 2009-2010).

Source: ENETS 2009-2010.

overall job quality, especially in personal services and services distribution. Unlike international evidence indicating that the influence of the service sector occurs mainly through objective dimensions (Crespo et al., 2017), our results show that it influences both dimensions, which is consistent with international evidence that service sector jobs are better than agriculture and manufacturing jobs (Simões et al., 2015).

Compared to large firms, which offer higher job quality, the other categories have a lower average, especially micro and small firms. In previous studies, it has been observed that small firms offer better quality in the subjective dimension. International evidence has shown that women perceive greater job security or job stability in small firms (Morton, 2004) as these firms are less likely to undergo changes, mergers, or acquisitions (Kok et al., 2011). In addition, they offer advantages with respect to physical working conditions, work intensity, job autonomy, the work-life balance, and intrinsic rewards, but disadvantages in terms of salary and interpersonal relationships (Crespo et al., 2017). In Chile, however, evidence has been found that small firms offer low quality jobs for both men and women (Mac-Clure, 2008). This is consistent with our results, particularly in the measurement of the subjective dimension of the phenomenon.

A final relevant result is that living in the Metropolitan Region has a negative effect on overall job quality and the subjective dimension, but positive effects on the objective dimension. These findings coincide with the results of Aguilar et al. (2016): living in the Metropolitan Region has a positive impact on the objective dimensions, but a negative impact on the subjective dimensions. The data indicate that living in another region is associated with poorer objective working conditions, but greater opportunities for development and use of skills and higher intrinsic rewards.

5.4. Robustness tests

A series of robustness tests were performed and are shown in Table 5. The job quality indexes proposed by Ruiz-Tagle and Sehnbruch (2011), Farné et al. (2012), and Aguilar et al. (2016) were reconstructed. The authors' specifications were followed using the variables available in the ENETS and similar variables were used when they were not available.

Similar results were obtained for the different objective job quality models. Although the negative association between the gender variables (being a woman, single caregiver, and work–family reconciliation needs) and job quality was generally maintained, the effect level of some of the variables changed and others lost significance. In the model of Ruiz-Tagle and Sehnbruch (2011), the effect of gender, being a sole caregiver, and the need index decreased. In the model of Farné et al. (2012), the effect of all three variables increased, but the need for reconciliation index lost significance. In the objective quality index model of Aguilar et al. (2016), the effect of being a woman and the need for reconciliation was maintained, but being a sole caregiver was not significant.

Table 5. Robustness test models

Variable	Global model Ruiz-Tagle and Senhbruch, 2011	Global model Farné et al., 2012	Global model obj. Aguilar et al., 2016	Global model sub. Aguilar et al., 2016
Gender variables				
Sex: female	–0.214***	–4.392***	–6.627***	–4.723***
	(0.035)	(0.680)	(0.556)	(0.734)
Sole caregiver	–0.135*	–2.292*	–0.978	–1.976
	(0.055)	–1.094	(0.889)	–1.161
Need for reconciliation	0.008**	0.089	0.181***	0.131*
	(0.003)	(0.060)	(0.049)	(0.065)
Need for reconciliation^2	–0.000**	–0.003	–0.005***	–0.002
	(0.000)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Need for reconciliation^3	0.000*	0.000	0.000**	0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Demographic characteristics				
Age in logarithm	0.477***	6.542***	5.849***	4.085***
	(0.041)	(0.800)	(0.657)	(0.866)
Skills level	0.255***	3.577***	2.669***	6.553***
High manual skills	(0.037)	(0.720)	(0.597)	(0.790)
	0.462***	9.918***	8.879***	7.133***
Low non-manual skills	(0.035)	(0.674)	(0.558)	(0.736)
	0.711***	24.062***	22.475***	14.744***
High non-manual skills	(0.055)	–1.098	(0.888)	–1.165
	0.477***	6.542***	5.849***	4.085***
Economic sector				
Services distribution	–0.238***	–4.031***	–0.794	–5.269***
	(0.045)	(0.880)	(0.719)	(0.946)
Personal services	–0.441***	–8.001***	–4.064***	–5.646***
	(0.060)	–1.185	(0.967)	–1.270
Services production	–0.258***	–0.709	-0.496	–2.641*
	(0.052)	–1.014	(0.834)	–1.095
Sector: extractive	–0.375***	–4.090***	–4.337***	–5.086***
	(0.049)	(0.957)	(0.788)	–1.039
Sector: productive	–0.334***	–1.520	–2.340**	–5.244***
	(0.049)	(0.958)	(0.787)	–1.040
Firm size				
Micro	–0.518***	–16.027***	–9.615***	0.972
	(0.034)	(0.664)	(0.549)	(0.724)
Small	–0.200***	–5.599***	–4.257***	–1.992**
	(0.034)	(0.661)	(0.545)	(0.716)
Medium-sized	–0.187***	–3.956***	–3.028***	–2.677**
	(0.039)	(0.773)	(0.635)	(0.833)
Region				
Metropolitan Region	0.091**	0.711	2.366***	–4.217***
	(0.033)	(0.640)	(0.528)	(0.684)
Constant	0.635***	39.114***	39.490***	51.374***
	(0.164)	–3.197	–2.632	–3.471
Observations	5.024	4.967	5.217	5.11
R-squared	0.177	0.273	0.259	0.088
F	59.64	103.4	100.8	27.38
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.174	0.271	0.256	0.0850

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

Baseline characteristics: firm size: large; economic sector: social services; sex: male; not living in Metropolitan Region

Source: ENETS 2009-2010.

Regarding the subjective dimension, the model of Aguilar et al. (2016) considers indexes related to the perception of control and work motivation. No significant effects were found for being a single caregiver. Although the non-linear relationship of the reconciliation needs index was not significant, it is similar to the one in our model.

We restricted the selection to people between 25 and 55 years of age to avoid possible selectivity effects of the younger and older groups. People under 25 are characterized by having working conditions that may be transitory due to studies or the combination of education and work. In addition, most live at home with their families and have family income transfers. People over 55 years of age reduce their working hours to transition to retirement and are less likely to find work. In addition, the pension and health care system can generate incentives for retirement. These criteria ensure the inclusion of cases that reflect personal and firm circumstances on job quality rather than other factors. Ordinary least squares, two-step weighted least squares, and group weighted least squares models were estimated. No differences were found with regard to the results applied to the sample of employed dependents.

In sum, the tests suggested that the main findings are robust to the objective indexes. The association between the gender variables (being a woman, sole caregiver, and the need for reconciliation) and job quality was negative and robust for all forms of measurement and selections made. However, the subjective index proposed by Aguilar et al. (2016) differs from our results, which is likely due to the fact that they capture different phenomena.

6. Conclusions

This study has analyzed the effect of gender, sole care of dependents, and the need for work-family reconciliation on job quality in Chile. For this purpose, a multidimensional index was developed using international and national evidence and showed good reliability. Unlike other research, the subjective dimension of job quality was incorporated in the index (Anseloaga et al., 2016), and aspects related to work-family reconciliation were considered as explanatory factors rather than as indicators of the index (Eurofound, 2002, 2017; Davoine et al., 2008; European Commission, 2008; Farné et al., 2012). This approach has allowed us to assess the effect of these factors as determinants of job precariousness of the subjects analyzed.

The indexes were constructed based on self-reported information. This involves subjective aspects of how individuals perceive themselves with respect to work-family reconciliation. Other factors that capture the objective views of individuals in the labor market, such as skills level, age, as and firm characteristics were also included.

The results showed that overall job quality was lower for women, for those who are sole caregivers, and for those with reconciliation needs. Being a sole caregiver was found to have no effect when the dimensions are considered separately. The effects are greater in the subjective dimension of quality that

includes job satisfaction, intrinsic rewards, opportunities for development and use of skills, and job security. This highlights the importance of developing job quality indexes that consider both objective and subjective factors. Consequently, we can confirm our research hypothesis.

An important finding was that the effect of gender and the sole care of dependents is stronger than the need for work-family reconciliation and that both factors are associated with poorer job quality. This indicates that not having resources or reconciliation strategies for caregiving is a major barrier to quality employment. Therefore, this limitation can be overcome by developing a comprehensive care system based on co-responsibility in which the state, the market, and families participate.

In addition to the above results, it was found that having low skills, working in the personal services sector, in micro firms, the need for work-family reconciliation, and being the sole caregiver in the home have a negative impact on job quality. The subjective dimension shows a similar trend to the overall index, but skills level has a smaller impact, and the productive and social services sectors carry more weight. When considering the objective dimension, differences were also observed. While the negative effect of gender variables is smaller, the positive effect of firm size and skills level increases.

Skills were found to improve job quality in all its dimensions. Given the progressive increase in the presence of women at all educational levels, it is expected that the effect of gender will decrease its incidence in explaining differences in job quality in the near future (Nicolás Martínez et al., 2010). In addition, skills are considered an important factor in production because if quality increases due to the increased skills, job performance will also increase (European Commission, 2001).

Age was found to modify trends in job quality due to changes in the life cycle. This implies that intrinsic opportunities and rewards become relevant in middle age, and participation in employment is a source of protection. However, those who enter and exit the labor market experience a loss of job quality, as they are exposed to risks such as illness, fewer opportunities for mobility, and unemployment.

The heterogeneity of job quality in the economic sectors reflects the social risks to which employed people are exposed. On the one hand, this situation may encourage occupational segregation by sex and not give women real possibilities of participating in the sectors they desire or in those that produce the greatest economic benefits and, on the other hand, may cause other emerging problems in the labor market such as pigeonholing and marginalization.

Although the quality of employment improves in larger firms, it is essential to consider (both for these types of firms and for smaller ones) the reasons why employees prefer larger institutions in order to retain their workers with their respective human capital.

It is important to underline the relevance of both the objective and subjective dimensions to better understand the different aspects in which working conditions manifest themselves and to examine groups in a disadvantaged labor

market position, as is the case of those who must assume caregiving responsibilities. This reveals the complexity of the study of job quality and confirms the relevance of multidimensional studies to capture the effects of various factors, including those related to family-work reconciliation.

Finally, in studies on job quality, it is necessary to consider the particular experience of women, who, due to their historical marginalization from the labor market and the prevalence of social patterns associated with the sexual division of labor, accumulate factors that make them prone to worse working conditions. The current public interest in incorporating more women in the Chilean labor market due to their low participation rates (Comunidad Mujer, 2018) tends to overlook the importance of the conditions of labor insertion. The possibility of single female caregivers holding jobs that protect them from economic fluctuations or are favorable to work-family reconciliation will be insufficient if the welfare conditions of these employees do not improve. To truly improve the overall quality of employment, family behavioral patterns must change, as feminist labor market theorists propose.

In terms of future lines of research, a longitudinal approach to the proposed index is needed, as well as a comparative study with other Latin American countries and other regions to identify whether the variables analyzed here are significant in terms of job quality. In addition, research that addresses more factors of reconciliation, such as the ones proposed here, would be of interest to analyze aspects of the social organization of care (Arriagada, 2011) in the quality of employment not only in terms of individual variables, but also from a public and social perspective (availability and use of childcare centers, economic transfers, support programs for the care of dependents, paid domestic service, among others).

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