

Suvi Heikkinen

(In)Significant Others

The Role of the Spouse in Women and
Men Managers' Careers in Finland



JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS 158

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines work-family integration for women and men managers by focusing on the constructions of career-spouse dynamics in the Finnish socio-cultural context. There are two research objectives in the study. First, the study focuses on the role of a spouse in women and men managers' careers as well as spousal support during their careers as constructed in their narratives. Second, the study focuses on how women and men managers portray and produce gender relations in their narratives. The study follows a narrative approach and the research material consists of 58 (29 women/29 men) managers' narratives. This thesis consists of an introductory essay and four empirical studies.

The study is based on the premise that work and family domains are not separate for managers but rather are associated and interrelated in many ways. The question of what is meant by family is often ignored in organization and management studies, and family is often considered to be a static unit, which fails to acknowledge that it has different members and that they may have different roles at different times. From the perspective of managers' careers, the family is seen more often as a hindrance for women and as an advancement for men.

To expand this one-sided view in a socio-cultural context of relatively high gender equality as Finland, I have two propositions based on my results. Firstly, work-family integration is a phenomenon in which the interdependencies of work and family are shifting, and should not be understood as the same throughout career and life; therefore a career is embedded in both women and men managers' broader context of life. My results showed that spouse is understood as a prominent but not a static component of a manager's career by both women and men. Secondly, family works as an important site of doing gender, and how gender is done in the family has an influence on the career construction. More specific, it is understood as bearing an influence on how gender relations flow within the family. This can be seen then having implications for careers and how work-family integration is organized by managers. More attempts are needed to understand the family and its different members as intertwined with managers' careers.

Keywords: manager, career, family, spouse, work-family integration, gender, doing gender, narratives, Finland

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Jyväskylässä 10.03.2015

Suvi Heikkinen

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LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

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III Heikkinen, S., Lämsä, A-M. & Hiillos, M. 2014. Narratives by women managers about spousal support for their careers. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 30(1): 27-39.

IV Heikkinen, S. & Lämsä, A-M. 2014. Male managers' narratives of spousal support for their career. Submitted for publication.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The investigated topic

Just as there has been considerable concern about the sustainability of environmental resources, in the same way there should be concern for fostering the sustainability of careers (Kossek, Valcour & Lirio, 2014). A crucial factor for enhancing the sustainability of managerial careers is an understanding of the interdependencies in the work and family domains (*ibid.*). Indeed, organizations have been awakened to the need to consider managers' work-family integration in order to increase managers' quality of life, and thereby to exploit their competency and potential resources to the full, and to facilitate longer careers (Burke & Ng, 2006; Aryee, Srinivas & Tan, 2005).

Organizational and technological changes have altered the ways in which managerial work is done. In particular, technological development has resulted in managerial work becoming portable, which in turn has shifted the boundaries of the physical workplace and blurred the boundaries of working time (Duxbury & Smart, 2011). The development of information technology has also flattened organizations in which decision making has been frequently delegated to business units whose managers are now required to interact constantly on a globally basis (McKern, 2003). This all has resulted in a "24/7" economy, meaning that managers are expected to be continuously available to the organization (Carnoy & Castells, 2001; Milliken & Dunn-Jensen, 2005). Yet, in many cases, what managers seem to regret the most in their lives is that they have downplayed their family and have not given enough time and attention to their spouses and children (Wajcman, 1998; Blair-Loy, 2003). At the beginning of the 21st century it must therefore be realized that a manager's sustainable career is closely linked with concern about how to live a fulfilling life in the postmodern world and a global economy (Savickas, Nota, Rossier, Dauwalder, Duarte, Guichard, Oresi, Van Esbroeck & Van Vianen, 2009).

This doctoral study explores the work-family integration of women and men managers by focusing on the constructions of career-spouse dynamics in

Finland. Work-family integration here refers broadly to interdependencies of the work domain and the family domain in a manager's life. The chosen perspective to the work domain is the career, and in the family domain my focus is on the manager's spouse. Traditionally, it has been said that work means working forty hours a week, and when you are working longer hours it's a career. The essence of understanding work and a career does not depend, however, on the number of hours involved, but a career can be seen as one interpretation of work, an interpretation that captures the viewed pattern or sequence of work experiences that evolves over time and along the life course (Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014). Thus, a career is interrelated with work experiences but the emphasis is on the continuum. When work-family integration for managers is investigated from the career perspective, it enables us also to engage with a focus that captures the interdependencies between the manager's work domain and family domain as they change throughout the entire career (*ibid.*).

It can be claimed that there is a contradiction between what is asked of a manager in terms of contemporary organizational life, that is, to be a competent manager and have a successful career, and what is valued and desired by managers themselves in terms of family life and overall life satisfaction (Thomas & Linstead, 2002; Lyness & Judiesch, 2008). Studies show that managers are working now more than ever (Brett & Stroh, 2003), but at the same time the family and free time are becoming more and more important to them (Haavisto, 2010). This trend toward softer values is even stronger among young people, who make up the pool of future managers (*ibid.*). Inglehart (2001) points out that in advanced industrial countries such as Finland, which is the socio-cultural context of this study, societal values such as human happiness and subjective well-being are increasing in popularity. These contradictions between organizational and individual values increase the importance of understanding managers' work-family integration.

Historically, for managers the work domain and the family domain have been depicted as two separate entities. William H. Whyte (1956) described how managers ought to be people who can and will leave their personal life behind when entering the organization; the 'organization man'. The ideal manager, like the 'organization man', is a man without any ties or constraints in other spheres of life outside the organization. This ideal with its accompanying successful career is embedded in the family model in which there is a wife who stays at home, allowing the husband to devote all his energies to his career while she takes care of other aspects of his life (Nieva, 1985; Schneer & Reitman, 2002). Obviously, these models have undergone a transformation in the contemporary career world, where there is a wide diversity of managers with different kinds of families and family responsibilities. Studies still show, however, that what seems to be gendered in terms of a manager's career is most often the family (Wajcman & Martin, 2002; Wajcman, 1996). In other words, a family is seen as a career barrier for women and as career advancement for men (Tharenou, Latimer & Conroy, 1994). For women it is claimed that their career success can be more severely constrained by home demands; for example, the family can dis-

tract their focus on the centrality of work, and restrict success-enhancing experiences such as relocations or job mobility much more often than for men in similar positions (Mayerhofer, Meyer, Schiffinger & Schmidt, 2008; Kirchmeyer, 2006; Eddleston, Baldrige & Veiga, 2004). Family responsibilities seem to trigger different gender themes in women and men managers' careers. As far as research is concerned, as Greenhaus and Kossek (2014) say, simply examining the principal effects of sex on careers or statistically controlling for sex in testing theoretical models are poor substitutes for delving into how women and men managers construe, pursue and appraise their career combined with family life over their life course. This emphasizes the importance of understanding gender and gender-related norms related to the work domain and the family domain over time and in connection with a career.

Satisfactory work-family integration for managers is also important for creating responsible business, as a report by the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy suggests (Jutila, 2008). In the report it is suggested that one way for Finnish companies to become more responsible is to facilitate an organizational culture in which work life and family life can be easily combined. Bulger and Fisher (2012) continue that linking work and family issues with organizational goals is a strategic challenge for organizations; however, it is also an ethical imperative for them to make it clear that quality of life is a key factor in both individual and organizational well-being. It has also been claimed that organizational performance is better when work life and family life are mutually enriching or balanced, and for organizations it would be profitable to offer benefits and policies that are aimed at assisting employees reconcile the demands of work and family life (Beauregard & Henry, 2009).

This PhD dissertation is in two parts: Part I consists of an introductory essay and Part II consists of four research articles. In Part I, Chapter 1 introduces the research topic and presents the research aim and questions. Then the points of rationale for the study are discussed and the key concepts of the study are set out. This is followed by an introduction to the Finnish socio-cultural context and a description of the research process. In Chapter 2, the theoretical foundations for this dissertation are presented. Chapter 3 discusses methodological considerations and explains the methods that were chosen. The four research articles that form the foundation of this dissertation are presented and discussed in Chapter 4, and in Chapter 5 the study is concluded and the contribution that this research offers is discussed in detail. Part II presents the research articles in their original form.

1.2 The aim and research task of the study

The overall aim of this study is to increase our understanding of managers' work-family integration by investigating women and men managers' constructions of career-spouse dynamics in the Finnish socio-cultural context. Two research objectives were set to achieve this goal. First, the study focuses on the

role of a spouse in women and men managers' careers as well as spousal support during their careers as constructed in their narratives. Second, the study focuses on how women and men managers portray and produce gender relations in their narratives. Additionally, the study aims to discuss the similarities and differences between the women's and men's narratives. To achieve these objectives four empirical studies were conducted. The first article deals with the role of a male spouse in women managers' careers, and the second article concerns the role of the female spouse in men managers' careers. In both articles I and II the analyses of gender roles between the spouses are connected to the topic. The third article is about the spousal support women managers perceive to get during their careers, and the fourth article looks at the spousal support male managers perceive to get during their careers. In articles III and IV an analysis of what kind of gender relations women and men produce when narrating their experiences is introduced.

The following research questions are answered:

1. What kind of meaning do women and men managers give to their spouse in their career?
2. How do women and men managers narrate their spousal support and the involvement of spousal support for their career?
3. What kind of gender do women and men managers 'do' in their narratives?

1.3 Rationale for the study

There are several myths and assumptions in the work-family literature which need to be addressed when studying managers and their spouses. Here I will introduce four points that are crucial to understanding the rationale of this study.

Firstly, Rosabeth M. Kanter (1977) set the agenda in organization and management studies for studying the worlds of work and family and raised the question of whether work life and family life were really two separate worlds each with their own rules, functions, and territories¹. In the field of career research, work life and family life were seen as independent rather than dependent, and mainstream studies examined the individual separate from his/her environment, as if they could really be separated (Collin, 1998; Bujold, 2004;

¹ Mead's *Male and Female*, Parsons's essays in *Family Socialization and Interaction Process* and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, where works in which the social analysis of gender started to evolve and they tried to define gender patterns mainly in terms of relationships within the nuclear family. In particular, Parsons and Bales (1955) argued the breadwinner-homemaker family provided a way for women to specialize in the 'expressive function' of domestic caretaking while men specialized in the 'instrumental function' of supporting the household through paid work.

Guillaume & Pochic, 2009). Sewell (1992) and Giddens (1984) argued that we have certain structures that shape our society and consequently also our individual lives. Thus, in contemporary society, one life role becomes the context for another in a complex riff operating at different levels, modalities, logics and dynamics (Moen, 2011). The starting point of this dissertation is the argument that the work and family domains are not separate for managers but rather are associated and interrelated in many ways, and more attention should be given to understanding the integration and inseparable nature of these life spheres.

Secondly, managers' work and family issues are often ignored and seen as irrelevant; the emphasis has been on work, where the manager has been seen as having a privileged status in the organization and considerable influence over his or her work (Ford & Collinson, 2011). However, studies show that particularly managers are uniquely placed to experience combining work responsibilities with non-work commitments, since there are expectations that they will show their commitment and availability by working long hours with the help of extensive technological solutions enabling work tasks to be performed at anytime, anywhere (Milliken & Dunn-Jensen, 2005; Thomas & Linstead, 2002; Brett & Stroh, 2003). These characteristics are also attached to an image of the 'ideal worker' which prevails vis-a-vis managerial jobs (Acker, 1990; Tienari, Quack & Theobald, 2002). This all makes the integration of work and family for managers different from that of other employees, and worth problematizing and studying.

For instance, although managers may have greater access to work-family initiatives than those in non-supervisory positions, they often feel incapable of using these initiatives due to negative attitudes in the organization toward using them and organizational pressures to work long hours (Beauregard, 2007; 2011). Managers who try to use their advantages might encounter resentment from colleagues who feel they are having to shoulder an unfair workload, professional isolation and reduced networking opportunities, or a reputation among peers and superiors for being less committed to the organization, and therefore in the long run they may damage their prospects of career advancement (*ibid.*). In the future, to have competent managers we need to accentuate work-family integration for the wellbeing and life satisfaction of managers as well (Graves, Ohlott & Ruderman, 2007; Lyness & Judiesch, 2008). Managers are also an important example for others in the organization of how to integrate work and family. Previous studies have shown that a manager's role and attitude are crucial in whether work-family initiatives are really used in the organization and they can lead organizations toward better work and family relationships at all employee levels (Bardoel, 2003; Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999; Burke, 2010).

Thirdly, there is an implicit assumption that the manager is male, in particular a white, upper-middle-class man, and it has been the life and work of this type of man that has been implicitly assumed as the research standard in career studies (Hearn & Parkin, 1983; Schein & Davidson, 1993; Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Takala, 1999; Lämsä, 2003; Pringle, 2008;

Lämsä, 2010). Still the belief that managers are men who can exclude themselves from other life spheres continues to shape studies on managers' careers and the organization of their work and family life. It has been common in the field to follow a 'Parsonian' gendered division of labor (Gatrell, Burnett, Cooper & Sparrow, 2013). This division emphasizes the categorization of woman-family and man-career which perpetuates the expectation that the woman will take primary responsibility for domestic matters while the man devotes himself to breadwinning. These symbolic distinctions are theoretically linked to the maintenance of male dominance (Coltrane, 1996, 2004; Coltrane & Adams, 2001; Connell, 1987, 1995). Moen (2011) brings out that what continues to be missing in scholarship, in policies and practices and in theorizing about careers, is questioning of these assumed models and examination of the interconnections of the manager, family, organization and community. The gendered assumptions about a successful managerial career make an interesting and relevant starting point to studying the role of the spouse in the setting of both women and men managers' careers. Making visible the view of both genders adds to current research about the manager's work-family integration; hitherto most studies have seen this only as a woman's issue.

Fourthly, studies concerning families and careers merit examination from qualitative perspectives with an interdisciplinary reach (Khapova & Arthur, 2011). Many studies in the field have been made on quantitative research premises (see for a review Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood & Lambert, 2007). For example, quantitative studies that have problematized family-related factors as predictors of a lack of organizational commitment on the part of women but not of men lack any refined analysis of gender issues or any conclusion about the context in question; they even reinforce the assumption that women and men should always be compared and differentiated (Mills & Mullany, 2011).

A deeper and more complete understanding of the career and the role of the spouse therein can be provided by an empirical exploration of what managers themselves define as salient and relevant in their own conceptions of the phenomena. Language and narratives are powerful transmitters of meaning about who one is as an individual and what is seen as appropriate behavior for example for a manager and his/her spouse (Wodak, 1997; Mills & Mullany, 2011; Hall & Bucholtz, 1995) and they help to identify what kind of gender is produced and whether the nature of language is gendered (e.g. Runté & Mills, 2006; Eriksson, Henttonen & Meriläinen, 2008; Myrden, Mills & Helms Mills, 2011). In asking how the spouse and her/his support are constructed with respect to gender, I am also interested in how gender relations are done and mediated through narratives. Giving equal importance to analysis that pays attention to differences and to similarities, here a narrative approach is used to understand work-family integration for managers in terms of gender to a greater extent and in a broader sense than the literature in the field of organization and management is currently offering. Above all, a narrative approach to understanding career and family helps us to understand the processes rather than the factors that influence career paths and transitions over time; it turns our atten-

tion to the multiple life strands that are involved and enables us to go further than a cross-sectional approach (Lee, Kossek, Hall & Litrico, 2011).

The present study seeks to contribute to our understanding of the manager's work-family integration in three different ways. Firstly, it aims to develop our empirical understanding of the ways in which career and spouse are intertwined, and describe some of the ways in which both genders, women and men managers, narrate their spouse's role in their careers. Secondly, it aims to make a theoretical contribution to our understanding of a career within organization and management studies by drawing together insights from work and family research and career research combined with gender aspects. These all have areas that overlap with work-family integration, enabling the development of a more complete understanding of the ways in which the spouse 'matters' within a career and ultimately within organizations. Thirdly, I will enrich existing scholarship by building a more diverse picture of how current gender relations are produced and presented in the manager's work and family setting in a country that is characterized as gender equal (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahidi, 2013). This means that the focus here is how gender is produced and done in gender relations within the manager's family and how this doing of gender is related to the manager's career. In this way my analysis extends the scope of current studies on the career and the spouse in the field of management and organizations.

1.4 Key concepts of the study

Analyzing career and family calls for approaches that take into account the individual and his/her life as complete, entire (Lee et al., 2011; Gatrell et al., 2013). If this conceptualization is missing, the manager is usually seen as an individual who does not have a life outside the organization and ultimately results in insufficient understanding within the organization of work-wellbeing, stress, organizational culture, and its performance – all crucial elements when we are thinking about the aims of getting competent people for managerial positions, lengthening careers, and improving happiness and the quality of working life (e.g. Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003; Lyness & Judiesch, 2008; Erdogan, Bauer, Truxillo & Mansfield, 2012; Lyness & Judiesch, 2014; Singhapakdi, Sirgy, Lee, Senasu, Yu & Nisius, 2014).

In general, the work-family field has stumbled over the basic conceptions and language use that anchor the field (Pitt-Catsouphes, Kossek & Sweet, 2006) and there are several concepts used in the field: work-family intersection, work-family balance, work-family reconciliation and work-family facilitation, just to mention the most common ones. However, these are often used without any specific conceptualization and explication (see Kalliath & Brough, 2008). The work-family terminology is not unitary and it has been criticized for focusing only on women, in particular on the mothers of young children (Lewis, Gambles & Rapoport, 2007). Here I specify the key concepts used in this study:

work-family integration, manager, family, spouse and career. In this dissertation the term **work-family integration** refers to the **experiences, relationships, and interactions of work and family lives as integrated in a satisfactory way** (Burke, 2004). Work-family integration here refers also to the broader idea that career and family are neither separable nor instinctively in conflict, but rather that life spheres should be seen as integrated and the interaction between them not as automatically negative; it can be positively enhancing (Gerson, 2004; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Lee et al., 2011).

To understand managers in contemporary organizational life one must first recognize the major elements of the emerging organizational framework that is shaping them (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1997). The classical view says that a manager is a person who organizes, coordinates, plans and controls (Mintzberg, 1990). As I have already said, traditionally a manager is seen as someone without any relationships outside the organization, giving his life to the organization (Whyte, 1956). Now new forms and modes of employment have emerged and traditional concepts like hierarchical careers have been put in question (Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh & Roper, 2012; Vinkenbunrg & Weber, 2012; Reitman & Schneer, 2008). Newer approaches emphasize managers as supportive coaches and institutional leaders and take more into account the social aspect rather than money (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1997). Here, **the manager is understood as a person who holds (or has recently held) a managerial position and has extensive work experience. In detail, the manager is seen and understood as part of his/her life context – as a part of his/her family.**

Morris and Madsen (2007, p. 445) say that family is about people who share something relationally (e.g. attachment), mentally (e.g. respect), spiritually (e.g. beliefs), psychologically (e.g. closeness), physically (e.g. care), and economically (e.g. financial resources) with one another. A nuclear family with a husband and a wife and a couple of children have most often been the focus of research (Moore & Asay, 2008). After the industrial revolution this type of family underwent a crucial shift with regard to work-family integration: men went physically away from home to work, and gender specific roles were more defined, the husband having responsibility for providing for the family through paid work, and the housewife being obliged to do the household work and nurture the children. Ever since, it has been women who have been considered the guardians of the family unit; they are seen in the primary moral relationship to their children and family, while men as providers are more evaluated in terms of their economic relationship to the family (Marshall, 1994). Women have also generally been associated more with caring than men (Gilligan, 1982).

The dual-earner model and the diversity of families (couples with children some married, some cohabitating, same-sex couples, and blended families through re-marriage) have certainly set a new research agenda for work-family integration (Whitehead, Korabik & Lero, 2008), but in organization and management studies the question of what is meant by family continues to be neglected (Rothausen, 1999). A family is often considered to be a static entity, which fails to acknowledge that there are different members and that they may have different roles in the family at different times. In this dissertation **family**

refers to two or more individuals occupying interdependent roles with the purpose of sharing experiences and aims in life; the spouse is the partner with whom life is shared. More specifically, I have left the participants themselves to define who are/have been their spouses (married, co-habitant, long-term partners) and who are/have been explicitly part of their families at different times in their lives. The focus here is on heterosexual families, since these managers were living in heterosexual family arrangements. Moreover, in this thesis the term female spouse is used interchangeably with the term wife, and male spouse with the term husband (even if the couple were not technically married in all cases).

The traditional career model was based on a hierarchical, highly structured pattern and rigid, one-dimensional steps toward the upper echelons of the organization (Baruch, 2004; Sullivan, 1999). Undoubtedly, careers in organizations have undergone a profound transformation in recent decades as organizations have reformed and reshaped, culling layers of the management hierarchy, rethinking employment contracts and revising human resources in terms of career management and development (Sturges, 1999). The traditional concept of the career triggered several points of criticism, primarily its overly narrow focus on the careers of white, middle class men (e.g. Super, 1957; Miller & Form, 1964; Levinson, 1978; Schein, 1978; Bujold, 2004). It has been claimed that the field of career research requires approaches which take into consideration social structures such as national context, gender and ethnicity (Cohen, 2006; Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Pringle & Mallon, 2003; Omair, 2010). Traditional career theory, with its focus on organizational careers, has been blamed for often viewing careers as gender neutral (Wilson, 1998; Mavin, 2001). Even though the classical career type is questioned by many scholars and upward-moving linear ladders appear increasingly *passé* (Kelan, 2008), the extent to which this is really the case for most managers, and for all the different types of women and men, continues to be hidden (Vinkenburg & Weber, 2012).

Inevitably, changes in working life, such as dynamism, flexibility, employability and marketability, have developed and altered how a career and its connections to the family have been framed in career research (Baruch, 2004; Kelan, 2008). For instance, a career concept “protean” was established by Hall (1976), who suggested an approach to careers in which it was relevant to look at work as a part of a wider life. This meant, for instance, that self-fulfillment was integrated into the elements of an individual’s life, not only into his or her work. Another development in the field came from Arthur and Rousseau (1996), who established the concept of a boundaryless career. They proposed that the boundaries of traditional organizational careers had become blurred and a career had become a part of a bigger whole, which included for instance having career interruptions for family or personal reasons. One stream of career research which has considered the family dimension to some extent is based on developmental career stages models (Levinson, 1978; Super, 1980, 1990). These models have integrated the different stages of a career with the life span. However, these can also be criticized for ignoring gender, and that individual lives

are not the same. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) tried to understand gender more comprehensively in their career model. Their kaleidoscope model especially fits women's careers and increases our understanding of how women operate relationally to others in the realms of both work and non-work. Like a kaleidoscope that produces changing patterns when the tube is rotated and its glass chips fall into new arrangements, women shift the pattern of their careers by rotating different aspects in their lives to arrange their roles and relationships in new ways. In their study the careers of women were relational; in other words, women's career decisions were normally part of a larger and intricate web of interconnected issues, people, and aspects that had to come together in a delicately balanced package. However, the results of their study were the reverse for men managers, as their career and non-work lives were kept separate usually with the help of a woman in their life.

In this dissertation, the concept of career is derived from social constructionist sensibilities. From a social constructionist perspective, a career is not conceptualized as a form or structure that an individual temporarily inhabits, constraining or enabling the individual in his or her journey, but rather, the career is here constituted by the manager, in interaction with others and it moves through time and space (Cohen, Duberley & Mallon, 2004, p. 409). Thus, the concept of **career in this dissertation refers to the whole career path of the research participant, in this case managers, and his/her making sense of their past experiences, their present circumstances, and their future prospects about their career along with and as part of their lives in a vivid, lively, yet to her/him familiar way.** Beside these key concepts, gender is a central concept in this study. Gender, here, is used more broadly than merely a concept, but rather as a larger theoretical framework. For that reason I have left the conceptualization of gender to the section of theoretical considerations.

1.5 The socio-cultural context

Many of the sociopolitical foundations and characteristics of working life create the basis for work-family integration, which is one of the core issues of gender equality. Understanding their societal and historical roots is relevant to work-family issues since work, family and careers are always affected by states' policies, laws, programs, societal norms and gender expectations, which differ in different societies (Lyness & Kropf, 2005; den Dulk & Peper, 2009; Eriksson, Katila & Niskanen, 2009). The socio-cultural context of the study is Finland. This is also the macro-context of the study. On the macro level the context is the broader societal and cultural environment in which this study is carried out. Let us now look at the relevant historical, societal developments for gender equality and work-family integration in Finland.

Finland, like other Nordic countries, is described as being a champion of gender equality. If Finland is compared internationally, the country ranks high in reports of the global gender gap (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahidi, 2013). In 2013

Finland was ranked second best out of 136 countries. Women and men's share of labor force participation is practically equal (Statistic Finland, 2011). The top positions in politics are occupied quite well by women, and we even have had a woman president and a woman prime minister. The picture of Finland as a land of gender equality is, however, controversial. Despite the increasing number of women as board members, there was only one woman CEO in the Finnish listed companies in 2013, corresponding to 0.8 per cent of CEOs. 16 % of executives in large listed companies were women in Finland in 2013 (Finland Chamber of Commerce, 2013). In general, women hold one third of management positions in Finland (Statistic Finland, 2009).

The Finnish history of gender equality is exceptional: women got the right to vote and stand as candidates in 1906, the first in Europe, and the right to do paid work without their husband's permission in 1919. They were freed from having to be represented by their husband or father in 1930. In general, nowadays women in Finland are not economically supported by their husbands or fathers, but they are used to making their own living (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2006). In 1975 the first legislation concerning fathers was passed, in which important details were specified about the relationship between a father and a child (Jyränki, 2010). The first law concerning gender equality was passed in 1987, and revised in 2005. For example, the law declared that every employer with at least 30 employees must have a gender equality plan, the absence of which was made punishable by law.

In Finnish society women have traditionally worked alongside men, a consequence of the fact that agriculture dominated the economy until relatively late (Haavio-Mannila, 1970). Along with the changing occupational structure peculiar to an industrialized and urbanized society, after the wars in Finland it became possible for women to work in industry and the service sector. As a result of this development home and work became physically separated and paid work was outside the home (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2006). On a general level, Ollila (1998) examined the Finnish attitude to work for women and men through studies by Kortteinen (1992) and Piela (1992). In Finland work is valued highly, and a Finnish sociologist, Matti Kortteinen, suggested that for men work is a means of demonstrating high competence and masculinity (1992). According to him, work for men is not merely of a way of earning a living, but it is held as a proof of success and victory in the harsh world and evaluated as a field of honor. Success at work should be achieved through toughness such as 'sisu' and with no one helping. In contrast, women's life stories in Finland emphasize collective connections to other people (Piela, 1992; in Ollila, 1998). In their stories, relationships to their husbands, children, relatives and friends are often repeated, and the impact of these relationships on important life decisions is made visible. For instance, according to Finnish proverbs a man should not choose a wife by her looks but by her willingness to work hard (Ollila, 1998). Ollila also states (1998) that a central element of the relationship between men and women in Finland is a companionship and working together toward a common goal; the husband and wife are united. This concept of wife and hus-

band as joint partners against the harsh world outside is still evident because of their roles in the agrarian society. However, in practice it is good to bear in mind that there is a great variation within Finnish identities, and that we all have our own.

Finland can be characterized as a country in which we have had strong support for work-family integration both legally and societally. For instance, Finland has striven for divided parenthood in many ways, and Pfau-Effinger argues that the culture of 'state motherhood' in Finland is highly supportive of mothers' full-time employment (Pfau-Effinger, 1999; in Crompton & Lyonette, 2006). The full-time job culture and the public childcare available for anyone are contextual factors which need to be considered when talking about work-family integration in Finland (Bittman, 1999). After women started working physically outside the home, traditional gender roles started to be questioned as they were seen as being based on the division of labor in an agricultural society. It was also emphasized that women and men should have equal roles in caring responsibilities in the family, they should both have a right to gainful employment, and they should be able to have an influence in society on an equal basis. However, in practice if we look at the statistics for men's participation in family life, we see for instance that Finnish women still take the majority of family leave, and Finnish fathers' share of total maternity, paternity and parental leave benefit days per year was a total of 6.1 % in 2007 (Haataja, 2009). Only two per cent of men have taken longer than one month leave after having a child (ibid.). This implies that despite the legal and societal goal for work-family integration for both women and men, in practice women still continue to carry the main responsibility for the family and it is seen as a woman's moral duty to take care of her family and children. In a Finnish gender equality barometer from 2012 it is shown that many people still consider that man's role is to provide for the family (Kiianmaa, 2013).

It has to be noted that while much of the gender equality discussion concerns women, in the future it will be essential to consider it also in relation to men (Lammi-Taskula & Salmi, 2014). In the government's program for the years 2003-2007 it was stated for the first time: "Gender equality will also be evaluated from the male point of view." The theme 'men and gender equality' emphasizes support for fatherhood and parenthood, including encouraging men to take family leave (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2006). Also the European Commission's strategy for equality between women and men for 2010-2015 stresses that no gender equality can be achieved without involving men and taking into consideration how gender equality affects men and boys. Overall, new attempts need to be made to increase men's involvement in the gender equality policy debate and the promotion of gender equality.

1.6 The research process and summary of the articles

The origins of this research lie in my Master's thesis, as it formed the basis of my first research article. Each study in this dissertation has eased the way for the next as my understanding of work and family issues for managers increased. The empirical results of the first study stressed the importance of spousal support and raised the question of whether spousal support could change over the career, and so it became reasonable to study spousal support for women's careers from a perspective that would take into consideration the whole life course. Undoubtedly research is never value free but is always politically motivated, particularly research into gender (Alvesson & Billing, 1997). Given that I have my own personal interest in the topic and in enhancing gender equality in general, I wanted to study the topic from the point of view of men managers as well. This was, however, also a reasonable step when thinking about the field of careers and families, which has mostly been seen as a woman's issue. As a whole, the four studies in this dissertation were made in a rather logical order, creating a complete entity – even though this dissertation is article based. Articles I and II, and III and IV can be regarded as to some extent following the same research design with different research material.

In practice this research process has not been straightforward, and I had to become aware of my own assumptions and patterned ways of thinking and to make connections between the obvious and not-so-obvious; getting closures and reopening them and starting new ones. Each article has its own process of identifying the research problem and finding the focus of the research. In each phase of the research, literature reviews have helped to determine the research questions that have been part of writing the four scientific articles. The data collection happened in two phases: the women's research material was collected by Minna Hiillos and Anna-Maija Lämsä between 2006 and 2008, and I did further work to extend that material in 2008. I myself then collected the research material on male managers in 2009. The data analysis and interpretation of the research material were also carried out in several phases, since each article has its own analysis and followed a report in a form of research article.

During the research process I had two quite long periods abroad on research visits and I attended many international conferences, in which I was able to elaborate my research ideas, and get valuable comments and further suggestions for this doctoral study. There have been many discussions that led to further consideration and revisions and became in the end part of this study. Undoubtedly, each review process of the articles has been a process of learning and development in itself. In this introductory essay I will summarize the four research articles and make an evaluation of the research process. The articles are brought together in the following Table 1.

TABLE 1 Summary of the research articles

Article	Focus of the study	Research material and analysis	Main findings and contributions
Välimäki, S., Lämsä, A-M. & Hiillos, M. 2009. The spouse of the female manager: Role and influence on the woman's career. <i>Gender in Management: An International Journal</i> 24(8): 596-614.	The meanings given to the male spouse by women managers from the perspective of their career.	29 narratives of women managers in the form of written texts and interviews.	Five types of spouses (determining, supporting, instrumental, flexible, and counter-productive) were constructed to describe the meanings for their career given to the male spouse by the female managers.
Heikkinen, S. 2014. How do male managers narrate their female spouse's role in their career? <i>Gender in Management: An International Journal</i> 29(1): 25-43.	The meanings given to the female spouse by the men managers from the perspective of their career.	29 narratives of men managers in the form of interviews.	Four types (supporting, balance-seeking, care-providing and success-expecting) were constructed to describe the meanings given to the female spouses by the male managers for their career.
Heikkinen, S., Lämsä, A-M. & Hiillos, M. 2014. Narratives by women managers about spousal support for their careers. <i>Scandinavian Journal of Management</i> 30(1): 27-39.	Spousal support and its evolving dimension over the career for women managers.	25 narratives of women managers in the form of interviews.	Spousal support for women managers' careers was constructed as flourishing, irrelevant, deficient and inconsistent.
Heikkinen, S. & Lämsä, A-M. Male managers' narratives of spousal support for their career. Submitted for publication.	Spousal support and its evolving dimension over the career for men managers.	29 narratives of men managers in the form of interviews.	Spousal support for male managers' careers was constructed as negotiated, enriching and declining.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1 Theoretical approaches to studying work-family integration

Here the theoretical foundations of this dissertation are presented. Previous studies concerning work-family integration can be broadly divided into three different strands according to how they approach the work-family relationship: 1) those working within the conflict perspective, 2) those working within the enrichment perspective and 3) those trying to understand flexible careers. Pitt-Catsouphes, Kossek and Sweet (2006) pointed out that the field of work and family research is generally fragmented but most researchers agree on seeing the relationship between work and family as multidirectional: work is seen as affecting the family, and the family is seen as affecting work. Whether the focus has been from work to family or from family to work, studies concerning this multidirectional relationship have most often taken a conflict perspective (see for review Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Byron, 2005; Casper et al., 2007). The conflict perspective has been characteristic of both international research and of research carried out in Finland (e.g. Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Eagle, Miles & Icenogle, 1997; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Anderson, Coffey & Byerly, 2002; Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Vanhala 2005; Winter, Roos, Rahkonen, Martikainen & Lahelma, 2006; Aycan, 2008; Drach-Zahavy & Somech, 2008; Lapierre, Spector, Allen, Poelmans, Cooper, O'Driscoll, Sanchez, Brough & Kinnunen, 2008).

The definition of work-family conflict offered by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), which was presented in their seminal work on the subject, is that it is a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family role or vice versa, and this kind of difficulty was seen as being time-based, (e.g. managers' participation in family life is reduced by the long working hours), strain-based (e.g. a stressful situation in the family (e.g. divorce) affects the work domain) or behavior-based (e.g. behaving as a successful manager is in conflict

with behaving as a caring parent). Vast bodies of research on work-family integration with managers have reinforced this conflict perspective: the family has been seen as a barrier and cause of stress in career advancement. Most often the family itself has been depicted as only a woman's issue, a woman's problem in particular (e.g. Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990; Hochschild, 1989; Jamieson, 1995; Beatty, 1996; Simpson, 1998; Still & Timms, 1998; Liff & Ward, 2001; Metz, 2005).

This burgeoning body of research within the conflict perspective has depicted work-family integration as a zero-sum game, meaning that work and family are two dependent areas of life which both take up a certain time of an individual's life with the result that when you spend time at work, it is taken out of your time with your family. This has then been seen as causing conflicts, stress and negative outcomes in an individual's life. It has been claimed that attention to workplaces and work schedules, especially to time spent at work, has been the reason behind the burgeoning research on conflict perspectives (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Byron, 2005). Runté and Mills (2004) argued that debates on work-family conflicts serve as a powerful discourse in which work is privileged over home life and, on the other hand, home-life is characterized by idealized images of emotionality and relief from the pressures of work. They argued that these debates serve primarily to privilege the work domain and its dominant themes of the effective use of time, speed, and prioritization, which ultimately privilege existing power relationships.

Since 2000 a more complete understanding of the subject has been developed, and there has been a shift to study more positively the interdependence between work and family (see for reviews Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Gatrell et al., 2013). These studies have raised the question of how work and family can be mutually enhancing, and have introduced concepts such as positive spillover, enrichment and facilitation (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Rothbard, 2001; Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer & King, 2002; Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). The scholars involved in this development have worked on the idea that work and family can be mutually beneficial, and they have tried, for example, to find out how work can enhance and support an individual's family life.

For example, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) defined work-family enrichment as the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role. They suggested that work-family enrichment occurs when resources acquired in one life domain are successfully applied to another life domain. Greenhaus and Powell identified five types of such resources: 1) skills and perspectives, 2) psychological and physical resources, 3) social-capital resources, 4) flexibility and 5) material resources. Like work-family conflict, work-family enrichment can work in both ways, from family to work and from work to family. As work-family conflict and enrichment are independent concepts, they can coexist in one person (Greenhaus & Foley, 2007). While these studies have brought more positive understanding to the field, they have also been criticized for failing to pay attention to gender and in particular to male gender (Gatrell et al., 2013). These scholars have not really tried to investigate more deeply work and family as a gendered image of female-family, male-career.

Those interested in work-family integration from the career perspective have brought to the work-family debate an approach that aims to take into account the changing shapes of the work-family relationship over the life course of the individual (Moen & Sweet, 2004; Gerson, 2004; Savickas et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2011). Studies which have emphasized understanding careers have aimed to capture the time and context, together with individual agency and personal relationships, and they have tried to go beyond seeing work and family as only in conflict or only an enriching causal relationship at one point of time (Lee et al., 2011). Moen and Sweet (2004) even suggest that the frame of 'work-family' should be expanded to include 'flexible careers'. They contend that, for instance, work-family research with its emphasis on conflicts and negative outcomes does not capture the variety of people and the heterogeneity of families, organizational and societal contexts, and time connotations.

This dissertation rejects the idea of any simplistic understanding of the work-family relationship in terms of either conflict or enrichment. Rather, in this research the goal is to synthesize these aforementioned three approaches. This means, here, that though it is acknowledged that the work-family relationship can be mutually in conflict or enhancing, if the goal is to better understand the work-family integration of managers it is more important to see that work and family are about changes in an individual's life course. Therefore, this study adds to previous studies on work-family integration for managers that frame work and family in a simplistic causal relationship by moving toward an understanding of career events in connection to broader life events, and their connections to social and cultural environments. This approach enables us to see managers' careers as extending beyond work concerns and into aspects of his/her life, such as family (Moen & Sweet, 2004; Lee et al., 2011). For example, it enables us to examine gender-related patterns of working hours, seeing couples making joint decisions rather than seeing only individuals making career decisions in isolation from their environments. Thus, it enables us to see how a career is socially constructed and sustained and helps us to identify taken-for-granted and built-in meanings and expectations that creating inequalities, as well as other impacts on the ways managers, both women and men, chart and experience their career and families (Moen & Sweet, 2004).

2.2 Previous research about managers, spouses and careers

In the previous section I looked briefly at how work-family integration has been studied in the past. Here, I will introduce previous studies that concern explicitly the role of the spouse in a manager's career. My emphasis is on studies that have specific results about the spouse in relation to the work and career of individuals in management positions. In order to map empirical studies in the field I carried out a systematic literature review with keywords (manager, spouse and career) in ABI/INFORM Complete (ProQuest), Business Source Elite (EBSCO), JSTOR, Emerald Insight (Journals) and Google Scholar databases with the

emphasis on management and organization journals (though not exclusively). I narrowed my review according to my research focus, which is on women and men in management positions and their careers in business life. For that reason I omitted from this review, for instance, studies that concern dual career dynamics or expatriation (e.g. trailing spouses). I also added to this review some other studies of which I became aware for instance at the suggestion of reviewers during the review process of the articles. I will introduce the previous studies in chronological order.

1970–1979. According to my review altogether five studies that focus on the topic were made in the 1970s. Two of the studies are seminal. The first concerns middle-class managers and their wives in Britain and was carried out by Pahl & Pahl (1971). The data of this study consist of 86 couples who completed questionnaires, and the main results suggest that the manager's spouse's task was first and foremost seen as being a housewife (e.g. a companion to the husband, creating a comfortable home and providing interesting activities for the children). *Men and Women of The Corporation* by Kanter (1977) can be considered an even better known and more influential study carried out during that time. Kanter made an ethnographic study in the Industrial Supply Corporation with multiple quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interviews, group discussion, observation, documents) data in the U.S. context. She studied gender issues broadly in a U.S. organization, but focused also on managers' wives. She concluded that wives were seen as helpers of the male career and served organizational functions. In both these studies the wife was seen as taking care of domestic chores, and she was seen as a sign of stability for a man. There were also three other studies (Stoess, 1973; Marshall & Cooper, 1976; Pinder, 1978) that focused on how the wives of male managers influence matters of relocation and geographical mobility. All these studies were carried out on quantitative research premises in North America (U.S and Canada). These studies are the first ones to suggest that the wife's attitude and personality and the adjustments made by her are the key to the successful relocation and transfer of the male manager (Marshall & Cooper, 1976; Stoess, 1973; Pinder, 1978).

1980–1989. A similar number of studies on the topic were found in the 1980s as in the previous decade. The first is a well-known quantitative study by Pfeffer & Ross (1982) in which they studied the effects of marriage and having a working wife on salary and occupational attainment for managers and professionals. The study, carried out in the U.S., reinforced the view that a wife is an additional career resource for men managers. Pfeffer & Ross demonstrated the effects of marital status and a wife's employment status on career advancement, and pointed out that male managers who were married and had a non-working wife in their data made higher incomes than those who were single men.

Managers' mobility issues were studied further in relation to the manager's spouse (Veiga, 1983; Marsh & Cooper, 1983). The female spouse was seen as both a reason for refusing to move and as omnirelevant. It was highlighted that when a managerial family is geographical mobile a managerial spouse (wife) is required to make the necessary practical arrangements, start a new life in a

strange community and make the necessary adjustments to her own career, and at the same time provide a stable environment for the children while also being a resource for her husband who is working hard and long to make his mark in a new job.

Davidson and Cooper (1984) were the first to focus on women managers. They found that the family is a source of stress for women managers in their career. For example, women managers were found to be under greater pressure in respect of career and spouse/partner conflicts than men managers, and women managers did not get the required emotional and domestic support from their spouses. Metcalfe (1984) also studied both women and men managers' career concerns in a survey study, and concluded that there was a substantial number of females who expressed deep gratitude to their spouses for the support they offered to them in their careers, and without which they felt they could not maintain their jobs. However, there were also comments, though less frequent, from women who had not received support and encouragement from members of their family. Several stated that their family thought they should regard their jobs as a mere hobby rather than a career and should be satisfied with the status quo. For women managers, relocation in conjunction with a spouse's career move was mentioned as a major cause of career turnover (Rosen, Miguel & Peirce, 1989). The research on the topic in the 1980s also followed mainly quantitative research designs and focused on data from the U.S. or the U.K. socio-cultural contexts.

1990–1999. In the 1990s the number of studies with results about spouses and careers increased, and several studies focused for instance on the family structure in relation to career advancement for managers (Schneer & Reitman, 1993; Tharenou, Latimer & Conroy, 1994; Hotchkiss & Moore, 1999; Kirchmeyer, 1998; Tharenou, 1999, also by Tharenou, 2001; Schneer & Reitman, 2002). Peculiar to these studies was that they compared women and men managers by using sex as a variable in quantitative studies. Most often it was concluded that traditional family men, male managers who had a housewife, advanced more rapidly in their careers than men in other family situations (e.g. single men without children) than their female counterparts. For example, Schneer & Reitman (1993) found that the men most rewarded in their careers in terms of income and salary progression were those living in a traditional family structure, and no family structure for women was found that achieved career success comparable to that of traditional family men. Tharenou et al. (1994) found that a spouse and dependents at home decrease women managers' work experience, which in turn reduced their career advancement.

In the 1990s, studies that had results explicitly about spousal support also emerged (Grossbard-Shechtman & Izraeli, 1994; Fielden & Davidson, 1998; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). Grossbard-Shechtman & Izraeli (1994) studied, for example, spousal support quantitatively with a sample of 869 men and women managers in Israel and concluded that spousal support was better explained for women than for men, but both genders recognized that the help of the spouse led to success in the workplace. They also found that cultural norms contribute

to explaining spousal support: women managers received more support from a spouse who was of Western origin than from one of Eastern origin. Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) suggested that spousal support can contribute to the level of stress: the lack of spousal support was assumed to be stressful because it might be taken to indicate to women that they did not fulfill what was expected of them as "good mothers and wives." Hence it was predicted that spousal support would be associated with women's distress level only in non-egalitarian marriages that were based on traditional role expectations, and not in egalitarian, role-sharing marriages. Similarly, studies found that a spouse's social support and encouragement was highly valued in cases of unemployment and redundancy, and that her spouse was an important part of a woman manager's social network (Fielden & Davidson, 1998; Burke, Rothstein & Bristor, 1995).

Taken together these studies suggested that positive spousal input and family support were very important, but that particularly for women the help was targeted at domestic life, and thus helped to balance work and family demands. In addition to these studies on spousal support, there was also increased interest in how family and spouse could be a liability and distraction, in particular for a woman manager's career (Schwartz, 1996; Still & Timms, 1998; also Liu & Wilson in 2001). For example, Still & Timms (1998) found in their qualitative study of women managers' career barriers in Australia that the retirement of a spouse could provide greater flexibility in the woman's attempts to juggle the "double burden", but the interviews revealed that many retired husbands still assumed that the woman had greater responsibility for household chores. During this decade, research interest in social contexts outside the U.S. and U.K. increased, and there were more qualitative studies focusing on career issues.

From 2000 onwards. Research perspectives have continued to broaden since 2000, and the topic of spousal support has continued to be a focus of interest (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008, 2009). These studies have focused most often on women managers. For example, Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2004) studied perceived spousal/partner support for professional women in early, middle, and late life. In their data were also managers, and they found out by means of a quantitative survey study that there are differences in women's perceptions of how spouses or partners manage the family finances, support the women's careers, contribute to household management, and provide interpersonal support at different life stages. The most commonly perceived support roles were in the areas of earnings and personal financial management and inter-personal support. Interestingly, career management such as acting as a mentor was less often reported for women in all stages of life than for example the spouse's contribution to earnings and personal financial management.

Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008, 2009) focused on executive women and spousal support and provided the most holistic view on the topic with reference to women managers. In their qualitative study, they presented an inductive typology of spousal support: emotional support, help with the household, help

with family members, career support, esteem support, and husbands' career and lifestyle choices. In descending order, the most valued behaviors by the executives included emotional support, esteem support, help with family members, career support, and help with the household. They also reported some unsupportive behavior such as the spouse being too protective or too commanding, instead for example of giving career advice. Besides these studies, there is the emergence of studies from those interested in the career advancement of women managers on the role of the spouse in their careers, (Linehan & Walsh, 2000; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Lämsä & Hiillos, 2008) and on relocation and intra-organizational job changes for both women and men managers (Konopaske, Robie & Ivanchevich, 2005; Mignonac, 2008; Eddleston, Baldrige & Veiga, 2004).

The significance of the subordination of one spouse's career to the managerial career of the other spouse is a result found in recent studies about advancing to top management (Linehan, 2000; Guillaume & Pochic, 2009). Linehan (2000) says in her study of 50 senior international female managers that the majority of the married women in the study believed that progressing to the top of their managerial careers had been facilitated by the careers of their spouses being placed secondary to their own careers. Guillaume and Pochic (2009) also conclude that to have access to top management it is implicitly expected that the spouse has sacrificed his/her career. They add that it is most commonly the woman's sacrifice: the woman is generally expected to sacrifice her career for the sake of her spouse.

The role of the spouse has also been raised in studies that concern work-family integration for managers (Cleveland, O'Neill, Himelright, Harrison, Crouter & Drago, 2007; Mayo, Pastor, Cooper & Sanz-Vergel, 2011; Ford & Collinson, 2011; Mihelic, 2014; Livingston, 2014). For example, hotel managers and their work-family integration were studied in 2007 by Cleveland and her colleagues in a study using focus groups and interviews. They found that the spouses of these managers raised the question of managerial availability and long working hours. Spouses reported that managers were frequently "on call" and had to be fully accessible to the hotel. Mayo, Pastor, Cooper & Sanz-Vergel (2011) studied the achievement of work-family balance among Spanish managers and concluded, for example, that managers with frequent business trips were less cooperative in housework and that this association was moderated by the extent of job control. Managers' cooperation in housework was positively related to the spouse's family satisfaction. Studies have also shown that the spouse is an important partner who makes it possible to achieve a work-family balance (Ford & Collinson, 2011; Livingston, 2014). All in all, from 2000 onwards there have been many studies with different data sets that present some results related to the role of the spouse in a managerial career, although this is not often an explicit research focus.

This review points out three shortcomings in previous research that the present study aims to contribute. First, most of the previous studies have been carried out in the U.S. or U.K. context, and studies outside these societies are far

less frequent. This study has been carried out in Finland, one of the Nordic countries, which has quite different societal development and gender equality premises than those in the U.S. or the U.K. Second, methodologically, there has been a great emphasis on quantitative research and most often the focus of research has been on male managers and their wives. Those studies that have focused on gender have used sex as a variable and have compared the differences between women and men. This has failed to show any deeper understanding of how gender and gender relations are constructed and what has led to these differences. This study extends previous studies by making visible a view of both genders, and by going beyond using gender only as a variable. Third, previous studies have in various ways and to some extent covered the role of the spouse at one point in a managerial career (e.g. career moves in terms of relocation, job changes and geographical mobility) and there have been many studies that have addressed the importance to a successful career of the right family structure or the spouse's employment status. However, these studies do not provide a complete understanding of how the spouse, whether husband or wife, signifies throughout the course of a manager's career.

2.3 Gender and doing gender

2.3.1 Theoretical approaches to studying gender

Gerson (2004, p. 165-167) presents important reasons why managers' work-family integration should be studied through a gender lens. Firstly, it helps us to go beyond stereotypes and analyze diversity among women and men along with the potential convergence between them. It is important to make clear that gender is not a binary and unchanging category, but rather a fluid and varied dimension of social life which changes as social institutions, options, and gender beliefs shift (Bradley, 2007). If gender assumes large homogeneity within gender groups and large or fundamental differences between women and men, it leaves researchers without the tools to analyze work-family integration among individuals and to consider any convergence between the two genders (Bradley, 2007; Alvesson & Billing, 1997).

Secondly, the gender lens directs attention not only to seeing work-family dilemmas as individual problems, but also to seeing them as part of larger social structures of inequality in their social and cultural context. Contemporary work and family arrangements have created paradoxes, contradictions and cross-cutting pressures; for instance, being a devoted spouse, parent and an ideal manager. These concepts also change with time and reflect the current social order (see also Thomas & Linstead, 2002; Tienari, Söderberg, Holgersson, & Vaara, 2005). Therefore the roots of these individual dilemmas become understood only when they are placed in an institutional context. Doldor, Anderson and Vinnicombe (2013) also highlight that studies interested in gender should be understood as context-sensitive.

Thirdly, a gender perspective draws attention to the complexity of changes in work and family lives. As Gerson (2004) points out, we must investigate the mix of opportunities, difficulties and needs in all kinds of family arrangements and in all the different twists and turns that take place over the career, and approach personal relationships and job commitments as fluid and unpredictable in a 21st century career.

Many scholars in the field of organization and management have established that organizations are gendered in terms of theory, practice and discourse (Mills, 1988; Acker, 1990; Calas & Smircich, 1992; Hearn & Parkin, 1983; Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Aaltio, Mills & Helms Mills, 2002; Mills, 2002; Helms Mills, 2005; Lämsä, 2010). In these studies, scholarly focus has been on the organization, and on how gender advantages and disadvantages are exploited and used in the workplace, mostly to the disadvantage of women. Even nowadays, women are often represented only as gendered objects following such discourse as “gender = sex = women = problem” (Calas & Smircich, 1996; p. 229, Kelan, 2008, p. 429). Alvesson and Billing (1997) declared that we should broaden the agenda from studying women to also studying men. This means that both women and men are to be taken seriously, not just as discriminated by/benefiting from patriarchy, stereotypical carriers of femininities/masculinities or as people standing in a harmonious relationship with dominant working life conditions, but as individuals who may experience mixed feelings, thoughts and orientations, a variety of interests and preferences and as people who might be constrained by current gender order models (ibid.).

Previous studies have suggested that the area of the family is the most gendered issue with reference to a manager’s career (Wajcman, 1996; Wajcman & Martin, 2002; Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Kirchmeyer, 2002). However, in the field of organization and management studies, there has been no in-depth analysis of how gender is done and how gendered relations are produced in the family for both genders (see for review Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011; Nentwich & Kelan, 2014). Although there are many studies which show how work is gendered, Fournier and Smith (2006) point out that there are still no studies on how jobs became gendered in the first place. Investigating the career and family in terms of gender leads to a higher degree of sensitivity to contradictions and ambiguities with regard to social constructions of gender relations, and what to consider as discrimination or equal opportunities (Ridgeway, 1997).

Kark (2004) following Lorber (2001) established three approaches for studying gender in management. First, traditional studies have followed *gender reform feminism*, which seeks to determine differences between women and men by studying *gender as variable*. According to Kark (2004), most studies taking this line have put emphasis on achieving gender equality by equating women to men (Lorber, 2001). Tienari (2014) says that this is still the most common approach in the field.

The second approach has followed *gender resistance feminism*. This differs to some extent from gender reform feminism, as it asserts that although women and men may be different, the differences should not be eliminated but em-

braced and celebrated (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). This strand has been adopted in fewer studies than gender reform feminism. Scholars using it have been more interested in the voices of women and their unique experiences, such as being a woman in management (Kark, 2004). The major critique of this *female advantage* approach has been the question of whether it really advantages women, because it strengthens essentialist perspectives of gender stereotypes and the inequitable division of labor based on these stereotypes, thereby limiting women's integration into positions of power and leadership (Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Lorber, 2001; Kark, 2004, p. 169).

The third approach to studying gender in management is *gender rebellion feminism*. Gender rebellion feminism is particularly interested in challenging the gender order and the construction of gendered arrangements. It aims to understand the categories of women, female, men, and masculine as multiple and to undermine the boundaries between the genders. This study can be identified as following gender rebellion feminism for several reasons. The emphasis here is on gender as context sensitive, socially constructed and shaped by asymmetrical power relations (Acker, 1990; Bradley, 2007; Gherardi & Poggio, 2001; 2007). In particular, gender is in this study seen from a social constructionist perspective (e.g. Lorber, 1994; Lorber & Farrell, 1991; Lorber, 2001; Bradley, 2007). **This means conceptualizing gender as fluid, shifting over time, and having multiple categories (Lorber, 2001; Billing, 2011). The focus here then is on understanding and multiplying the categories that are taken for granted, such as women-family and men-work.**

Gender as a social construction asserts that the individual creates their gender through their interactions with other people. Thus, gender is constantly created and recreated out of human interaction, out of social life, and is the texture and order of social life (Lorber, 1994, p. 13). Gender relations refer in this study to the rules, traditions and relationships that together determine what is considered feminine, appropriate for women, and what is masculine, appropriate for men, and how power is allocated between and used differently by women and men (MacDonald, Springer & Dubel, 1997). Gender order is understood as the informal social arrangements that define the complex and changing patterns of these gender relations (Connell, 1987). The resilience gender system and its orders are seen as being reinforced by the way social relational contexts carry pre-existing gender-specific beliefs into new activities in society, thus effecting social change (Ridgeway, 1997, 2002). Being a gendered person in society is seen then as having an influence on our behavior, identities and ultimately on the flow of our work and family lives (West & Zimmerman, 1987; Gherardi, 1994; West & Fenstermaker, 1995; Martin, 2003; Martin & Collinson, 2002).

2.3.2 Doing gender

'Doing gender' is a concept that is now widely used in studies focusing on work and organizations (Mavin & Grandy, 2012; Nentwich & Kelan, 2014). By applying the 'doing gender' theory in academic research, the focus shifts away from treating men and women as self-evident categories towards seeing gender as a

social practice (Nentwich & Kelan, 2014). Central to the idea of doing gender is to show gender as created in the situation rather than existing a priori (West & Zimmerman, 1987; West & Zimmerman, 2009). As a social phenomenon, gender does not just exist, but is created. According to West and Zimmerman, gender is something we accomplish: "Gender, in contrast, is the activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category. Gender activities emerge from and bolster claims to membership in a sex category. Doing gender theory posits that when we give membership to a certain sex category (which is not the same as biological sex), then we inevitably start doing gender. According to West and Zimmerman, we can never not do gender, because it is such an integral part of individual identity as well as of societal structures. As they say: "Doing gender furnishes the interactional scaffolding of social structure, along with built-in mechanisms of social control" (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 147).

Fundamental to understanding the doing gender theory therefore is to see gender as something that is a routine accomplishment in social interaction, relevant and done in all social situations. It is an important part of creating social structures, hierarchies, and power asymmetries (Nentwich & Kelan, 2014). The doing gender approach is for that reason useful when studying workplaces, professions (Katila & Eriksson, 2013; Katila & Meriläinen, 1999) and also the family (Butler, 2008; Lorber, 2008). Many in the field have used the theory to study how gender is done in organizations (see for review Nentwich & Kelan, 2014), and in this dissertation the doing gender framework is expanded to study family as well.

Using the theory of doing gender for studying constructions of spouse-career dynamics for managers is important for two main reasons. First, as generations of feminist scholars have argued, the workplace is a crucial site for the reproduction of gender inequality. But not only is the workplace a crucial site for the reproduction of gender inequality, but so too is the family, which is seen as a site of female dominance (Oakley, 1972). In the Nordic countries gender equality is defined through working life, career and pay level – in other words in very masculine terms. The traditional work-family discourse bolsters the strongly patriarchal values of heterosexuality and marriage and can easily be transferred to the career setting in management, in which setting the acceptable discourse would follow a pattern where wives are seen as more appropriately supporting their husbands than the other way round. Blau, Ferber & Winkler (1998) say that men and women are often socialized to expect that men's careers will take priority. In Finland it would be seen as acceptable for women (managers) to work in paid employment and build a career, but at the same time their moral obligation and ultimate duty would be seen as lying within the family. For men (managers) this obligation to the family is much less visible.

Secondly, the use of the doing gender theory enables us to show if and how behavior related to managers and their spouses and, for instance, spousal support of women and men, are gendered and how certain gender-specific assumptions are induced and sustained. For instance, in organization and man-

agement studies there is a strong expectation that managers are first and foremost managers or “organization men”, as described by Whyte (1956); there is no need to consider their roles, commitments or responsibilities outside the organization (Gatrell et al., 2013). However, in this study, the question is addressed of how managers make meaning and narrate the support they receive from their spouses for their careers. They are constantly doing gender by making choices on how they represent the phenomenon, and at the same time they are discursively maintaining or challenging gender order. This can then be seen to have implications for the career and family life of managers. This link between language use and other social practices is hardly direct, but it is worth seeing as indirect and mediated (Fairclough, 1992; Kendall & Tannen, 1997; Alvesson, 2004). Thus, analyzing how gender relations are done gives some idea of, for example, how the underlying assumptions of an appropriate behavior for a manager and his/her spouse influence and guide the careers and work-family integration of these managers.

3 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Epistemological and ontological assumptions

Positivism as a paradigm presupposes that there is only one reality, that it can be understood by examining the essential components of events, and that the specific causes of events can be traced by the methods of science (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Guba and Lincoln say that positivism frames science as a value free and objectivity seen as something that can be attained. Researchers have criticized a wide body of previous research on careers for taking this stand (Collin & Young, 1986; Cohen & Mallon, 2001; Moore, Gunz & Hall, 2007; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Post-positivism, a further modification of positivism, states that while there is only one reality, it can only be imperfectly understood (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Post-positivists state that reality must be subjected to the broadest possible examination in order for it to be understood as precisely as possible. Both of these paradigms usually use quantitative methods, verificate or falsificate hypotheses, and ultimately aim to reveal social reality and provide universal laws and theories about it.

The research approach here is non-positivistic, and has its ontological and epistemological roots in social constructionism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The approach has affected my research questions, the material, analysis and the form of the results. Guba and Lincoln frame as constructionist those studies that adopt a relativistic ontology, assuming that there are multiple, apprehendable and sometimes conflicting realities which are the product of human intellects, and that these may change as their constructors become more informed and sophisticated. Social constructionism² differs from the above-mentioned positivistic paradigms considerably: it does not accept that there is one truth, but many "truths" which are perspectival and situated in relationship (Stead, 2004, p. 391).

² Social constructionism can take various forms and is under constant debate (Hacking, 1999; Sparkes & Smith, 2008).

Following the idea of Berger and Luckmann (1966), social constructionism highlights that social reality is created through social human interaction, meaning that beliefs about reality are negotiated in interactional relationships. The social constructionist view emphasizes that meaning-making is best understood through examining and understanding the interaction processes between people (Burr, 1995). Its interest lies in the language, processes, contexts and co-construction of relationships (Stead, 2004). Knowledge is seen as being created in interaction between respondents and investigators; it is not disinterested or apolitical but an exclusive and embodied aspect of human experience, and also in some sense ideological, political and permeated with values (Rouse, 1996). The starting points of social constructionism are based on the notion that the social world is not a fixed or objective entity, or something external to individuals and impacting on them in a deterministic way, but as constructed by individuals through their social practices such as language (Cohen, Duberley & Mallon, 2004, p. 409).

In this thesis social constructionism is understood in moderate form: in other words, I see that knowledge and the meanings made of the world are a human construction, and I do not support the radical form of social constructionism which would suggest that there is nothing outside the narrative (like e.g. Edwards, 1997). In a social constructionist position, it is central to see language practices as the medium of social interaction, and meaning is derived from social interaction. Stead (2004) emphasizes social constructionism as an anti-essentialist belief that people are the product of social processes; they are not assumed to have a pre-determined nature, but relationships are seen as constructing cultures, while, recursively, culture constructs relationships. Thus, the relationship between the individual and society is seen as dialectical, and humans are both products and producers of the social world (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Depending on people's personal background, family characteristics, previous experiences, environmental contexts, and so on, they tend to construct the world differently, with the result that meanings differ across cultures and context (Stead, 2004; Cohen et al., 2004).

In the field of careers, social constructionism as an epistemology asserts that knowledge is historically and culturally specific, and that language constitutes rather than reflects reality, and is both a precondition for thought and a form of social action (Young & Collin, 2004, p. 377). The importance of social constructionism for this study comes from the idea that a career represents a unique interaction of the self and social experience (Scott, 1991): careers are seen as time and space-specific, interwoven with an individual's life (families, organizations and societies). Social constructionism is concerned with how the individual constructs not only her/himself, but also society and the social order (Young & Collin, 2004; Cohen et al., 2004). Burr (1995) claims that the advantages of using a social constructionist view are that it persuades one to challenge conventional and taken-for-granted understandings and helps to outline knowledge as culturally, historically specific; it also leads one to see that knowledge is sustained by social processes and versions of reality are created

and recreated through social practice as language by people. The language used also has a crucial impact on work-family integration in terms of the current models of paid work, successful careers and ideal workers and their social impacts. Many scholars in the field encourage a focus on language and its use to see how language sustains or questions the prevailing social orders (Lewis, Gambles & Rapoport, 2007; Kossek, Baltes & Matthews, 2011; Lewis & Humbert, 2010; Rúnte & Mills, 2004, 2006; Tienari et al., 2002; Meriläinen, Tienari, Thomas & Davies, 2004; Tienari, Vaara & Meriläinen, 2010).

3.2 Studying careers as narrated

It is suggested that narrative is the oldest form of influence in human history and storytelling is one of the primary forms of communication among human beings (Bruner, 1986ž1990). Narrative is one of the fundamental means by which we organize, explain and understand our life and social relations (Polkinghorne, 1988). In this respect, narratives are always about human action and experience. Narrative approaches in the field of organization and management studies have acquired an increasingly high profile and have their own specific scholars. This is particularly evident in the area of organization theory, in which researchers such as Barbara Czarniawska (1997, 1998, 2000, 2004), and the postmodern organization theorist David Boje (1995, 2001, 2008) have debated about various types of narrative approach in business research. Their focus has mainly been on organizations and organizational storytelling. A more psychoanalytical approach to the world of narratives was established by Yiannis Gabriel (1995, 1999, 2000). This dissertation takes a more sociological stand, since it is interested in individuals and their lives as narrated (Riessman, 1993, 2000, 2003, 2008).

In this dissertation, narrative is understood as a distinct form of discourse with certain characteristics. It is considered to be the making of meaning through the shaping or ordering of experience, understanding the actions of oneself and others, organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole, and connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events, especially over time (e.g. Chase, 2011; Søderberg, 2003). Narratives focus on different and contradictory layers of meaning, and therefore help us to understand more about individual lives and social change (Squire, 2008). The interest of a narrative lies in people's lived experiences and is founded on an appreciation of the temporal nature of that experience, and in addition it focuses on process and change over time and the self and its representations (Elliot, 2005). While meta-narratives often ignore the heterogeneity and variety of human experience, ordinary people's mundane, but personal and individual narratives tackle exactly that (Squire, 2008). Focusing on individual narratives strengthens our understanding of the social and cultural setting and the diversity and emotionality of human experience (ibid.).

This study draws upon an approach to personal narratives which has its focus on individual experiences (Squire, 2008). Squire says that experience-centered narrative research assumes that narratives are sequential and meaningful, a means of human sense-making, and that they represent, reconstitute, and express experience, and display transformation or change. Experience-centered narrative research believes that we can understand personal experience through narratives because they are a means of human sense-making, and that the sequential temporal ordering of human experience into narrative is not just characteristic of humans, but makes us human. Narratives in experience-centered narrative research are conceptualized as involving some reconstruction of stories across times and places: the same stories are never told twice, but they are performed differently in different societal contexts. In this type of research the material can be in oral or written form. The final assumption of experience-centered research is that it assumes that narratives represent personal change: addressing themes rather than causes, the focus in these studies is often on changes and transformations in the narratives.

There is a great variety of ways in which personal narratives are operationally defined and conceptualized (e.g. Riessman, 2003; Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). For instance, Riessman (2003) says that one stream is seeing narratives as an amalgam of autobiographical materials which create an entire life story (e.g. Myerhoff, 1978). Another way is to see narratives as very strict, rather brief and topically specific (Labov, 1982), while a third one is the idea that personal narrative encompasses large sections of talk and interview exchanges – extended accounts of lives that develop over the course of interviews (e.g. Mishler, 2000). In this dissertation, narrative is understood as capturing the manager's career as a part of a broader context throughout his/her life, and the narrative is seen as being created as a co-construction with a research participant and the researcher in a research setting. The narratives in this study can be described as autobiographical. As Renza (1977) puts it, autobiography is neither fictive nor non-fictive, not even a mixture of the two, but is a unique, self-defining mode of self-referential expression, one that allows, then inhibits, the project of self-presentification, of converting oneself into the present promised by language. Thus, a narrative here refers to an entire account, produced in a research setting, in which an attempt has been made to capture and cover the manager's career and family during the life course, as she/he wants to tell it. I also follow Gergen and Gergen (1988) in seeing that narratives make sense and are coherent; they have characteristics such as following the establishment of a valued end point, the selection of events relevant to the stated goal, the ordering of events, and ultimately the establishing of narrative causal linkages. The chosen narrative approach therefore gives us a vantage point from which to see how one person experiences and understands life, his or her own especially, over time. It is also important to note that though the research participants and the researcher together are collaborators, composing and constructing the narrative, the narrator is considered to be the expert and the authority on her or his own life.

A narrative approach to careers begins with a conceptualization of the individual as storied, rather than as someone who possesses static traits (e.g. Cochran, 1990; Cohen & Mallon, 2001; Savickas, 2005; Bosley, Arnold & Cohen, 2009; Ekonen, 2014). Savickas and his colleagues (2009) argue for research that takes into consideration the individual's work and life as a whole. This approach is preferred to traditional approaches in the field of career research since it takes into consideration the individual's context, has a processual understanding of careers and depicts them as dynamic and non-linear, and emphasizes narrative realities rather than realistic facts. In particular, Lee, Kossek, Hall and Litrico (2011), in a recent study, make it clear that a narrative approach is advantageous for understanding the intertwined nature of different life spheres; it therefore helps us to increase our understanding of careers as embedded in family, personal, and community life over time. A narrative approach to careers embraces the context in which individual needs, interests, abilities, and values arise (Del Corso & Rehfuß, 2011). When the managers narrate their subjective perceptions of themselves and the world, they do so using their own language and meaning system (Bujold, 2004). Understanding the language that people use to describe their work and family lives is crucial to how they construct the meaning of it (Ba', 2011). In the context of this study, it can help us to understand how people experience their spouse's role in their career and how they feel about it. These narratives help people to identify and make clear their experiences to themselves but also to others (Bruner, 1986, 1991; Ricoeur, 1984, 1991; Polkinghorne, 1995). When the managers talk about their careers in the form of a narrative as a temporal and plotted construction (Cohen et al., 2004), the managers make sense, reflect and simultaneously interpret their own career history and other aspects of life, such as their spouse, in relation to that.

This research is not longitudinal but it aims to capture individual life as a whole, using narratives and narrative time. Autobiographical narratives can contain a number of different forms and orders of time, creating a multi-layered weave of human temporality and a space in which different modalities [past, present, and future] are inextricably interwoven, it is also important to remember the temporal structure of human life itself, which is essentially a multi-layered and many-centered fabric of different orders of time (Brockmeier, 2000). Here, I follow Ricoeur (1984), who proposed that we can understand the past and the future through the present, as an extension of it. According to him, time exists in a discursive sense and the present should be understood as a threefold idea. This means that the present, past and future cannot be separated as such, but they are all temporal qualities that are used in the discursive representation of time. He states that we have memory to give us a competence to understand the past in the present. The past can be connected to the present through images, and the future can be connected to the present through expectations. The idea of an extended or threefold present frees us from the bodily sense of the restrictions of time (Lämsä & Sintonen, 2006). Thus, when a manager narrates (in writing or orally) about his or her career and spouse at a certain point of time

and in an appointed research situation, it is possible to bring issues from the past and the future into the present of that situation. This same idea can be applied to the connection of space and narrative (Lämsä & Sintonen, 2006). As bodily creatures we human beings are tied to a certain time and space, but through narration we can make meaning through time and with time (Andrews, 2008; Carr, 1986).

3.3 Research material and its analysis

The research material of this dissertation consists of two data sets: 29 women managers' narratives which are in the form of interviews (25) and written text (4), and 29 men manager's narratives which are in the form of interviews. Here I will introduce the research material and its production in more detail. Empirical data used for narrative research can take various forms: interviews, conversations, oral histories, chronicles, biographies, family stories, a journal, autobiographical writing, letters, field notes, photographs, memory boxes, and personal artefacts. Not all the data have to be originally in narrative form (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). However, in this dissertation I understood the data in narrative form (Polkinghorne, 1995).

The interviews can be described as semi-structured and open-ended. Atkinson (1998) says that the protocol for interviewing people about their individual lives can be loose: there is a structure that is used in the background, but each interviewer will do an interview in his or her own way to capture the essence of each of the career and family events that have happened. The main objective in conducting these interviews was to have the manager elaborate on what had happened, in what circumstances, what led to events, and how they felt about their career or other life events in relation to their career, as expressed in their own words. Mishler (1986) advocates more open-ended questions, with minimal interruption of accounts, and the encouragement of the respondent's own linguistic formulations to elaborate on the experiences that are mentioned. This was operationalized in these interviews: respondents were given as much time to answer the questions as they needed and pauses and silence were allowed, and at the same time respondents were encouraged to give examples of their life events so that the narrative revealed as much as possible about the interviewee's life. The very nature of this kind of method, which tries to capture the life story an individual, means that no two researchers will carry out the interview in precisely the same way, nor will their analysis of the data be totally replicable (Jackson, 1987; Atkinson, 1998). This means that the narratives of the managers are highly personal encounters.

An announcement recruiting managers for this study was published in a booklet by The Finnish Association for Human Resource Management - HENRY ry, which is an association of professionals responsible for the management and development of human resources in Finnish companies and organizations.

Moreover, the HENRY email-list and personal contacts were used to get research participants for the study.

The research material in this dissertation includes managers working in small, medium and large organizations in the public and private sectors; some of them are business owners. A common feature among them is their managerial position and extensive work experience. Bryman and Bell (2007) say that it is an essential characteristic of an explorative study and an appropriate research strategy given the relatively low development of current theory and research on the topics addressed. To obtain a rounded and vivid view of the topic I used purposeful sampling in order to get a heterogeneous group with a great deal of variation in their experience as managers (Patton, 2002) and people who had sufficient work and life experience to reflect on their lives and careers retrospectively. All the research material is in Finnish and quotations presented in this dissertation are translations.

The first data set consists of the narratives of women managers. The first data set is used in the first article and the 25 interviews are used in the third article. The women managers who are part of this study are in mid- and late career, they are aged between 35 and 63, and they represent different branches of industry. The educational background of the women managers varied from secondary level to higher university degrees. All the women managers either had or had had one or more spouses in the course of their careers, and all but one were mothers, mostly of teenage or adult children. The most common number of children was two, but the number varied, mostly between one and three. Most of their spouses had an active professional life (e.g. working as an entrepreneur, employee, expert or manager) and none of the spouses had chosen to have a career as a full-time house husband, although a few of them had spent some periods of time at home.

All the interviews with women were face to face and followed the same interview method and content. The interviews with women were conducted by the author, Anna-Maija Lämsä and Minna Hiillos. The interviews were semi-structured, they were based on an interview guide covering the successive phases of the woman's career and family life up to the present, and they lasted between one and two hours. The four written texts were collected because these women managers preferred writing to being interviewed about their experiences. These narratives were written by the participant herself and then sent to the author by post or e-mail. The participants were guided to write the story of their career and family life from the early stages of their career until the present, following a similar pattern to that of the interviews. The length of the written texts varied from one to six pages.

The second data set consists of the narratives of men managers. The second data set is utilized in the second and fourth articles. Men who were in mid- or late career, between the ages of 37 and 61, and who had sufficient experience of managerial work and extensive work experience in various branches of industry were recruited for this particular study. The same sampling techniques were used to recruit the men as the women by using HENRY's networks and

personal networks. The criteria were designed to keep the potential sampling frame broad in order to reflect the diverse perspectives and experiences of male managers, and my aim was to get a similar type of research material with men as with women managers. The men all had one or more spouses in the course of their careers, and all were fathers. Their educational background varied from secondary level to postgraduate degrees. Most of their spouses had an active professional life (e.g. working as an employee, expert or as a teacher), but there were also spouses that had chosen to have a career as a full-time house wife. A semi-structured interview approach was used that allowed participants to share their experiences of career and family life and the interviews lasted between 45 minutes and two hours. The interviews with men were conducted by the author in offices or rooms specially reserved for the study. All the interviews were carried out face to face and followed the same interview method and content covering the successive phases of the man's career and family life up to the present. The interviews were handled in the same way as the women's data (Appendix).

The research material is influenced by the fact that, as in this study, it is produced in a research setting (Alvesson, 2003). The research setting, such as an interview (or in four cases the writing situation³), should not be understood just as an arena for finding out experiences and perceptions but also as a social event, and that in itself acts as an empirical setting (Alvesson, 2003). The research setting should be understood as a meaning-making conversation and as interactional and constructive by nature (Gubrium & Holstein, 2011, p. 152), thus creating a micro-context for the study. Interviewers are active participants in the interviews, subtly prodding participants to 'say more' about a topic or pausing at points in the expectation that 'more' could be said. In interview research it is often naively believed that the researcher can gain unmediated access to a life story by ignoring the interactional and institutional environments that shape the particular version of it (Riessman, 2011). In contrast to the positivist premise that it is possible and imperative to distinguish between the known and the knower on the one hand and reality "as it is" on the other, a narrative approach maintains that researchers and the phenomena they study are inseparable (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Therefore the narratives in this study are seen as the production of two people, the researcher and the research participant. To a certain extent the researcher is socially constructed within the interview setting as part of the manager's construction of his/her life. Thus, the generation of the research material is very much the result of the involvement of the researcher as well.

A good narrative analysis prompts the reader to go beyond the surface of a text, and aims to move toward a broader commentary (Cortazzi, 1993; Riessman, 2008). I follow Polkinghorne (1995) when he says that there are two modes of analysis in narrative research. The first mode of analysis is analysis of narratives, in which the focus is on narrative as a form of representation, and

³ The written text in the data can be interpreted as being a mutual production of a researcher and a research participant as well since the written texts were inspired by the same type of questions as those used in the interviews.

specific narratives are analyzed in terms of the content e.g. meanings, plots and narrative structures. To be precise, the analysis focuses on common elements in the narratives. The second mode of analysis, according to Polkinghorne (1995), is narrative analysis, which means that the researcher organizes and interprets the empirical data to describe some more or less consistent events, happenings and actions in such a way that he or she constructs one or more narratives that will be interpreted and discussed. Narrative analysis is usually the procedure through which the researcher organizes the data into a coherent developmental account. In practice, it is good to bear in mind that neither of these modes of analysis exists in its purest form (ibid.). In my first and second articles I have applied analysis of narratives as my mode of analysis, and in the third and fourth article I have applied narrative analysis. Here I provide a detailed description of the four procedures of analysis used in each of the articles.

In the first article the research material on women managers was analyzed with a six-phase procedure using NVivo computer software. In the first phase, the data were read multiple times for the researcher to become properly familiar with the material. In the second phase the data were organized into three main categories depending on the meanings given to the spouse: positive, negative and other. In this phase the narrative phrases were divided into those containing positive and negative meanings. This division was made based on earlier research about women managers and spouses by White et al. (1997) and Lämsä and Hiillos (2008), who had argued for this dichotomy. For example, here is an excerpt from the research material that shows both the discussion between the interviewer and a woman manager and the constructed meaning, which was analyzed as positive:

I: Have you got anything that you would see as sort of personal reasons I mean not in your working career but I mean from somewhere else in your life, that have influenced your career? For example with you, your husband has been there at home and so in that way, has your family life been difficult?

W: No, because it's been my good fortune that I've never had to think about home like that, to think that it isn't working well.

I: Yes.

W: Yes, yes, it has definitely freed up a lot of my energy. Because when I leave in the morning and give my wife a kiss and say bye-bye, then during the day I don't need to think at all about, oh dear, how are they getting on at home, because I know they're getting on really well."

Here, in contrast, is an example excerpt from the research material in which the constructed meaning was analyzed as negative:

"W: I got very little appreciation and I even got some negative comments, that it wasn't any kind of work (HR-work) that I was doing."

When the analysis was taken further, it was noticed that not all of the phrases fitted into these two groups, so the category of other meanings was added. In the third phase the contents of each of the three categories were scrutinized for differences and similarities within them. In the fourth phase an even more thorough and detailed investigation was carried out, which led to the interpretation of the main meaning groups and a preliminary typology of spouses. In this

phase of analysis these were named as: a determining, supporting, instrumental, flexible and negative spouse. Then, in the fifth phase the categorization was re-examined and remodeled by going through the third and fourth phases yet once more. This further clarified the typology and the final typology of spouses was formed; it included a determining, supporting, instrumental, flexible and counterproductive spouse. This phase also included the analysis of gender role construction between the spouses. Each type of spouse that was narrated was analyzed in terms of gender roles between the spouses and whether they were constructed in the woman manager's narration as following either traditional or equal gender roles. For example, in the excerpt with positive meaning that I introduced on the previous page, our analysis procedure led to the interpretation of supporting spouse. When the gender role constructions were analyzed in each type of spouse, attention was paid to whether the woman and her spouse expected to follow the traditional gender role construction of women-family-private and men-career-public division or whether they tried to challenge this. When this division was narrated as happening on more equal terms, it was analyzed as a more equal gender role construction between the spouses; in such cases both genders were often encouraged to have a successful career and a participative family life.

In the second article a similar type of analysis was carried out as in the first article as I aimed to identify the common themes of experience within the narratives told by the male managers. In the first phase of the analysis I read the interviews many times to refresh my memory of the interviews. Then, after becoming familiar with the research material, I began to analyze the narratives to identify the meanings given to their spouse by each male manager. Following the steps applied in the first article I used a similar procedure and coded the positive, negative and other meanings into categories. Following the analysis procedure I went systematically through the research material and put these phrases into categories based on their homogenous thematic content related to the purpose of the study. Through this iterative process I identified four narrated types of female spouses in the male manager's career: supporting, balance-seeking, care-providing and success-expecting. Up to this phase the analysis procedure was similar to that of the first article.

From this phase onwards I deepened the analysis to study the constructed types more thoroughly. I used the career narrative framework of Lee et al. (2011), who argued that three elements - figure-ground, agency vs communion and salience of external events - can be analyzed to better capture the interconnectedness of different life spheres and relationships in career narratives. In their framework figure/ground refers to the main characters, and what is dominant (figure) and what is background (ground) in the narrative. Agency vs communion refers to the extent how individual posture in relation to events and happenings in the world: 'communion'. Salience of external events, according to them, means the impact of external events and the domain of these events narrated in the narrative. I focused firstly on the figures, the main characters, in this case the male managers and their wives, particularly on how sali-

ent different aspects of their lives were in their narrations in each of the types. Secondly, I looked more carefully at agency vs communion, that is, at how the managers portrayed their playing of different roles, and how events in work and family life were described through either individual agency or communion in their narration. Lastly, I turned my focus to external events: the extent and the life domain in which these external events were narrated as having a major influence. Each of these elements was analyzed carefully in each type of spouse. This phase of analysis was carried out because I felt that this enabled me better to capture how the male managers constructed their role in relation to their spouse and family, and ultimately which kind of gender role construction could be found in the types of spouses that were narrated by the male managers.

As I have said, in the first two articles the analysis mode can be identified as following the analysis of narratives, while in the third and fourth articles the analysis was narrative analysis as defined by Polkinghorne (1995). In the third article a dual-phase analysis was used to process the research material: first, a content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980) was carried out to interpret the women's constructions of different forms of spousal support, and then in the second phase the idea of a story line from Gergen and Gergen (1988) was adopted to examine the evaluative shifts in the perceived spousal support throughout the women's careers. Gergen and Gergen state that in narratives we can view the various events as moving through evaluative space. This means that when a woman manager expresses in her narrative a valued outcome, the story line becomes more positive as it refers to happiness and satisfaction in her life and career, while the story line becomes more negative when disappointment and failure are recounted. As a whole, the story line of the woman manager's narrative could change in relation to time.

According to Gergen and Gergen (1988), all plots of narratives may be converted to a stable, progressive or regressive linear form with respect to their evaluative shifts over time and in this form can be considered rudimentary bases for other more complex variations, creating narrative forms such as tragedy, comedy, 'happily-ever-after' and romance. Tragedy in this sense contains a regressive story line, and would tell a story of downfall. Comedy and 'happily-ever-after' are the reverse of tragedy, and both are dominated by a progressive story line. The comedy narrative consists of some challenges or problems prior to a happy denouement, and in the 'happily-ever-after' narrative the progressive form is followed by a blissful stable end. The narrative of romance consists of many progressive-regressive phases. The data analysis was organized into two phases using NVivo computer software. In the first phase of the analysis the data were read many times so that the researcher could become properly familiar with the topic from this perspective, and the narratives were systematically coded based on what spousal support could mean for each of the female managers. The constructions of different forms of spousal support in the narratives were categorized following the dichotomy favored by Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), into groups of emotional support and behavioral support, plus a group of others. Further analysis was made based on the constructions of

support, focusing on the target of spousal support: whether it was targeted at the individual, the domestic sphere or the public sphere. Finally, three main categories were identified: psychosocial support, hands-on support and career assistance. Beside positive spousal support, the research material also consistently brought up non-supportive behavior narrated by the women, and so this form of non-support was added to our analysis as well.

In the second phase of the analysis the narratives were approached again to gain a comprehensive understanding and to capture the evolving dimension of the forms of spousal support or lack of it over the course of the woman's career. We did this by comparing and contrasting individual narratives in ways that allowed us to assign them to meaningful groups. This was an iterative process as we went back and forth between the research material to see whether and how the constructions of spousal support changed during the woman's career, then compared and assigned particular narratives to appropriate categories based on the women's evaluation of spousal support during their careers. In this phase the narratives were categorized into three preliminary groups: narratives where the women narrated that their spousal support was present throughout their career, narratives of a lack of spousal support, and narratives which did not belong in either of these groups. The contents of each of the groups were further scrutinized for differences and similarities, and they were re-examined, remodeled and specified. The evolvement of spousal support was evaluated even more thoroughly within each particular group of narratives (see Gergen & Gergen, 1988). Finally, after many reformulations and discussions, we synthesized a final division of the narratives into four groups: harmonious development of spousal support, irrelevant spousal support, quitting deficient spousal support and inconsistent spousal support. The narrative groups were then analyzed and different events were specified that were common over the woman's career. In this phase each of the storylines was also analyzed in terms of gender relations between the spouses. In practice this was done by paying attention to how the woman manager constructed in her narrative the gender relations between the spouses, and what role was expected from the woman and man in terms of gender. This analysis was detected along with the storyline by identifying if this construction may change. Each grouping was made a coherent whole, and reported as a separate entity in the article.

In the fourth article, the analysis procedure was very similar to that used in the third article, and it was done in two phases: first the use of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2013) to examine the men's different forms of spousal support, and then in the second phase the use of the idea of a story line from Gergen and Gergen (1988) to analyze the evaluative shifts in perceived spousal support in the course of the men's careers. In the first phase four types of spousal (non-)support were identified: running the household, psychosocial support, career assistance, and negative expectations.

In the second phase, following Gergen and Gergen (1988), we worked on the principle that in the men's narratives we can view various events as moving through evaluative space. This means that when a male manager expresses in

his narrative a valued outcome, the story line becomes more positive, as it refers to happiness and satisfaction in his life and career, while the story line becomes more negative when disappointment and failure are recounted. By using the above-mentioned procedure, as in the third article, the analysis resulted with men managers in three groups of narratives (negotiated spousal support, enriching spousal support and declining spousal support) with three different storylines (romance, 'happily-ever-after' and tragedy). The only difference in this analysis procedure from that followed in the third article was how the research material was made visible: in the third article I decided to show excerpts from the research material to support the analysis, but in the fourth article a synopsis of each group of narratives was made to make more thoroughly visible the essence of each storyline. These synopses capture the essential components in each group of narratives and are reported in the fourth article. Though I am aware that these synopses cannot capture all the details, they were constructed because it is impossible to include the complete narratives in the article.

4 REVIEWING THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARTICLES

In this chapter I will examine each of my articles, review their research results in relation to previous literature, and make explicit the contributions of the study.

4.1 Study 1 – The spouse of the female manager: role and influence on the woman’s career

My first article sheds light on women managers’ work-family integration, in particular on the role of their male spouse in their career. In this study the focus is on how the women managers themselves talk about and make meaning of their spouse’s role in their career. The topic is integrated with an analysis of gender role construction between the spouses. The study adopts a narrative approach and its research material consists of 29 narratives of women managers. The method of analysis was based on paradigmatic cognition (Polkinghorne, 1995), and as a result a typology of five abstract narrative types of spouses was constructed. The types are not static and they may overlap during the woman’s career. The types are determining, supporting, instrumental, flexible and counterproductive.

In their narrations the women managers most often construct the spouse as supportive, emphasizing their husband’s important role as a discussion or sparring partner, someone who offers a secure background for creating a career. In this type the gender roles between the spouses are narrated as respectful and balanced, and neither of them dominates. This type is also narrated as the most positive for the woman’s career. Interestingly, the second most common type of narration from the women managers is on the negative side: the women in this case see the husband as having a dismissive and discouraging attitude to their career. In particular, the wife having a high profile and being successful in both

status and wealth are constructed as being difficult for the male spouse to accept. In this type the gender roles are constructed as women doing gender in a way that emphasizes traditional gender roles, where the domestic sphere is constructed as the proper place for a woman, not the pursuit of a successful career in management, which is traditionally seen as a male arena. The third most common construction by the women is of the determining spouse, in which traditional gender roles are followed, the husband's career is prioritized over the woman's career, and the woman's career and the family are said to be adjusted to the husband's working circumstances. In contrast to the determining spouse, in the fourth type the spouse is narrated as being particularly flexible as far as the woman's career is concerned, and taking second place in the family in terms of career. In this type the husband takes clear responsibility for domestic duties, and this type is constructed as a conscious choice made either jointly or by the man himself. The last of the types, which is very much a minority in the research material, is the spouse narrated as offering some instrumental support, such as social or material status, for the woman, which again is constructed as being beneficial for the woman's career. In this type the woman is narrated as dominating, but in the end she is reinforcing the traditional gender role division because she bolsters the man's traditional role as a breadwinner. The results of the study suggest that more fluidity in gender roles between the spouses is associated with a woman manager's sense of success and satisfaction in her career. Based on the study it can be implied that in Finland strict, traditional gender roles may cause women managers some difficulties and prevent them from attaining top managerial positions.

This research extends previous research in two respects: Firstly, it extends theoretically the previous literature on women managers' work-family integration. It offers a perspective that takes into account the family not as a static entity but as consisting of different members, in this case the husband, and considers his various roles in a woman manager's career. In particular, it does not focus only on the positive or negative effects of family on a woman manager's career, but contributes to a more complete and many sided understanding of work-family integration. Secondly, this study brings into debates on work-family integration an analysis of spouses' gender roles, which are interrogated in relation to the woman's career. Therefore it is suggested:

The women managers construct the meaning of their spouse for their career through multifaceted and ambiguous meanings, not only as a career barrier or advantage. Fluid, equal gender roles between the spouses are constructed as advantageous for women managers' careers.

Analyzing more carefully how gender is done in these narratives, it is apparent that the male spouse in heterosexual living arrangements is constructed as varied, and the women managers' narration is fragmented. However, according to my analysis, these women construct gender norms in relation to what is regarded as appropriate behavior for male spouses, and what support

they want and expect for their career, and they want to enable and create a space in which equal roles in the work-family context are possible for both genders. This kind of narration challenges traditional gender roles in many respects. However, as the results show, there is also narration of another type, for example that of the counter-productive spouse. All in all, based on the narratives it seems that it is important for the women that fluidity in gender roles is possible: it is seen as enabling more equal relations between the spouses and ultimately as offering both women and men the opportunity to thrive and strive in the work and family spheres. These managers' accounts are an important source of argument for and the production of gender-appropriate behavior for the woman and the man in work-family integration. The narratives are also useful for emphasizing the variety of experiences and realities for women managers in their work-family integration.

In practice, this article makes two contributions to the field of women managers' careers: Firstly, the results of the study suggest that it is beneficial to promote an organizational culture and atmosphere that respects the personal and family concerns of its members and promotes a flexible and broad-minded view of gender roles in organizational and family matters. Given that work-family integration and how it is experienced vary greatly among these women managers, organizations would benefit by creating different kinds of supportive strategies to make it possible for women to combine their family and working lives. Secondly, the results of the study make it very clear that women managers feel that they can better manage their career and work-family integration if they have a spouse who does not take traditional and conventional gender roles as given and taken-for-granted, and who is first and foremost flexible and supportive.

4.2 Study 2: How do male managers narrate their female spouse's role in their career?

The second study concerns the issue of work-family integration from the perspective of male managers. It investigates how they make meaning of the role of their female spouse for their career. As said, most of the studies in the field of work and family have been carried out from a woman's perspective, making visible their experiences in different contexts, and explicitly their struggles to combine a career with family life. The study now being discussed follows the same narrative methodological considerations as the first study, but in this study the framework of career narrative put forward by Lee et al. (2011) has been utilized when analyzing the narratives. In this study the analysis of gender roles emphasizes how the male manager's role is constructed in relation to his spouse and family. The research material consists of interviews with 29 men managers, as a result of which a typology distinguishing four abstract and

varying narrative types of female spouses was constructed: supporting, care-providing, balance-seeking and success-expecting.

In the male managers' narratives the spouse is most often constructed as having an important role as discussion partner, encourager and supporter, and she is presented as accepting the demands of a managerial career. In this type the gender roles between the spouses are constructed as traditional; the male manager dominates and the family and the wife's job adapt to the man's career. The second most frequent narrative is of the care-providing spouse, who very much follows and conforms to traditional gender roles. In this type the wife is clearly constructed as taking care of the household and the children, and the man dedicates his life to his work and career. The third most common type is the balance-seeking spouse, who is narrated as having a balancing influence on the male manager's career, while she provides the link between the male career and a larger life context. In this type the gender roles are constructed as more equal: the manager can be understood to be an involved partner and parent who makes career choices for the sake of the family, and this generally enables equal participation in the family and working life for both partners. The last of the types, the success-expecting spouse, which has negative connotations, is narrated in only a few of the narratives. In this type the female spouse is reported to have talked about her expectations of economic success, which was felt at the same time to be both helping the male manager to get ahead but also to be putting negative pressure on him. The man is narrated as dominating and having a strong breadwinning responsibility, which strengthens the traditional gender role division.

All in all, in this study the male managers' narrations are very positive. It is noticeable, however, that the balance-seeking type was the only one in which the male manager was constructed as an involved member of family life. The career is the area that seems to dominate in the men managers' narrations. However, as the balance-seeking type of meaning given to the female spouse shows, it seems that Finnish men managers are beginning to put greater emphasis on work and family: they want to be an involved part of their families, and to have a greater role than just that of breadwinner. The study suggests that in the setting of a male career in management, traditional gender roles are still constructed in many senses as the norm between the spouses. However, the male manager's career is unfolding in tandem with, not separate from, their family life, and as with the women managers, the men's experiences vary greatly. Further, the study suggests:

The spouse of the male manager is not narrated by the male manager as inevitably being behind his career, as the given meanings were far from static and monolithic. Traditional gender roles between the spouses seem not to be constructed as harmful for men managers' careers, although more fluid gender roles are constructed as giving them the opportunity to have a successful career as well as a part of involved family life.

I can identify two implications of how gender is done in these narratives. According to my analysis, these men construct gender norms as the wife provid-

ing supportive behavior, in the background of his career. In this type of narration the men do not offer equal gender relations for both spouses, but we get the impression that the men's primary concern is their career, while their female spouses are expected to take care of almost every aspect of domestic life while also having a paid job. This has been found elsewhere to be typical of Finnish managers' spouses (Kartovaara, 2003). Thus, it seems that a double burden – taking care of the family and pursuing a career – is often women's lot in Finland. This is also reinforced by the notion that these men managers do not question or consider their role in family life; in their narrations they do not narrate, for example, about how they could be more involved in terms of fathering or be a more devoted husband. It therefore seems that men managers do not have to justify their lack of involvement in family life, to explain that it is due to their career, but this situation is simply more acceptable for males in managerial positions in Finland than it is for females. Despite the fact that female and male gender roles tend to be more fluid in Finland than in many other Western countries (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006), this study provides evidence that traditional gender roles still continue rather strongly to direct men to the public sphere and women to the domestic sphere. In practice, then it bears an influence for the ways in which men managers pursue their careers and dictates the terms of their involvement in family life.

On the basis of this study it is proposed that a male manager's career and other life spheres might be valuable to understand as intertwined and multidimensional. In practice, this highlights the idea that a male manager's career is related to and affected by the family and vice versa. For that reason, when examining male managers' careers, it would be valuable to adopt more approaches and try to understand the variations in the men's family life, as well as the norms and gender roles related to the family and its members.

4.3 Study 3: Narratives by women managers about spousal support for their careers

The third article in this dissertation examines spousal support for the careers of women managers, and the focus is to study how women managers experience the support given them by their male partners from the perspective of their careers. Here, the emphasis is on the evolving dimension of spousal support over the life course. We were also interested in what kind of gender relations women managers construct when discussing their experiences of spousal support for their careers. In this study the concept of gender order is used to analyze the informal social arrangements that define the complex and changing patterns of gender relations (Connell, 1987), particularly between the woman manager and her spouse.

The research material consists of 25 narratives of women managers. The study applies a narrative approach to careers and uses for its analysis both con-

tent analysis (Krippendorff, 1980) and the idea of storyline from Gergen and Gergen (1988). Analysis showed that spousal support from the male spouses was constructed as flourishing, irrelevant, deficient or inconsistent. Furthermore, four different groups of narratives which followed four different storylines and illustrated changes in spousal support for the woman manager's career from the point of view of gender order were identified. Those are 1) harmoniously flourishing spousal support which follows a happily-ever-after storyline, 2) irrelevant spousal support with a stable storyline, 3) quitting deficient spousal support, which was analyzed following a storyline of romance, and 4) inconsistent spousal support with a tragic storyline.

The results of the study emphasize that spousal support is changing and dynamic, bringing out its multifaceted nature (e.g. Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008). However, in this study it also emerged that women managers may also experience spousal non-support. Moreover, although it is known that a family can act as a key organizing principle providing resources or limitations for a career (Kimmel, 2000), how gender is done between a woman manager and her spouse has not often been a focus of research. In the group of narratives of irrelevant spousal support, the storyline was stable and the gender order is left untouched. In the other groups of narratives (harmoniously flourishing spousal support, quitting deficient spousal support and inconsistent spousal support) the storylines were changing. Traditional gender order was said to be challenged clearly only in the happily-ever-after storyline; in storylines of romance and tragedy there is discussion of the traditional gender order but it remained vague and unchallenged.

This research suggests that a male spouse who is willing to break the traditional gender order and provide his wife with various forms of support is often constructed as having a positive influence on the career of his woman manager wife. It is put forward that ideally a close fit between the changing form of spousal support and what the woman manager expects and needs in different career and family situations is constructed as preferable. While previous studies concerning management and careers have shown them to be gendered, this study stresses families as sites of doing gender. It is therefore suggested:

For the careers of women managers, it should be taken into consideration that spousal support is understood by women managers as changing over the career. This implies that the interdependency of the work and family also changes over the career. The gender order between the spouses seems to be crucial for understanding the nature of spousal support. When the gender order is made visible, it can be examined, and changed if necessary.

As the study showed, spousal support was narrated as changing over the career, and it can be implied that gender relations and ultimately gender order between the spouses can change during the career. These changing shifts, as well as family and work as shifting domains, are not often taken into account in empirical research in the field. The most problematic situation seems to be when the gender relations between the spouses are not brought to the surface but are

left untouched; they are then taken for granted and cannot be assessed. Therefore from the perspective of theory of doing gender, it is important to make gender order visible between the woman manager and her spouse, as this is the basis for the assessment of whether it is satisfactory or whether it needs to be questioned and ultimately changed. Often the processes of how and what kind of gender is produced and done remain invisible and unacknowledged in studying work-family integration (West & Zimmerman, 1987, 2009; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004), and this invisibility may (unintentionally) create or uphold unequal power relations and segregation between spouses in the work and family domains.

It is important for organizations, in practice, to take into account that women managers have different expectations and needs with respect to their careers and their family at different times in their life course (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004). This might be worth taking into consideration when designing management development activities and career management (e.g. mentoring, coaching, counseling, international assignments), and when work-family policies are being designed and put into place.

4.4 Study 4: Male managers' narratives of spousal support for their career

The fourth article presents a study about spousal support for male managers' careers and investigates the narratives of male managers to analyze how they perceive their female spouses' support in relation to their careers. As in the previous article, here the interest is also in what kind of gender relations male managers produce while narrating their experiences of spousal support for their career. The concept of gender order is used to analyze the informal social arrangements that define the complex and changing patterns of gender relations (Connell, 1987), particularly between the man manager and his spouse. A similar methodological approach to that used in the third article is used. The research material consists of 29 narratives by male managers.

The results of the study show that support is constructed by men managers as varied and flexible. Family and spouse are narrated as a prominent part of a male manager's career, but it is not as fixed or uncomplicated as the previous studies tend to present. On the basis of the narrative analysis we identified three different groups of narratives which followed three different storylines and illustrated the changes in spousal support for the man manager's career from the point of view of gender order. These are 1) negotiated spousal support which follows a romance storyline, 2) enriching spousal support with a story line of the 'happily-ever-after' type and 3) quitting deficient spousal support, which was analyzed following a storyline of tragedy. In the first group of narratives, negotiated spousal support, the storyline is going up and down and is aiming for an equal gender order pattern. In the second group of narratives,

enriching spousal support, the storyline is progressive, and the gender order between the couple changes from the traditional gender order to a more equal gender order, not due to the male manager actively trying to bring this about, but as a result of developments in the family such as children growing up and freeing their mother's time to support the manager psychosocially. In the last of group of narratives, declining spousal support, the storyline is going down and the men managers describe their spousal support as changing from psychosocial support to running the household type of support. This was not constructed by the male managers as happening easily.

The study shows that the traditional gender order is not constructed as problematic for a man manager's career, but if life satisfaction and career success are both concerned, then the most valuable gender order is constructed as one in which the spouses are willing to be flexible and adaptable in their gender relations, and in this sense this questions the traditional female-family and male-career division. This enabled the male manager to be involved and active also in family life. It became apparent from the narratives that even when the male manager narrated career choices which were in the short term harmful for his career, he expressed an appreciation that he was making those choices for the sake of his family and in the long term he felt that it had really paid off also for his career. Based on the study it is suggested, that:

For the careers of men managers, it should be taken into consideration that spousal support is understood by men managers as shifting, attentive and context sensitive. How spousal support is constructed in relation the man's career seem to vary a great deal. The traditional gender order seems not to affect a male manager's career adversely, but it leaves the man with a non-participatory role in the family apart from breadwinning.

Male managers construct appropriate behavior in terms of gender in the narratives as the female spouse being dominant in and responsible for the family, and this pattern is not often questioned. These narratives suggest that it is rather acceptable for male managers to exclude themselves from family life, or that the activity and initiative they are having in working life is totally acceptable to be absent in family life. If the male manager narrates himself as participating in family life to a greater extent than simply breadwinning, it is necessary for him to construct the spousal gender roles as negotiable and fluid. In general, this can be taken to mean that the divisions and juxtapositions of women-family-children, men-work-career are constructed much more unnecessary and irrelevant.

In practice, the study suggests that organizations should pay attention to the work-family relationship of male managers. Though there are many and diverse career patterns and domestic life of managers, what is still the reality in organizations even nowadays is that they often present a man's successful career as a line of upward mobility without any family life interruptions. Perhaps in the future these ideals could be valuable to assess both in organizations and in the field of research, that work-family integration can be better enhanced for men managers.

4.5 Synthesis of the results

The overall aim of this study was to increase our understanding of managers' work-family integration by investigating women and men managers' constructions of career-spouse dynamics in the Finnish socio-cultural context by offering four empirical studies. Two research objectives were set: First, the study focused on the role of a spouse and spousal support for women and men managers in their careers as constructed in their narratives. Second, my focus was on how women and men managers portray and produce gender relations in their narratives. The study had three different research questions. Figure 1 aims to answer the first question: *What kind of meaning do women and men managers give to their spouse in their career?* Table 2 aims to answer the second research question: *How do women and men managers narrate their spousal support and the evolution of spousal support for their career?* The last research question, *What kind of gender do women and men managers 'do' in their narratives?* is answered in both Figure 1 and Table 2.

Figure 1 synthesizes the results that are presented in Articles I and II. In Figure 1 three elements can be detected: 1) the types of spouses narrated by both women and men, 2) the type of gender relations between the spouses constructed in each type and 3) whether the narration in this type is positive, negative or neutral. To make visible the third element, in Figure 1 I have used an idea of Gergen and Gergen (1988), who proposed that narratives have an evaluative space, highlighting that narration can be positive when the protagonists, in this case managers, are happy and satisfied with the situation and have achieved a valued outcome, and negative when the outcome in the narrative is undesirable and they are dissatisfied. The types of spouses in the narration with women managers were supporting, flexible, instrumental, determining and counterproductive. In three types out of the five a more or less traditional gender order was constructed and there are two types of spouses that can be characterized as following equal gender order. In the case of women managers, three of the types are clearly a positive type of narration, in which the women are happy and satisfied, one type is a neutral type of narration, and one type is clearly negative, expressing dissatisfaction.

The types of spouses in the narration with men managers were balance-seeking, supporting, instrumental and success-expecting. In three types out of the four more or less traditional gender relations were constructed; there is only one type of spouse with can be characterized as following a pattern of equal gender order. In the case of men managers, two of the types are clearly a positive type of narration, in which the men are happy and satisfied, one type is a neutral type of narration, and one type is negative, and they are not satisfied.

FIGURE 1 Summary of the types of spouses and gender orders



The figure reveals that in Finland both women and men managers most commonly construct relations between the spouses following the traditional gender order. This emphasizes the women-feminine-private-family-children, men-masculine-public-work-career division and may not be seen as advancing work-family integration for managers. This is for two main reasons: For women managers, the traditional gender role division leads them to have to face a double burden (Jamieson, 1995), when they have to take care of the household and children and also have a demanding managerial career without any significant contribution from their spouse. According to the traditional gender role division, men are not expected to help their wife with domestic chores or be particularly supportive of her career. The traditional gender roles seem to be less harmful for male managers' careers than for women managers' careers, because in his case it is expected that someone else will take care of his domestic life, and it is quite legitimate for him to ignore family life and put all his focus on his career and work. The traditional gender order does not seem particularly advantageous for the male career, but it definitely encourages the male manager to be absent from family life and it discourages him from seeking work-family integration.

Both the men and the women also constructed narrative types that followed equal gender order, but they occurred less frequently. Looking at the nature of the narration, the men managers described their spouse's role in positive terms more often than the women managers did. Interestingly, however, those narrative types that followed an equal gender order were narrated as more negative by the men managers than by the women managers. The results

suggest that it is more acceptable for male managers to put their career above their spouse and family, and for wives it is constructed as preferable that she should provide both practical and emotional supporting behavior for her husband. Though in the narrations there are similarities, it cannot be claimed that the husbands of women managers are constructed in an equivalent role. Even the traditional breadwinning discourse is not emphasized explicitly in the narrations of these men managers, but indirectly these roles constructed by men managers for female spouses give some support to the idea that there are some expectations of male breadwinning in Finland. Similarly, women managers in the types of spouses constructed seem to emphasize, though not directly, that ultimate responsibility for the family lies with them as women.

In Table 2 I have synthesized the results from Articles III and IV, which focused on spousal support for women and men managers' careers. In the case of women managers four groups of narratives were identified: quitting deficient spousal support, harmoniously flourishing support, inconsistent spousal support, and irrelevant support. With male managers three groups of narratives were identified: negotiated spousal support, enriching spousal support and declining spousal support. The results of these articles indicate that both women and men managers construct their spousal support as changing along the course of their career. Interestingly, in the storyline of tragedy, gender relations for both women and men were constructed as changing, though not in the same way. It can be argued that when gender relations are constructed as changing, the assumption is that some kind of adjustment and rethinking of the appropriate behavior is called for from both female and male; this was narrated as challenging, in both the women's and men's tragedy storylines. Though women managers describe these changes in gender relations in other types of storyline as well, none of them are in the end portrayed as negatively as in the storyline of tragedy. Indeed, it seems from this study that for both women and men it is difficult to make changes and renegotiate gender relations. Martin (2003) says that this shaking of gender order is seen as "rocking the boat": it upsets the social structure and undermines the coordinated actions that are premised in gendered expectations. However, without rocking the boat, the gender institution can never be changed.

TABLE 2 Analyzing gender in the narratives of women and men managers

Storyline	Name of group of narratives (W/M)	What kind of gender is produced in the narratives?
Romance	Quitting deficient spousal support	Traditional relations for women and men; it is assumed that the family is woman's and work is man's moral duty and responsibility.
	Negotiated spousal support	Fluid and varied, equal relations for both genders.
	Harmoniously flourishing spousal support	Fluid and varied, equal relations for both genders.

Happily-ever-after	Enriching spousal support	Traditional relations for women and men; it is assumed that responsibility for the family is the woman's moral duty and for work is the man's moral duty.
Tragedy	Inconsistent spousal support	Changing between traditional and equal relations.
	Declining spousal support	Changing from equal to traditional relations.
Stable	Irrelevant spousal support	Remains an open question and not made particularly visible. A woman manager is constructed as a strong and independent individual who does not need or want help.

The most positive storylines can be found in the storyline of romance for men and of 'happily ever after' for women. In both of these storylines it is assumed that there are some adjustments made by the manager and/or his/her spouse and different forms of support are available and congruent with the career. Both of these storylines emphasize fluid, varied and equal type of relations for both genders. The storylines constructed by men reveal that for men managers it seems easier to portray and reproduce traditional gender relations, because they are not narrated as disturbing their career advancement. In the narrations of a stable storyline with irrelevant spousal support, women managers do not explicitly make gender relations visible and the gender order is left untouched. All in all, spousal support with traditional gender relations seems to be less problematic for male managers' careers than for women managers' careers. However, the results of the articles suggest that when gender relations are narrated as fluid, varied and equal, they enable not only possibilities for career success for women, but also a fruitful opportunity for men to have a fulfilling family life, and they are thus seen as most advantageous for work-family integration for both women and men managers.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

5.1 Contributions and conclusions

This doctoral study has explored the work-family integration of women and men managers by focusing on the constructions of career-spouse dynamics in Finland. I will here point out my contributions to the field and present my conclusions.

One of the starting points for this study was that we need more attempts to understand the inseparable nature of work and family for managers from the perspective of their career. Previous research on work-family integration has mainly focused on women, presenting the issue as merely concerning a mother with young children, and as specifically their problem (e.g. Eby et al., 2005; Korabik et al., 2008). In my view this has led to an oversimplified picture of work and family. Previous research has not properly tried to understand or examine what work-family integration means from a manager's perspective at different twists and turns of her/ his career and at different stages in her/his family life. More specifically, the field has taken for granted the concept of family itself and has failed to produce a refined analysis looking at different family members. For instance, the large number of previous studies that problematize the work-family conflict for individuals who have many responsibilities in their family life (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), like the parents of young children, present work-family integration as a zero-sum game (e.g. Runté & Mills, 2004) and leave out the whole range of insights into how family and work might be mutually enhancing (Rothbard, 2001; Ruderman et al., 2002; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Moreover, when work and family relationships have been examined, it has most often been in a cross-sectional study which has left out of the picture any possible changes in the course of the career and family life (Moen & Sweet, 2004).

A wide body of research has ignored the complexity of a manager's work and family life: they have failed to consider that managers do not have just one path in their career, or in their personal life, or that the domestic basis is not

always the same (Wajcman, 1996, 1998; Blair-Loy, 2003). The results of this present study contribute to filling these shortcomings by making it clear that work-family integration is constructed as much more varied and ambiguous. Therefore, I first propose that *work-family integration for managers is constructed as a phenomenon in which the interdependencies of work and family are shifting, and it should not be understood as being the same throughout a career and life. Therefore, the world of work and the family should be understood not as two static and divided entities, but rather the career should be seen as embedded in the manager's broader context of life.* This is a finding that has already been found for women managers (Blair-Loy, 2003; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005), but not properly for men managers. This study shows that this is a theoretical idea that should still be developed in conceptualizing careers for both women and men managers. The understanding of work and family as part of life, not as two different worlds, needs further study.

This study has shown that the role of the spouse in the Finnish socio-cultural context was not understood as simply working as a barrier to the career for women managers and as a resource for the career of men managers, as many previous studies have suggested in the U.S. and U.K. contexts (Kanter, 1977; Pahl & Pahl, 1973; Pfeffer & Ross, 1982; Schwartz, 1996; Still & Timms, 1998). Instead, constructions of career-spouse dynamics is valuable to be seen as multifaceted, mutual and as negotiated between manager and spouse. Indeed, the family and its different members were given diverse meanings at different stages in their careers by these managers. A sub-proposal to the first main proposal, then, is that *the spouse is understood as a prominent component of a manager's career by both women and men, but the family itself should not be taken for granted or taken as static.* This means that when managers' work-family integration is studied, the career itself is worthwhile to be studied based on the acknowledgement that a family may have different members and that these members have different roles at different times during a manager's career.

Previous studies have seen management and careers in very masculine terms as aligned with the lives of middle class white men who have a certain type of nuclear family in the background of their career, supporting them (Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Nieva, 1985). On the other hand, discussions on work-family relations have been blamed for being overly feminine, focusing on a white woman and a mother having difficulty combining work and family (Korabik, McElwain & Chappell, 2008). This adversarial nature of the research related to work-family integration for managers has sustained oppositions such as career-family, public-private, men-women, reason-emotion, mind-body, competition and co-operation (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). Ely and Meyerson (2000) say that the first term in each of these pairs is deemed a universal feature of maleness and maleness is more valued and rewarded than the opposite term, femaleness. In particular, to change the societal view of work/men-family/women, the ideology of separate spheres should be put under examination and disputed (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000).

This study has made visible the views of both women and men, and has also made it possible for us to hear that the voices may vary within these groups. It is already an important contribution to the field to bring out the

views and voices of both genders, and particularly the male perspective, where work-family integration is concerned (Daly, Ashbourne & Hawkins, 2008). Added to this, its gender aspects contribute to the recent stream of narrative research in the field of careers (Cohen & Mallon, 2001; Cohen et al., 2004; Savickas et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2011), and have made it possible to understand the matters that managers are making meaningful in decisions concerning their careers and spouses, and the choices and adjustments are made together with them. Thus, the study has captured how a career is constructed by a manager with adjustments and synergies in different working life and family situations throughout life. It has thus contributed for career construction to be comprehensive for both women and men managers.

However, the examination in this study has not just revealed the perspectives of both genders, but has also thrown light on language use and how gender is done in narratives. The approach in this study has enabled a gradual shift from sex as a variable in understanding how gender is constructed (Lorber, 2001; Kark, 2004). A significant contribution of this study has been its examination of the family as a site of doing gender and how it is altered and interconnected to women and men managers' careers and families, and ultimately to their career choices, breaks and moves, and their possibilities of engaging with their family. Central to is the idea of gender as something that is accomplished in talk and text; gender is viewed as something that is done, as opposed to innate qualities that individuals or groups are viewed merely as having (West & Zimmerman, 1987; Lorber, 2001).

In particular, narratives, in this study, have helped to uncover the dynamics that integrate career and family, and have brought out the various meanings of career and the range and diversity of its construction in relation to spouse and family. These have not often been the focus of organization and management studies. The family is seen as less valuable in organizational terms, and the dominant discourse tends to neglect families in studying careers and management. This study adds to the current literature with my second main proposition: *Family works as an important site of doing gender, and how gender is done in the family has an influence on the career construction. More specific, it is understood as bearing an influence on how gender relations flow within the family.* This can be seen then having implications for careers and how work-family integration is organized by managers.

The present study demonstrates that women in managerial position can in many respects be indistinguishable from men in equivalent positions, but their career in relation to their family continues to be constructed as to some extent gendered in the Finnish socio-cultural context. The value of this insight is that it encourages us to reconsider the gender-laden expectations and stereotypes that we attach to the family, to see gender as a part of societal and cultural environments, and to recognize the multifaceted nature of the work and family along with a manager's career (Gerson, 2004).

This study shows that constructing traditional strict gender relations in the family seems to be more harmful for a woman manager's career than for a man

manager's career. However, when these traditional gender relations are constructed, it can be interpreted as making it difficult for men to play a full and active role within the family. It has to be noted that the traditional gender order places constraints on women managers, but this study shows that in this sense men managers may be constrained by it as well. This is a point that has not often been made visible in previous studies. Ultimately, the dominant model of the family somewhere in the background of the manager's successful career, with broad expectations of long working hours and commitment on the part of the manager, promotes intense forms of competitiveness that makes managers miserable with overwork and causes them to lose sight of more important things in their lives; usually these expectations have fallen mostly upon men (Brandth & Kvande, 2001).

This study has been carried out in Finland, which is considered one of the leading countries for gender equality (Hausman, Tyson & Zahidi, 2013), and one could argue, critically, that gender equality issues are not particularly problematic in Finland. But especially against this background it needs to be considered that still in the 21st century these women and men managers are constructing gender relations in quite a traditional manner. From this study it can be concluded that in Finland the family still to some extent seems to be an environment where gender-related assumptions and expectations are easily made to follow the traditional model. This means that the family is often constructed as the woman's arena and the career as the man's arena, and this division guides concepts of acceptable, moral behavior for women and men managers in work-family integration even nowadays in Finland. These processes, then, have an influence on the choices and negotiations made with the spouse by managers and lead to reinforcing the division between work and family life, seeing them as two separate entities, the first ruled by men, and the second by women. Surprisingly, in the study it became apparent that women managers will consider it possible for their husband's career to take priority over their own (Blau et al., 1998). With the men managers in this study there were no such cases. A Finnish dissertation by Käsälä (2012), which focused on dual-career couples in Finland, confirms that in general much negotiation and compromise between the spouses is needed for satisfactory work-family integration, but suggests that dual-career couples may be more gender equal than for example managers with their spouses. Käsälä shows that a dual-career couple may perceive themselves as more equal than the norm, but points out that equality does not in practice necessarily mean really gender equal behavior between women and men.

Finally, this study seems to confirm the idea that deep structures of gender segregation processes can be found in the division between the paid economy and unpaid work in the family, as Acker (2012) said. Whether it is produced in language, as the study has shown, this division and the prestige of labor seem still to result in some segregation in managers' careers in Finland. Finland is a society in which work is a core element of human happiness, success and prestige, and part of our identity (Kortteinen, 1992; Ollila, 1998), but the family is not valued in economic terms, and when it is not valued economically it fails to

have any attractiveness to organizations and this ultimately leads to the view that a family is a hindrance and obstacle to a manager's career. More specifically, work done in the family domain may have goals that are not valued in organizational life, but as the study has shown, this work is often related to women managers but not to men managers. These processes can lead to managers not having an integrated work and family life, since according to the ideals it is not possible to be a successful manager and have a fulfilling life outside the organization (Thomas & Linstead, 2002; Ford & Collinson, 2011). In organizations the family is automatically seen as negatively impacting on a career. As long as this is the case, the idea of a division between the women's sphere and the men's sphere will be perpetuated.

5.2 Practical implications for organizations

Here I offer five practical areas in which the effectiveness and added value of work-family integration for managers in organizations could be enhanced. Firstly, I follow Galinsky and Matos (2011) in their suggestion of the idea of flexibility to enhance work-family integration from the career perspective. They say that this means not only various choices in relation to managing one's own working time and physical place of work, but having flexibility in terms of career (e.g. phasing into retirement, taking sabbaticals or extended career breaks for care giving, receiving special consideration when returning after an extended career break). This means an organizational culture of flexibility. In practice managers usually have considerable impact on their working times and physical places, but a culture of flexibility would add to understanding in the organization that as a manager you do not have to choose between career advancement and family life. Instead, it would be valuable for managers to have organizational support when work-family issues arise. Moreover, if we think in terms of developing work-family policies and practices for managers, it might be advantageous for organizations to be interested in the structure and roles played by different members of the managers' families, given that families can vary from the nuclear family to single (parents) to rainbow families or to elderly dependents.

Secondly, as said, for organizations the issue of work-family integration is an important part of attracting a competent workforce and keeping employees in working life for as long as possible (Burke & Ng, 2006; Aryee et al., 2005). For organizations it might be profitable to encourage managers to feel that their family and family responsibilities are not a barrier to being a competent manager, especially where male managers are concerned. This might have the practical consequence that organizations would better accept the presence of family issues in the lives of their employees, and it would be more possible to raise family matters at work (Gatrell et al., 2013; Burnett et al., 2013). In practice, it might be beneficial, for example, to arrange training for managers on how they can, together with their spouse, combine family life with demanding careers. As

the results of this study imply, there is no single way to succeed in work-family integration, so measures that would make visible that each manager can find their own way of integrating a managerial career with their spouse and children might be advantageous. This flexibility on the part of the organization could lead to better flexibility on the part of the manager when needed by the organization, it could enhance managers' organizational commitment, and ultimately it could improve managers' work wellbeing and prolong their careers (Lyness & Judiesch, 2008).

Thirdly, this study suggests that organizations might not have a complete understanding of careers if gender assumptions and practices are not made visible (Wood, 2008), not only in the organization but also in the family domain. Similarly, for organizations gender still often means just women, but for both genders to be involved it is worth trying to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the gendered nature of careers (Wilson, 1998). Both research and practice in the field of work and family would benefit from working on the idea that the rules of living gendered lives affect men too (Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Brandth & Kvande, 2001). Most work and family policies have been discussed and designed in terms of attracting women out of the home and into working life (Moss & Deven, 2006), but there are also limitations in work-family research and policies as far as men are concerned (O'Brien, Brandth & Kvande, 2007). In particular, this study has shown that it would be valuable for male managers if it were pointed out that merely having a managerial position should not be a reason to exclude themselves from family life. More attempts to make it easier for men to participate actively in family life would be helpful.

Fourthly, this dissertation gives evidence that no organization can scorn that effectively integrating work and non-working life is today an essential component of managing a sustainable career and being a socially responsible organization (Muna & Mansour, 2009; Jutila, 2008; Kossek et al., 2014). As shown in this research, understanding a career as family-related is the first step for organizations to take to enhance work-family integration, thus enabling sustainable careers not just for managers, but for all employees (Goodstein, 1994; Jutila, 2008). As the results of one of the articles show that spousal support is crucial for a manager's career success, organizations can be asked how they can be changed to offer similar support to the support that managers receive from their spouse? This could lead to the creation of formal support networks in the organization. As softer values have begun to be acknowledged in modern working life and family and free time have become more important (Inglehart, 2000), in the future organizations might get added value by responding to these changes in individual values and enabling better work-family integration for managers. An organizational culture in which different types of families and employees' life outside the organization are not just acknowledged but embraced would be an effective way to do this.

Fifthly, in this study my focus has been on careers as narrated. There are several ways for organizations to utilize a narrative approach in career counseling, career management and enhancing work-family integration (Cochran, 1990;

Cohen & Mallon, 2001). For instance, many of the managers that I interviewed recounted after the interview that it was therapeutic and advantageous for them to talk about their career and families, and that actually they had not spoken so thoughtfully about their career path with anyone. In the future, organizations could find narrative counseling a useful tool for career management and better work-family integration. A narrative approach would offer an excellent way to map out the complexity of managers' careers and family lives and would make it possible for them to recount the history, current concerns and future prospects of their career and family life.

5.3 Evaluation of the study

In this section the study is evaluated. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) put forward the important idea that in qualitative research the evaluation of the research process should not only be at the end of it, but should take place during the whole research process, and acknowledging the chosen philosophical and methodological assumptions. Though this section comes physically at the end of the research report, there has been evaluation at each stage of the research process and separately in each of the four studies presented in the articles.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, in Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008) say that in particular studies in a constructivist paradigm should be evaluated in terms of trustworthiness and authenticity. Here my emphasis is on evaluating trustworthiness. In particular, it makes it possible to describe the virtues of qualitative terms outside of the parameters that are typically applied in quantitative research such as generalizability, internal validity, reliability and objectivity (Given & Saumure, 2008). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness contains four different aspects: *credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability*.

Credibility refers to the extent to which you are familiar with the topic and the extent to which the research material used is in line with the claims made. It refers to there being a logic between observations and interpretations, and to the possibility of someone else being able to come close to your interpretations or agree with them. In this dissertation the research material can be characterized as rich and detailed, and extensive, and it is a product of three different researchers. I did a great deal in order to become familiar with the topic both theoretically and empirically, and used methodologies and analysis methods that are traceable and well-known. I try to bring out the logic of the analysis and interpretations by making the empirical material as visible as possible in the articles without revealing the research participants.

Moreover, I have taken into consideration that each research situation, whether it has been an interview or an encouragement to write a story, has been a complex social event calling for a theoretical understanding, or rather, a reflexive approach (Alvesson, 2003). Therefore, besides being reflexive of my own actions, there have been many joint discussions with my colleagues to encour-

age us all to be reflexive about all our (Anna-Maija's and Minna's) actions. This means that we as researchers have acknowledged that the way we ask, behave and do not behave in the research situation bears an influence on the research data used in this research. Our many discussions have reflected our understanding of this, both with the production of the research material and while we were doing the analysis and making our interpretations.

Essential for this understanding is that the research material in this dissertation is not actually gathered but produced. Without this understanding, any use of research material risks being naive, and its interpretation rests on shaky ground. Being reflexive has two advantages for research: first, it helps to avoid the naivety associated with the belief that "data" simply reveal reality, and second, it enables creativity following from an appreciation of the potential richness of meaning in complex empirical material. (Alvesson, 2003.) Moreover, a reflexive approach is necessary in qualitative research in order to produce high quality results, to help provide a strong contribution for future research, and also to allow the identification of a study's solid practical implications (Keso, Lehtimäki & Pietiläinen, 2006).

Analyzing extensive qualitative data has enabled me to get closer to the managers' insights but at the same time it has posed a challenge: to make a comprehensive analysis bringing out the particularities, nuances and smaller features of the data and at the same time give coherent insights into the analysis and results (Squire, 2008; Riessman, 2008). It must be borne in mind both that results of this type of narrative analysis are not generable or universal (Riessman, 2008) and that the meanings and interpretations presented in this research material may be open to various new meanings and interpretations in some other research context or data. For example, Alvesson and Billing (1997) make the important remark that there is often very little space in qualitative research for findings that the distinction between women and men is not crucial. In the same way it has been in my mind what Gabriel (2003) brings out, that the most evident danger in narrative research is the selective use of narratives to amplify or reinforce the researcher's own ideas, assumptions and preconditions. I think that handling women and men in different studies and in separate analyses has helped make it possible not to compare or differentiate between the results of both genders too much.

Transferability, according to Lincoln & Guba (1985), is connected to the results of a study and in particular, to the need for the study to make sense in the light of previous studies. Here, attempts have been made to guarantee the transferability of the study as each article has had its own literature review which is complemented with the literature review that is presented in this introductory essay. In addition, the results of each study have been evaluated in terms of previous results and I have used previous studies in my understanding of the research analysis as well (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Although there are not many narrative studies in the field of work and family, many previous studies have had similar types of perceptions concerning the role of the spouse in a manager's career (e.g. Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008).

Dependability, the third element in trustworthiness, is the extent to which the researcher offers the reader evidence that the process of research has been logical, traceable and documented. From this point of view, given the amount of research material (over 800 pages of transcribed text), using the NVivo computer software has been particularly useful and has assisted me greatly in the process of analysis. Each analysis procedure has been detailed and made explicitly open in the articles. I feel that each reviewer in the review processes has helped to make the analysis procedure as understandable and accessible as possible. One risk of using computer software for qualitative research, as Bazeley (2009) says, is that it is often considered that computers can distance researchers from their data. There is also the fear that using software will make the analysis more positivistic and quantitative in nature. However, I feel that since the research material in this dissertation is so extensive, the software has truly helped me to get closer to the data and go back and forth with it, and has ultimately enabled me easily to get back to my data in cases when I have needed clarification of my interpretations or thoughts.

The last element of trustworthiness, *conformability*, refers to the idea that data and its interpretation are not just imagination, and that the analysis and interpretations must be understandable for others. As Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou (2008) say, there is no starting or finishing points for narrative research. This being the case, the study has been made using well-established narrative frameworks which have made it possible to capture the essence of the answers to each research question. Moreover, I have tried to be as precise as possible in describing the analysis procedures. For example, when using the model of Gergen and Gergen (1988) in the analyses of the third and fourth articles I felt sometimes when working with the narratives that their content and the meanings given were too fragmented and too varied to show their significance, and this at times made it difficult to analyze their storylines. At the same time it helped me to capture the developmental account in the narrative. In the future I feel that it might be worth visualizing the storylines to make them more accessible and even creating my own types of storylines. In the end, I felt it was better to try to capture the diversity of the research material than to give a solely homogenous picture of a typical manager and his/her spouse. Therefore, the methodology chosen here, I feel, has enabled me to give a richer and thicker, more compelling, and easily memorable and context-sensitive picture of the studied phenomenon compared to non-narrative research (Polkinghorne, 1988).

5.4 Directions for future research

Although this study has emphasized that the context, whether it is socio-cultural or the individual setting of work and family, is important when work-family integration for managers is being studied, only a few aspects of the contexts have been explored. For example, because the gender relations between men and women take different forms depending on organizational, societal,

cultural, and historical circumstances, in the future it would be fruitful to focus on a wide range of contextual characteristics to further increase our understanding of managers' work-family integration.

Most of the empirical studies of the significance of gender beliefs on behavior have been conducted in circumstances where hegemonic gender beliefs are likely to prevail (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004, p. 517). Further studies are needed to explore different kinds of power relations. For instance, Casper et al. (2007) suggest that paths that should be followed in future research are samplings from different racial and ethnic groups, in particular samplings from other countries than the USA, as well as those focusing on nontraditional families. Studies with different age groups in connection with managers' work-family integration could be one such future research path. Generally, in the field of work and family research there is a need to recognize the multi-layered nature of exploration, including the combinations of different social environments and their interconnectedness (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010).

One future direction for research on work-family integration for managers could be gender identity, which can take different forms (Shields, 2008) and intersects with identities based on other group memberships such as race, ethnicity, nationality and religion (Özbilgin, Beauregard, Tatli & Bell, 2011). Understanding these identity processes, and their integration into various types of group memberships, would be an interesting field of study for future work and family researchers. All in all, perspectives which take into account gender and power dynamics are much needed, especially if they navigate paths that have not yet been taken. Such different approaches might be valuable. Their results could affect the practices of management and thereby ease the journeys to work-family integration undertaken by both women and men. For example, gender identity may also raise questions related to motherhood and fatherhood in work-family integration for managers.

Given its interdisciplinary nature, there are many ways of broadening studies in this field, but as seen in my review of previous literature, many studies in the work and family have followed a positivistic quantitative research design identifying the different situations when work and family are in conflict at one point of time in someone's life. Work and family research in the field of organization and management might benefit from more effort to increase understanding of the work and family domains as varied, fluid and shifting. For example, it might be worthwhile to shift the focus to the evolution of work-family integration along the life course. This might benefit from a longitudinal study, which would allow us to understand change and stability in the work-family relationship. Other qualitative research designs besides narrative methodologies could offer new and worthwhile insights into understanding life domains as shifting (Phoenix, 2014). For example, how the discourses of these life domains have changed over time could be an interesting topic. Another would be how the social media have affected work-family integration, and whether they have, for instance, brought closer work and family domains in organizations. It has been claimed that social media have had a lot of positive effects on

individuals' lives, like enhancing friendships and connecting family members, but it has also been blamed for a resulting lack of intimacy (Turkle, 2011).

The findings of this study suggest that narrative methodologies in the field of career research could offer the desired variation in methodologies for studying work and family (Lee et al., 2011; Weisner, 2014). Many difficult issues in our lives concern our career as well, but it is not easy to talk or be open about failures in family life at work. This became apparent in the interview situations. I felt this at various times: divorce, for example, was not an easy topic to talk about in relation to working life. Methodologies that could offer understanding of how other people or a group have experienced similar situations, for example in focus group interviews, might also be useful in our attempts to understand work-family integration. These kinds of research approaches would provide a complete and broad understanding about issues that are very personal and emotional (e.g. the spouse having a serious illness) (Hýden, 2008). In general, more emphasis in the field of work and family research on language and meanings would also make it possible to reveal the practices and structures that keep up certain images of how work-family integration should be handled (Rúnte & Mills, 2004; 2006). Understanding language use would increase our knowledge and enable us more easily to break the established moulds and demolish outdated assumptions.

Though this particular study has its focus on managers, many studies have been conducted on other organizational levels. There is still further need to study organizations and their view of work-family integration on the managerial level. Multiple data sets would offer insights into the various components involved in work-family integration. This would make it easier to meet the expectations and needs of organizations and individuals, and their spouses, as far as work-family integration is concerned. Also more qualitative attempts are needed to understand work-family integration specifically for men and masculinities in work organizations both in Finland and internationally (Lammi-Taskula & Salmi, 2014; Gatrell et al., 2013). These new lines of research might add to the findings regarding the feminine discourse that is ruling in the field. In general, the field yearns for gender exploration, to examine how gender operates within individuals, families, organizations, and cultures, not only for women but also for men (Halrynjo, 2009; Holter, 2007).

Lastly, instead of assuming that work-family integration is a similar phenomenon in all kinds of organizations, fields of business and occupations, more understanding is needed of how the characteristics and policies of a specific workplace or field of business affect work-family integration (Bailyn & Harrington, 2004; Abendroth & Den Dulk, 2011). As I have said, individual work-family integration varies a great deal, and representing homogeneous groups or fields of business as similar in terms of work-family integration takes too much for granted. For example, the field would benefit from an interest in social movements, policies and issues that influence these (Lewis & Cooper, 1995).

YHTEENVETO (FINNISH SUMMARY)

Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan johtajien työ-perheintegraatiota keskittyen puolison rooliin ja puolison tuen kehittymiseen nais- ja miesjohtajien urilla. Lisäksi olen kiinnostunut siitä millaista sukupuolta johtajat kerronnassaan rakentavat. Kyseessä on laadullinen narratiivinen tutkimus ja aineistona on yhteensä 58 nais- ja miesjohtajan tarinaa. Tutkimuksen sosiokulttuurinen konteksti on Suomi. Väitöskirja on artikkelimuotoinen.

Johtajan työ ja perhe on perinteisesti nähty erillisinä toisistaan. Johtajien urien tutkimuksessa taustalla on vaikuttanut implisiittinen ajattelumalli (valkoihoisen ja keskiluokkaisen) miehen elämän kulusta ja perheestä. Vahvana oletuksena on ollut, että miehen tehtävänä on edetä organisaation hierarkiatasoilla ylöspäin luoden katkeamatonta uraa, ja vaimon tehtävänä on ollut hoitaa koti ja lapset sekä tukea miestä urallaan. Tämä ajattelumalli on johtanut siihen, että johtajien työn ja perheen välinen suhde on problematisoitu vain harvoin. Jos perhettä on eksplisiittisesti tarkasteltu johtajien uran näkökulmasta, perhe on nähty edesauttavan miehen uraa ja hidastavan naisen uraa. Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys rakentuu työ-perheintegraatiota koskevasta aikaisemmasta tutkimuksesta ja sukupuolen tekemisen teoriasta. Tutkimuksessa pyritään laajentamaan ymmärrystä työ-perhesuhteesta ankkuroituen näkökulmaan, jossa johtajien uraa ja perhettä tutkitaan osana laajempaa elämäntulkua ja huomioiden myös perhe moninaisena ja muuttuvana. Lisäksi aikaisempi tutkimus on tuonut esille vahvasti johtamisen ja organisaatioiden sukupuolituneisuuden, tässä tutkimuksessa halutaan tehdä näkyväksi myös perhe sukupuolen tuottamisen ympäristönä.

Tutkimustulosten perusteella voidaan sanoa, että puoliso läheisessä yhteydessä johtajien uraan sekä naisten ja miesten kerronnassa. Nais- ja miesjohtajat rakentavat puolison roolia suhteessa uraan monimerkityksisenä ja vaihtelevana uran eri tilanteissa. Myös perheen koostumus ja merkitys vaihtelee uran eri käännteissä ja muutoksissa. Lisäksi tutkimuksen perusteella voidaan sanoa, että perheessä tehtävä sukupuoli ja puolisojen välillä tapahtuva neuvottelu ja roolitus ovat merkittävässä osassa uran rakentumisessa kuten esimerkiksi uraa koskevissa päätöksissä ja uramuutoksissa. Tällä on vaikutusta myös siihen millaiseksi johtajien työ- ja perheintegraatio muodostuu. Tutkimuksen perusteella näyttää siltä, että perinteiset sukuroolit puolisojen välillä ovat haitallisempia naisjohtajien kuin miesjohtajien uran näkökulmasta. Vaikka suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa naisen ja miehen työn ja perheen välinen suhde nähdään yleensä melko samankaltaisena, tutkimuksen mukaan miesjohtajien on hyväksyttävämpää olla poissa perheen ja kodin roolista kuin naisjohtajien.

Tutkimustuloksia voidaan soveltaa helpottamaan johtajien työ-perheintegraatiota molempien sukupuolien kohdalla sekä edesauttamaan kestävien urien luomista. Lisäksi tutkimustuloksia voidaan hyödyntää rakennettaessa joustavampaa organisaatiokulttuuria työ-perheintegraation näkökulmasta. Tulevaisuudessa tarvitaan lisää keinoja ymmärtämään johtajien työtä ja perhettä muuttuvina mutta yhtenäisinä alueina huomioiden elämän kokonaisuus.

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APPENDIX

Interview Guide

Taustatiedot

Ikä
Koulutus
Työkokemuksen pituus
Nykyinen asema
Perhetilanne ja parisuhde (avio-/avoliitossa, eronnut)

Kerro urasi alkuvaiheista

Mitkä tekijät vaikuttivat koulutusvalintaasi?
Mitä ymmärrät käsitteellä "ura"? Miten urasi lähti liikkeelle?
Miten kuvailisit itseäsi urasi alussa? Mitä tavoitteita sinulla oli?
Minkälaisia käsityksiä sinulla oli urastasi?
Milloin menit naimisiin ja perustit perheen?
Miten kuvailisit puolisesi merkitystä urasi alkuvaiheissa?
Millaisia haasteita kohtasit?

Kerro urasi keskivaiheista

Miten urasi eteni alkuvaiheiden jälkeen? Minkälaisissa organisaatioissa työskentelit?
Mitkä ovat olleet urasi tärkeimmät käännekohdat? Miksi?
Mitkä tekijät ovat vaikuttaneet muutoksiin urallasi?
Miten perhe on vaikuttanut uraasi? Koetko olevasi enemmän ura- vai perhesuuntautunut?
Miten kuvailisit puolisesi merkitystä urasi keskivaiheissa?
Miten olet onnistunut työn ja perheen yhteensovittamisessa?
Miten kuvailisit puolison roolia työn ja perheen yhteensovittamisessa?
Koetko hänen on edesauttaneen tai hidastaneen uraasi? Miten? Miksi?

Kerro urasi nykyisestä vaiheesta

Miten koet urasi tällä hetkellä?
Millaisena näet itsesi johtajana?
Koetko joutuneesi uhrautumaan urasi vuoksi?
Oletko saavuttanut itsellesi asettamia tavoitteita urasi suhteen? Mitkä tekijät ovat vaikuttaneet?
Miten näet nyt puolison merkityksen urallasi?
Miten kuvailisit puolison roolia urasi eri vaiheissa?
Miten puolisesi rooli on muuttunut urasi eri vaiheissa? Miksi?
Mitä ura on sinulle antanut? Mitä perhe on sinulle antanut?
Mikä on mielestäsi merkittävin asia urallasi tai elämässäsi? Mitä tekisit toisin?

Tulevaisuuden kartoitus

Oletko tyytyväinen nykyiseen elämäntilanteeseesi?
Miten näet tulevaisuutesi?
Mitä suunnitelmia sinulla on tulevaisuutta ajatellen?
Miten koet mahdollisuutesi onnistua niissä?
Voisitko kuvailla lyhyesti puolisesi roolia urallasi ja miten se on muuttunut urasi eri vaiheissa?

ORIGINAL PAPERS

I

THE SPOUSE OF THE FEMALE MANAGER: ROLE AND INFLUENCE ON THE WOMAN'S CAREER

by

Suvi Välimäki, Anna-Maija Lämsä & Minna Hiillos, 2009

Gender in Management, Vol. 24 No. 8, 2009, pp. 596-614

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III

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IV

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