Thirdly, plans to combine work and family differ, in general, according to working status. Working students were more clear on how to combine work and family, while those who are only students had more doubts about this planning. This result is in line with research that showed that working students have higher self-confidence than regular students (Warren, 2002) and their work experience can lead them to have a more realistic approach to their future work-family balance demands. Similarly, the research results by Luyckx and others (Luyckx, Schwartz, Goossens, Pollock, 2008) revealed that the feeling of being an adult was higher in students who were working than among other students.

This exploratory study reveals that Portuguese and Polish emerging adults enrolled in HE share common views and doubts as regards future reconciliation of work and family roles, pointing to the importance of social background and economic trends. Moreover, working while enrolled in higher education seems to be important in having more realistic plans about combining multiple roles. This is an important finding since many studies only focus on the negative aspects of work and study. The present research is not exempt from limitations. Due to the use of convenience samples and a cross-sectional design results should be treated with caution. Both studies with larger samples and with scales that more deeply address plans to combine work and family are needed.

References


