Family Relations and Work Experiences Relate to Salutogenic Health – a Survey among Swedish Employees in 2012
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Background
Many employees in Europe feel that their work situation is stressful and demanding. Health promotion processes are needed to improve the psychosocial work environment. It is unusual to include the family situation in these processes. Most studies of employees have had an ill-health perspective, while the salutogenic perspective, which focuses on resources rather than risks, so far is rare. The aim of the study was to analyse to what extent positive work experiences and family situation relate to salutogenic health.

Methods
In two Swedish municipalities, nurses in care for the elderly and teachers (n = 817; response rate 75.2%) completed a questionnaire with a salutogenic focus in 2012, including information on health, work experiences, and family situation. Work experiences were measured by a previously validated WEMS index (Work Experiences Measurement Scale), containing six sub-domains of work factors, and indicators of health by a likewise validated SHIS index (Salutogenic Health Indicator Scale). Family situation was measured by two indexes – on family relations (eight items) and autonomy at home (four items) – deduced from a factor analysis in the present study. All indexes were standardised to range from 0 to 100 (from most negative to most positive work experiences, health, family relations and autonomy, respectively). Multiple regression analysis with SHIS as the dependent variable was used to study the relationship to positive work experiences and family situation.

Results
The regression analysis showed that Family relations (β = 0.31; p = 0.000) and three sub-domains of WEMS significantly contributed to the regression model explaining SHIS. The three sub-domains were Time experience (β = 0.25; p = 0.000), Internal work experience (β = 0.22; p = 0.000), and Supportive working conditions (β = 0.15; p = 0.002). 37% of the variation in SHIS could be explained by WEMS and family situation. Family relations was a significant predictor of the SHIS health variable for both females and males.

Conclusions
Positive work experiences among employees, as well as an appreciation of the family situation, relate to positive health. A practical implication is that investment in workplace health promotion, as well as a willingness to care about the employees' work life balance, has the potential to influence the health of the employees.

Key messages
- The family situation, and not only work experiences, should be taken into account when investing in workplace health promotion.
- Time experience is the work factor of greatest importance to employee health, followed by Internal work experience and Supportive working conditions.