Role Demands, Work-Family Conflict and Motivation: A Proposed Framework

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Abstract
A review of the literature on conflict between work and family roles suggests that role demands at work can significantly affect work-family conflicts. Building on the Role Theory, this paper draws a conceptual framework that links role demands and work-family conflict. Three dimensions of role demands, namely role conflict, roles overload and role ambiguities are incorporated in the framework. In addition, it is suggested that the impact of work-family conflict on work motivation be explored as not much is known on the link between these two constructs. It is proposed that role demands will influence work-family conflict, which in turn affects employees' work motivation. Overall, the proposed framework contributes in integrating work-family conflict as a mediating variable between the relationship between role demands (independent variable) and employee motivation (dependent variable). Finally, several recommendations for further research are proposed.

Keywords: Role demand, Role overload, Role conflict, Role ambiguity, Work-family conflict, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

Juggling between work and family roles has become a part of everyday routine for individuals in many professions. According to (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985), employees who are married have to offer their time, energy and commitment to perform their work and family responsibilities. Such a situation requires them to take multiple tasks as employees, spouse and parent simultaneously. Working during weekend, for example, might prevent a parent from taking care of their children at home. In addition, when employees bring home their workplace problems and stress, the quality of family life may be negatively affected. The demands of these multiple roles are not always compatible, which may lead to the occurrence of work-family conflict (Hammer et el. 2003). Work–family conflict (WFC), described as ''a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect'' (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985) can be a challenge for many employees. Expectedly, WFC has become an area of concern to many scholars (Panatik et al. 2011) and studies examining factors that influence WFC have increased over the past few decades (Eby et al. 2005).

Role theory has been one of the most popular theoretical perspectives (Allen, T. 2001) that show the links between WFC and its antecedents. The theory proposes that employees will increasingly be unable to handle each role successfully if they are taking multiple roles in a

row, which eventually will lead to inter-role conflict (Kahn et al. 1964). The theory e.g., (Jackson and Schuler 1985; Katz and Kahn 1978) suggested that WFC will lead to negative effect when employees find it increasingly complicated to successfully complete each of their tasks, either due to limited resources (e.g., energy and time) or incompatibility of diverse roles (e.g., employee roles vs. family roles).

The aim of this paper is to review and synthesize empirical literature concerning the impact of role demands on WFC and to develop a conceptual model of the antecedents WFC from the perspective of the Role Theory. Additionally, the impact of WFC on motivation is proposed to be explored as not much is known on the link between these two constructs. It is postulated that role demands will influence WFC, which in turn affects employee motivation. Finally, recommendations for further research are proposed.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Role Demands as the antecedents of Work-Family Conflict
A review of the literature on WFC has found that over the last few decades, much has been studied to understand the antecedents of WFC. Among others, role demands at work, namely role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity have been identified by many scholars as major sources of conflict (Barling and Macewen 1992; Carlson and Kacmar 2000; Fisher and Gittelson 1993; Carlson and Perrewe 1999; Jesse et al. 2003; Greenhaus and Beutell 1985; Parasuraman et al. 1999)

Role overload is a situation in which individuals have to face with high demand of roles, responsibilities or activities which need to be accomplished within certain time and beyond their ability to perform (Rizzo et al. 1970; Cooper et al. 2001). Employees would experience greater intensity of WFC if they are required to cope with workload more than they can manage at certain period, which in turn lead to negative emotions, fatigue, tension and other mental health symptoms (Lingard and Francis 2006). Scholars have given considerable attention to the ways in which roles affect individual behaviour since over the past 50 years [Jackson and Schuler 1985). Studies that examined the impact of role overload on WFC have found significant relationships between role overload and WFC (Jesse et al. 2003; Greenhaus and Beutell 1985; Fu and Shaffer 2001; Markham and Bonjean 1996; Yip et al. 2008). Research findings have also indicated that role overload which correlates with WFC are also associated with a lower level of job satisfaction and a higher tendency to leave the organization (Boyar et al. 2003).

Role conflict is another component under role demand. Role conflict refers to the difficulty faced by employees in dealing with two or more sets of pressures and conflicting roles occurring simultaneously (Katz and Kahn 1978; Kahn et al. 1964) , a situation commonly faced by many professionals Brewer and Clippard 2002;Dodge and Storey 1979; Kantas, A. 1995;Steers and Black 1994. Research has found role conflict to be associated with higher level of WFC e.g., Bedeian et al 1988; Greenhaus and Beutell 1985; Greenhaus et al. 1989;Kopelman 1983). In addition, scholars (Fisher and Gittelson 1983; Jackson and Schuler 1985) have found role conflict to be linked with unfavourable consequences, such as lower job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, and higher turnover intentions. Previous studies have found that employed mothers are exposed to role conflict due to multiple roles in their routine life (Cooke and Rousseau 1984). Sutton (1984) pointed out that teachers often experience role conflict when facing with one or more set of expectations which are difficult to accomplish. Such a conflict is partly due to workload burden and increasing contact hours in teaching and large amount of paperwork and too many meetings (Pierce and Molloy 1990).

Role ambiguity is also another antecedent of WFC (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985; Carlson and Perrewe 1999). Uncertain situation facing by employees regarding their work demand can be related to role ambiguity (Baron 1986; Kantas 1995; Koustelios et al. 2004). Reference (Rogers and Molnar 1976) viewed role ambiguity as the condition occurring when "position incumbents lack adequate role relevant information" (p.599). According to (Breaugh and Colihan 1994), there are three different parameters pertaining to role ambiguity: (i) working methods, (ii) organizational planning, and (iii) performance criteria. Other researchers see role ambiguity is a multidimensional concept (Bedeian and Armenakis 1981; Sawyer 1992; Singh and Rhoads 1981; Singh et al. 1996). Role ambiguity has been found to have direct and indirect relationship with WFC (Barling and Macewen 1992; Bacharach et al. 1990; Bedeian et al. 1998; Greenhaus et al. 1987; Lance and Richardson 1998; Loerch et al. 1989; Parasuraman et al 1992; Voydanoff 1998. As (Jones and Butler 1980) found a positive relationship between role ambiguity and WFC for a group of male sailors. Role ambiguity might be expected to lead to lower performance in some jobs due to employees do not know how to direct their efforts effectively (Beehr et al. 1976) which lead to withdrawal from the organization (Beehr and Newman 1978).

Consequences of Work-Family Conflict

Besides focusing on the antecedents of WFC, the consequences of WFC have also been widely researched from various angles (Ilies et al. 2012). Some scholars have focused on the impact of WFC on the organization as a whole. This line of interest has showed that inability and inefficiency in managing WFC may increase absenteeism and turnover, reduced organizational commitment, and lower productivity (Kossek and Ozeki 1998). Some other scholars have concentrated on understanding the effect of WFC on employees. They, among others, have found that WFC could lead to poor job attitudes, ineffective work performance, dissatisfaction within the family domain, physical and behavioral symptoms of distress and diminished psychological well-being (Frone 2003; Greenhaus and Parasuraman 1999; Burke and Greenglass 1999; Frone et al. 1992). Other career and work consequences of WFC include turnover intentions (Greenhaus et al. 2001) and job stress (Netemeyer et al. 2005), lower career satisfaction (Martins et al. 2005) and lower perceptions of career success (Peluchette 1993). In addition, WFC may also lead to increasing health risks, inadequate performance as a marital partner and parent as well, reduced life satisfaction and poor marital adjustment e.g. (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985), and family role performance. Consequently, these negative outcomes have encouraged many researchers to conduct further investigate to prevent the conflict or minimize its negative impact e.g. (Tetrick and Quick 2003).

Despite WFC is associate with decreased job involvement, reduced organizational commitment, and employee health problems; further, employees who experiencing WFC also are more likely to quit their job, be absent from work, and experience burnout (Kahn 1964; Kossek and Ozeki 1999; Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran 2005; Netemeyer et al 1996).

Work Motivation, it antecedents and consequences

Work motivation is an important factor that influences the performance of an organization (Kanfer et al. 2008; Latham 2007; Latham and Pinder 2005; Richer et al. 2002). From an organisational perspective, having highly motivated employees is important both in the short and in the long run. Previous studies have consistently found that work motivation impacted performance (Riketta 2008), withdrawal behaviour such as absenteeism (Sagie 1998) and well-being (Ryan and Deci 2000).

A review of the literature on work motivation showed that it has been studied along with other different work-related behaviours such as job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion (burnout), psychosomatic health complaints (Tummers et al. 2002; Tummers et al. 2006; Van den Berg et al. 2008), job related anxiety and turnover intention (De Jonge et al 1999; Janssen et al 1999). For example, work motivation has been found to be positively associated with work satisfaction e.g. (De Jonge et al 1999; Kivima¨ et al. 1995; Tummers et al 2002); and negatively related with emotional exhaustion and burnout (Jamal and Baba 1997; Tummers et al 2002; Christina et al. 2013) and well being at work as well (Salmela-Aro and Nurmi 2004).

Although limited, several studies have been conducted to link WFC and motivation. In a study (Aycan 2008), in the event of work-family conflict, many people were experienced negative outcomes including low work motivation, difficulty in concentrating on the job, withdrawal from work, distress, irritability, sleep deprivation, guilt feelings, experiences of panic and sadness. Eventually, the conflict increases the intention to quit from work and marriage.

Moreover, other studies finding justified that WFC are a concept perceived by an individual. Gilad and Levine (1986) indicate that the family is one factor that influences the emergence of entrepreneurial motivations. Gilad and Levine (1986) also infer that high work-family conflicts contribute to the strength of entrepreneurial motivations. The regression analysis proves the positive effect of WFC on entrepreneurial motivations. The latest research finding by (Chien and Chu 2003) also proves the positive effects of work-family conflicts on entrepreneurial motivations.

PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

From a comprehensive review on literatures of WFC, Aryee et al. (1999) found majority of the studies found in Western industrialized societies. Examples include Sweden (Allard et al. 2011); United States (Bellavia and Frone 2005), Finland (Kinnunen and Mauno 1998), Southern European (De Luis et al. 2004) and America (Kelly, 2011). In this line, it is not surprising to have little studies in Malaysia setting. A few studies can be mentioned in Malaysian setting e.g. (Panatik 2011). Noor (2004) found that work salience exacerbated the negative impact of work-family conflict on well-being. However, studies emphasize on WFC in Malaysian setting is still rarely been investigated.

Moreover, a few studies existed which illustrate the WFC have provided ample confirmation that WFC is an important and persistent experience, with unfavorable consequences, such as stress and mental health problem (Hammed 2008) , job dissatisfaction (Noor 2004),withdrawal behavior at work (Hammer et al. 2003) and work family life dissatisfaction (Ford 2007). However; to date there have been little attempt made to empirically discuss the relationship between WFC and work motivation in the context of Malaysia.

Review of the literature has highlighted that role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity will significantly influence WFC. It suggests that higher role overload; role conflict and role ambiguity will lead to increasing WFC. In addition, the review has highlighted that despite many previous studies on the impact of WFC on factors at both organizational and individual levels, limited research however has explored the consequences of WFC on work motivation. A study on the impact of WFC on employee motivation is therefore proposed to understand the interrelationships that exist between the former and the latter.

Furthermore, review of the literature has indicated that limited studies have examined the mediating role of WFC in the relationships between role demand and work motivation. Thus, a conceptual framework that links role demands (role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity), WFC and motivation is therefore proposed, as shown in Figure 1.
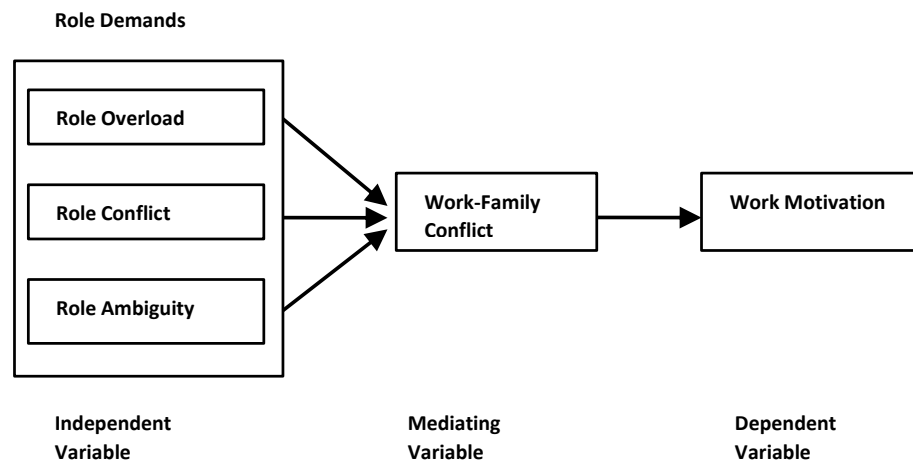

Figure 1 : Proposed Conceptual Framework

CONCLUSION

This paper proposes a conceptual framework that links role demand, WFC and work motivation. Specifically, WFC is introduced as a mediator between role demand (independent variable) and work motivation (dependent variable). Future research that empirically investigates the proposed framework is suggested to validate the proposed hypothetical links between the constructs. It is also suggested that the framework to be tested in a different settings and different occupational groups, to gain a better understanding of the interrelationships between the constructs.

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