Impact of Situational and Dispositional Factors on Work-Family Conflict and Job Satisfaction: A Proposed Framework

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Abstract. Job satisfaction has become an empirical attention as subject of inquiry in many fields. Past studies have revealed that employees with higher level of job satisfaction mostly enjoyed their job, had higher productivity and eventually contributed to generate profit for their organization. Despite its popularity, there is still lacking in determining what exactly drives employee satisfaction from the perspective of situational and dispositional factors. Moreover, the role of mediator in is also rather limited. The present paper proposes a conceptual model from the perspective of situational factors (role overload and role conflict) and dispositional factor (core self-evaluations) to understand the concept of job satisfaction. Specifically, it is suggested that when an employee experiences either role overload, role conflict or perceive with negative core self-evaluation, one of the consequence was increased level of work-family conflict. Ultimately, individuals who perceive higher level work-family conflict will experience less job satisfaction. Recommendations for future research are also discussed.

Keywords: role overload, role conflict, core self-evaluations, work-family conflict, job satisfaction

1 Introduction

Through past decades, job satisfaction has always become an empirical attention as subject of inquiry in many fields such as industrial/organization psychology, organizational behavior, and social psychology (Judge et al., 2017). Specifically, job satisfaction refers to a situation whereby employee perceive their favorable or unfavorable feelings and excitements towards their work (Newstrom, J.W., & Davis, K., 2002). Apparently, job satisfaction is reported to be associated with many important organizational outcomes. For example, many scholars demonstrated that organizations which give satisfaction to their employees were more likely seen to achieve high performance (Moradi, Almutairi, Idrus, & Emami, 2011; Robbins, 2003). In addition, it was found that lack of job satisfaction was a major predictor to reduce organizational commitment (Faridi, A., Baloch, A., & Wajidi, A., 2017), increase the level of absenteeism (Ibrar M, 2015) and increase turnover intention (Shaw, 1999). In brief, given these negative consequences, henceforth this paper emphasizes that it is important to focus on the predictors that affect the level of job satisfaction.

Several studies have confirmed that situational factors which consists of role conflict and role overload often view as key predictors to the occurrence work-family conflict, consequently give impact on lack job satisfaction. For instance, evidence from Nasurdin & O’Driscoll (2012) and Illies et al., (2015) study confirmed that role overload significantly related with work-family conflict. Similarly, Abd Razak et al. (2011) in their study also found role overload can caused to higher level of work-family conflict. In supporting this finding, a study by Ahmad (2010) which examined the effect of role overload and work-family conflict among junior physicians in Malaysia revealed a high correlation between these two constructs.

In such, much of the empirical research has documented role conflict associated positively with work-family conflict (Erdamer & Demirel, 2014; Kim and Ling, 2001; Carlson, Kacmar, &Williams, 2000), in varies work setting. Specifically,
explorative research studying in Malaysia by MJYC, EE et al., (2017) was reported that role conflict had significant relationship with work-family conflict despite of different gender and age. To date, research has tended to focus on role overload, role conflict and work-family conflict. However, there has been little discussion about how work-family conflict mediate the relationship between role overload, role conflict and job satisfaction.

Next, it is proposed that core self-evaluations as dispositional factor in determining the level of work-family conflict. Fundamentally, the basic idea of core self-evaluations was introduced by Judge et. al., (1997) which mainly highlighted a higher-order individual differences construct contained of four broad traits representing a global self-evaluation about oneself and self-worth (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998). While Judge and colleagues have found that core self-evaluations have a positive relationship with employee job satisfaction, performance, and life satisfaction (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge et al., 2005). A study by Boyar & Mosley (2007), on the other hand, revealed that individuals who perceived with high core self-evaluations could be able to reduce work-family conflict. Nevertheless, Bono & Judge (2003) in their studied agreed that operational definitions of the dispositions have not been consistent, yet the role core self-evaluations as major predictor of work-family conflict is unclearly justified. Moreover, most conducted studies on the relationships between core self-evaluations, work-family conflict and job satisfaction have been done in the United States, while fewer studies conducted about the link in Asian countries (Yamazaki, 2012). Therefore, this study proposes a predictor for work-family conflict and job satisfaction from the perspective of dispositional factor.

Despite the important roles of situational factors in determining work-family conflict (Devi KR, Rani SS, 2016; Brack & Allen, 2003), yet there is still scarce study on dispositional factors in understanding how it give impact on work-family conflict (Kroeker, 2008), particularly focusing on core self-evaluations. Basically, work-family conflict is about conflict that occurred when work and family are mutually incompatible in some respect (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Numerous studies on work-family conflict had associated to such consequences including lower job satisfaction (Beutell, 2010; Karatepe and Kilic, 2007; Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006), family satisfaction and well-being (Kinnunen et al., 2010; Lu et al., 2010). Studies, (e.g., Riley, 2012; Boyar & Mosley, 2007) have shown that work-family conflict mediates the relationship between situational factors (eg role overload and role conflict) and dispositional factor (eg, core self-evaluations) with job satisfaction. Hence, the present study proposes WFC as a potential mediator between proposed predictors and job satisfaction.

The present study aims to conceptualize the role of work-family conflict as mediator in order to enhance proposed conceptual model. Despite limited studies considered work-family conflict as a mediator, yet there is also no published study has conceptualized work-family conflict as a mediator between situational factors (role overload and role conflict) and dispositional factor (core self-evaluations) with job satisfaction. Thus, by proposing a mediating model to better explain the phenomenon, it is hope that this study may contributes in enriching the literature of role overload, role conflict, core self-evaluations and job satisfaction. The next section justifies on the relationship between role overload, role conflict, core self-evaluations and job satisfaction. Towards the end of this paper, the role of work-family conflict as mediator is discussed further.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Job satisfaction

Arnold and Feldman (1986, p.86) defined job satisfaction as “the amount of overall affect that individuals have toward their job”. Accordingly, Eren (1989) believed that job satisfaction is about the experience of feeling joyful and benefits obtained once individual complete their tasks successfully. Seemingly, Erdoğan (1997) in his study revealed that feeling satisfied at work is essential since it will encourage an individual to develop positive attitudes towards his/her job. In short, job satisfaction is individuals' sensation of enjoyed or love the job they do, in which will optimize their productivity, feeling happy and eventually achieve organizational mission (Erdamar & Demirel, 2016).

Although the job satisfaction continuously increased its popularity as research topic in organizational behaviour literature, Westover & Taylor (2010) argued that there is lacking finding in determining what exactly drives employee
satisfaction. Therefore, to understand the concept of job satisfaction, this paper proposes a conceptual model which content both perspective of situational factors and dispositional factor. For instance, it has been suggested that when an employee experiences either role overload or role conflict, one of the consequences has been a decreased level of job satisfaction. Moreover, the association between core self-evaluations and job satisfaction is significant (Brown, Ferris, Heller, & Keeping, 2007; Judge, Ilies, & Zhang, 2012). In such, past studies consistently shown that job satisfaction to be directly or indirectly related to one or both directions of work-family conflict (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Bacharach et al., al., 1991; Frone, Yardley et al., 1997). In other words, an interesting possibility of the process model suggests that role overload, role conflict and core self-evaluations are important predictors of work-family conflict, which are in turn interrelated to job satisfaction.

2.2 Role overload and work-family conflict

Role overload is described as situations whereby employees identify themselves faced with too many responsibilities which expected to be accomplish within a little time available, yet beyond their abilities to performs, and other constraints as well (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). This understandable definition is most accepted in the literatures. After 20 years, Bacharach et al., (1990) conceptualized role overload as discussed employees’ inability to complete consigned tasks effectively due to time limitations (ie., the conflict between time), eventually lead employees using personal time to rectify work demands (Duxbury and Higgins, 2001). Several studies (Colligan & Higgins, 2005; Newton & Jimmieson, 2008; Judy, 2010) extremely believed that individual who heavily burden with workload will give impact on their health, attitudes, and behaviors. Other undesirable results of role overload include increase the level of work-family conflict and ultimately lower organization’s overall profitability (Riley, 2012; Muasya, 2015).

With regards to role overload, various studies have shown that role overload has been directly linked to work-family conflict. For instance, a study conducted by Frone et al. (1997) reported that role overload was significantly and positively associated with work-family conflict. To support this notion, a study by Ahmad (2010) who investigated female physicians in public hospitals in Peninsular Malaysia was revealed that role overload is one of central predictor for work-family conflict. The strong association between role overload and work-family conflict is consistent with the findings of prior studies (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Lingard and Francis, 2007). Similarly, the findings of Rimi and Rubel (2013) disclosed that role overload has positive relationship with work-family conflict. Therefore, to reduce this negative consequence, there is a need to pay attention on the relationship between role overload and work-family conflict.

2.3 Role conflict and work-family conflict

Role conflict has been defined by Rizzo et al., (1970) as “the contradicting roles carried out by an individual in an organization”. While Glissmeyer et al., (1985) defined role conflict “the level to which a person experiences pressures within one role that is incompatible with pressures that take place within another role”. Specifically, role conflict exists when individuals are required to perform two or more tasks simultaneously which hardly to accomplish or when an individual is expected to perform tasks that are beyond of their professional scope of practice (Jahawar, Stone, & Kisamore, 2007). The most alarming aspect of role conflict were that it has led to lower organization commitment (Fisher, D. M., 2014), and ultimately job-related burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). On the other hand, role conflict also can lead to lower levels of work-family conflict (Ballout, 2008).

Several studies have tried to examine the relationship between role conflict and work-family conflict (eg Ryan, B., Jintao, M., & Minyen, K., 2008; Bakar, Z. A., & Salleh, R., 2015). Specifically, a study conducted by Kim and Ling (2012) revealed that role conflict facing by women entrepreneurs in Singapore are positively correlated to work-family conflict. In supporting the view, a study on time effect of role stress on psychological strain among lecturers in public universities in Malaysia was explored the positive relationship between role conflict and work-family conflict (Idris, 2011). Similarly, Beigi et al., (2012) confirmed that role conflict was positively associated with work-family conflict among Iranian operating room
personnel. In short, the unresolved role conflict problem is demand for more research conducted to test the effects of role conflict among various populations employed in a variety of work settings (Carolina, 2010).

2.4 Core self-evaluation and work-family conflict

Core self-evaluations is defined as “the fundamental assessments that people make about their wellness, competence and capabilities” (Judge et al., 2005, p. 257). Specifically, core self-evaluations is composited with four traits namely as self-esteem, locus of control, self-efficacy, and neuroticism. According to Judge et al., (2003), although the four traits are conceptually similar and have share some unique variance, however there is “considerable redundancy”. According to Kammeyer-Mueller et al., (2009), individual with higher level of positive core self-evaluations were always view their job tasks in positive ways and be able to cope with workplace challenges.

Given the links of core self-evaluations with work-family conflict, it mainly been supported in the previous studies (eg. Kroeker, 2008; Haines et al., 2013). Specifically, a book chapter by Friede and Ryan (2004) argues that people with more positive core self-evaluations will experience less work-family conflict. Interestingly, a study conducted by Friede & Jill (2008) confirmed that core self-evaluations to be negatively correlated with work-family conflict. In general, these findings lend support to the notion that individuals with higher core self-evaluations anticipate less work-family conflict. Consistent with another study, Westring & Ryan (2011) who investigated on medical students at a large Midwestern university revealed that core self-evaluations is a global evaluation of the self, which strongly related to work-family conflict. Since its introduction, core self-evaluations has become a dominant topic of investigation since it has been associated to a variety of phenomena such as satisfaction (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998). Nevertheless, despite its increasing popularity and as the potential limitations associated with the construct, future research on core self-evaluations literature to date seems needed due to an increased concern from educators regarding job satisfaction (Chang, Ferris, Johnson, Rosen, & Tan, 2012). Accordingly, the present study attempts to examine the core self-evaluations as potential predictors of job satisfaction and the plausible mediating role of work-family conflict.

2.5 Mediating role of work-family conflict

Work-family conflict is defined as “a form of interrole conflict in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). Work-family conflict often viewed as a bidirectional dimension which consist of two components namely work interfering with conflict (conflict occurred when work roles interfere with family roles) and family interfering with work (conflict occurred when family-related roles interfere with work-related roles) (Neerpal and Barath, 2013; Kossek and Ozeki, 1998). Apart of work-family conflict antecedents, empirical literatures emphasized that work related antecedents were more strongly related to work related outcomes; while family related antecedents were more strongly related to family related outcomes of work-family interface (Bicaksiz, 2009).

In most of the studies (eg. Cloninger et al., 2015; Crain, T.L et al., 2014; Kinnunen et al., 2010) have examined work-family conflict negatively impacted numerous individual and organizational outcomes. For instance, research has shown that work-family conflict is related to increased turnover intentions, reduced job satisfaction and family satisfaction (Lu et al., 2017; Beutell, 2010; Spector et al., 2007). Further, in study by Neerpal and Barath (2013) which investigated police department in India argued that organizations should embrace possible actions in order to reduce work-family conflict and increased job satisfaction. While a more recent study by Soomro, AA et. al., (2018) confirmed that the negative and significant relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction was supported. Several other scholars also found that role conflict, role overload and core self-evaluations influence employees’ job satisfaction (Mustapha & Yu Ghee, 2013; Chang, Ferris, Johnson, Rosen, & Tan, 2012; Koustenios, Theodorakis & Goulimarlis, 2004).

Work-family conflict has been increasingly seen as a potential mediator (Mauno, Kinnunen, & Pyykko, 2005), between several situational factors and dispositional factors with job satisfaction. Studies conducted consistently proven that the role conflict, role overload and work-family conflict (eg Riley, 2012; Baral & Bhargava, 2011; Ballout, 2008) are positively related
to work-family conflict, which in turn, mediates the relationship between the predictors (role conflict, role overload and core self-evaluations) and job satisfaction (Kroeker, 2008). Supporting to this notion, Riley (2012) found that work-family conflict as a mediatior between role overload and job satisfaction. However, Boyar and Mosley (2007) used to argue that there have been no publish study link work-family conflict and work-family conflict by year 2007. Therefore, researcher introduced the mediating role of work-family conflict in the relationship between core self-evaluations and job satisfaction for the first time. In another study, a meta-analysis of 178 studies (Ford, Heinen & Langkamer, 2007) concluded that work-family conflict mediates the relationship between work stressors and job satisfaction. Seemingly, Cabrera (2013) further confirmed the job demands are connected to work-family conflict as mediator which in turn, significantly related to job satisfaction.

Conversation resources theory (COR) was discussed as employees’ competency to achieve, sustain and how they secure things they worth, which is resources. When individuals fail to replenish the lost resources (Ngah, Ahmad, Hamid & Ismail, 2010), then the psychological strain is expected to occur. Specifically, the COR theory is a vital step forward in theorizing on work-family conflict because it clarifies why people act when confronted with a conflict and not just when they experience strain. Moreover, COR theory is very much relevant to this research model in a sense that, role overload and role conflict threatens an individual’s resources, and over time, lengthy experience with multiple roles in hand would result in strain, such as work-family conflict (Tsai, 2008). Thus, the potential or actual loss of these resources results in low job satisfaction.

3 PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This paper attempts to conceptualize the mediating effect of work-family conflict between the role overload, role conflict, core self-evaluations and job satisfaction. In addition, COR was adopted to develop theoretical linkages among the constructs. It is postulated that work-family conflict will mediate the relationship between role overload, role conflict, core self-evaluations and job satisfaction. Specifically, individuals with a higher level of work-family conflict would be likely to have a low job satisfaction. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study.

![Figure 1: The conceptual framework](image)

4 CONCLUSION

Role overload, role conflict and core self-evaluations play an essential part as predictors to determine the level of work-family conflict. While the issue of lower job satisfaction becomes a severe threaten to organization, enhancing employee work-family conflict can be crucial element in order to sustain the productivity. Ultimately, past studies have indicated that individual who confront with high level of work-family conflict are generally unsatisfied with their jobs. This paper assimilates work-family conflict as a mediator between role overload, role conflict, core self-evaluations and job satisfaction,
as a response to the recent calls of research. Thus, future research could also investigate work-family conflict as great potential between other proposed predictors and job satisfaction to validate and extend the proposed model.

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