

A Study on Impact of Perceived Organization Support on Work-Family Conflict of IT Sector Employees in Mumbai

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Abstract: Balancing work and family responsibilities have become challenging for majority employees, and it is a known fact now that incompatibility between the two domains have adverse effects on employee health and wellbeing (Kinnunen, Feldt, Geurts, & Pulkkinen, 2006). Work-family conflict affects not only individuals suffering from it, but their families and their employers too. Hence it has become important for organizations to look for mechanisms which help employees in reduction of their work-family conflict.

The concept of work-family conflict has received considerable attention because of its impact on various individual outcomes. Various authors have studied the negative consequences for the individual (e.g. loss of sleep and stress), as well as these conflicts having negative outcomes for the organization, such as lower employee satisfaction and performance, increased stress levels and, consequently, higher health-care costs (Carlson, Michele Kacmar & Stepina, 1995).

Social support (perceived organization support) is an important element of work-family conflict studies as it is one of the most significant factors helping employees with facilitation of work and family roles (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999). Thus one of the most important areas of research in the field of human resource management includes not only investigating work life policies but also employees perceptions of organizational support at work.

Due to liberalization of Indian economy in mid-90s to mid-2000s more work-family research was conducted in India. Information technology enabled services (ITES) sector boom was witnessed by India. As employees were expected to work 24/7 x 365 days of the year, various organizational practices from developed countries in the West were adopted by Indian companies in this sector. Some organizations provided family-friendly measures more as replication of western organizational practices rather than from a legitimate concern to enable employees to handle work and family responsibilities, however, they failed during the recent recession in the IT sector (Poster & Prasad, 2005) which leads to more work-family conflict among IT employees. This attracted increased number of studies in work-family literature.

Hence the study is conducted in IT sector exploring relationships among variables like perceived organization support and work-family conflict.

I. INTRODUCTION

Work-family Conflict (WFC) Definitions:

Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, (1964) defines work–family conflict as “a form of interrole conflict that occurs, when engaging in one role makes it more difficult to engage in another role”. As a form of interrole conflict a large amount of the early research on work-family conflict appears from the work on organizational stress by Kahn, et al. (1964).

Work-to-family conflict happens when involvements at work interfere with family life, like extensive work overload, inflexibility in working hours and other forms of job stress, extensive travel, and interpersonal conflict at work, career transitions, unsupportive organization or supervisor. For example, working till late night for a presentation to be presented to client next morning may prevent a parent from being with his/her child when he is sick. Family-to-work conflict transpires when involvements in the family work interfere with work life like taking care of elder, having young children, key responsibility for children, interpersonal conflict within the family unit, unsupportive family members (Frone et al. 1992; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985).

Changes in workforce demographics have resulted in increased research on work-family issues i.e. Dual career couples and single parent household's numbers have risen and there is reduction in traditional, single-earner families leading to responsibilities for work, housework, and childcare not confined to traditional gender roles (Byron, 2005). Hence there is augment in work-family conflict studies.

Studies have established the relationship between demographic variables like marital status, number of children and age of children and work-family conflict. Being married, having more children, having younger children were found to be related to high levels of work-family conflict (Bedian, Burke and Moffette, 1988).

Types of Work-Family Conflict:

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have identified three types of work-family: time based, strain based, and behavior based:

1. Time-based - competing time requirements across work and family roles
2. Strain-based - pressures in one role impair performance in the second role
3. Behavior-based - incompatibility of behaviors necessary for the two roles

1. Time based:

In Work and family domains roots of conflict are derived from scarcity theory, in which personal means like attention, time and energy are deemed to be limited, and that application of more resources in work domain certainly leads to lesser means left for the family domain results in reducing the amount of resources left for the other domain (i.e. family).

Challenging requirements for time act as constraint between both work and family domain as stated by Staines and O'Connor (1980). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), in line with the findings of Staines and O'Connor (1980), described two different forms in which time-based conflicts are exhibited: (1) "when it is physically not possible to fulfill time demands of single role due to time pressures coming from another role;" (2) "when someone is mentally indulge with one domain in spite of physically being present and trying to meet the demands of another."

Time-based conflict takes place when responsibilities from both domains are competing each other for the time available. (e.g., working overtime forces employees to miss a school performance.) Time-related circumstances such as increased work hours, rigid schedules, working in shift, and overtime duties are every time related to Work-family Conflict.

2. Strain Based:

Various researchers are of the opinion that growing demands in one role creates strain for a person in the form of tension, dissatisfaction, fatigue and anxiety which in turn affects the performance in another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Edwards and Rothbard (2000) in their explanation regarding strain-based conflict have highlighted that "emphasize the depletion of personal resources as a result of physical and psychological strain, which in turn is needed for role performance."

Hence, strain-based conflict is not competitive demands in itself rather it's a state in which involvement in one domain will result in either psychological or physical stress that hampers role performance in another domain (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Same author conducted research on it and identified that persons invested greater amounts of time in painful / dissatisfying role domains to overcome unpleasant experiences (Rothbard & Edwards, 2006). Moreover, the studies pointed out that a negative psychological strain will result in extensive time involvement in one domain reducing the amount of time available for role performance in the other potentially satisfying domain resulting in conflict. Therefore, competing time demands will lead to both strain-based as well as time-based conflict. "Despite being conceptually distinct, both time-based and strain-based conflicts are found to share a number of sources within the work and family domains" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

3. Behavior-based:

This conflict transpires when specific behaviors required in one role are mismatched with behavioral expectations in another role (e.g. violent behavior and extreme introvertness required for managerial positions are incompatible with the need for harmony and openness).

Effect of work–family conflict can be decreased by providing family-friendly policies in the organization. These initiatives can include employees having flexibility to work from home, and schedule flexibility policies where employees have control over their schedules. Effect of family-work conflict can also be decreased by providing workplace family-friendly policies. Examples of these policies can be different types of leaves like maternity, paternity, parental, and sick, providing child care crèches at workplace or providing other child care options. For proper implementation of these policies organizations need to ensure that employed managers and supervisors are supportive and allowing the employees to use these policies.

In addition to the policies related to work-family domain, employees also evaluate the support expected from the organization before engaging in any course of action. The reciprocal exchange between employees and organization thus seem to be an important factor that impacts work-family conflict of employees.

Social Support Definition:

Barnes (1954) was the first to describe prototype of social relationships that were not explained by the previous research.

Cobb defines social support as information that leads a person to believe that he or she is "cared for and loved, esteemed and valued, and a member of a network of mutual obligation" (1976, 300).

Sources of Social Support:

Earlier research on social support has typically looked at social support from two different angles i.e. non-work-based social support or work-based social support (e.g., Baker, Israel, & Schurman, 1996)

Work based social support:

The most commonly explored sources which provide social support at the workplace are organization, supervisors and coworkers. All sources of workplace social support are significant because they indicate the possible help that is available to an individual. (Wadsworth & Owens, 2007).

Non-work based social support:

Non-work social support includes support from family and friends. Researchers found that social support from friends is positively related to social competence, whereas support from both family and friends is negatively related to distress (Wadsworth & Owens, 2007).

Perceived Organization Support (POS)

Eisenberger et. al. (1986) defined perceived organization support as ‘the extent to which employees perceive that their contributions are valued by their organization and that the firm cares about their well-being’.

It states that POS is "how much representatives trust that their organization esteems their commitments and thinks about their prosperity and satisfies socio-passionate necessities." Employees see organization having humanistic qualities and view ideal or negative treatment as a sign whether association between them and organization is favorable or unfavorable.

Taking social exchange theory into consideration, Eisenberger and companions generated this concept of POS (Blau, 1964). It is accepted to be a worldwide conviction that employees structure opinion about their valuation by the organization.

Levinson (1965) also added to above concept by establishing link between actions by organizational members which is attributed to organization itself. According to Rhoades and Eisenberger, (2002) Perceived Organization Support is reciprocated by the employees with increased performance, commitment and loyalty.

Research on organizational support started with the perception that if organizations are worried about their workers' responsibility to the organization, employees are centered around the association's pledge to them. For employees, the organization fills in as a significant source of socio-passionate assets, i.e. not only tangible assets like wages and salaries but also intangible assets like care. Being respected profoundly by the organization, addresses employee's issues for endorsement, regard, and connection.

Various factors such as organizational rewards, job conditions and perceived fairness are believed to influence employees Perceived Organization Support. Theory of Organizational support also mentions the psychological processes important to the consequences of POS. The theory mentions that first, on the basis of the reciprocity norm, POS should produce a felt obligation to care about the organization's welfare and to help the organization reach its objectives. Second, POS brings in respect and care that satisfies shared and emotional needs, which leads to employees incorporating membership behavior towards organization. Third, POS should strengthen the beliefs of the employee's that the organization recognizes and rewards increased performance. Thus the perception of the employees about organizational support enables them to develop adaptive and innovative ways of coping with environmental exigencies (Rhoades et al., 2001).

Research on theory of organizational support also supports social exchange dimension very strongly. Social exchange dimension positively impacts not only the behavior at workplace but also working attitude of employees like commitment, job satisfaction (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades et al., 2001).

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Objectives:

- i. To conceptually review work-family conflict.
- ii. To understand theoretically importance of perceived organization support.
- iii. To examine the influence of perceived organization support on work-family conflict.

2. Hypothesis:

To study objectives of study following hypothesis were formulated:

H₀₁: Perceived organization support is not significantly related to work-family conflict.

H₁₁: Perceived organization support is significantly related to work-family conflict.

3. Research Design:

Exploratory Research Design is used in order to study the impact of perceived organization support on work-family. The present study is conducted using survey research. Survey research is defined as “the administration of questionnaires to a sample of respondents selected from some population” (Babbie, 1989). Survey research is appropriate for making exploratory studies of large populations. Hence, it was found appropriate for this study.

4. Sampling:

Simple random technique was used for current study. The sample of the present study is 500 employees of IT sector in Mumbai.

5. Data collection:**Primary Data:**

Structured interview method and Questionnaire method of primary data collection is used for research study. Instrument used for assessing perceived organization support includes eight-item survey of POS(SPOS) developed by Eisenberger et al., (1986) and reliability of scale is 0.925. Five items are taken from Netemeyer et al., (1996) scale and reliability is 0.88.

Secondary Data:

To develop conceptual literature and theoretical framework of study related to variables undertaken for study, secondary data was collected by referring various books, magazines, national and international research journals, websites, newspapers, research reports, etc.

6. Statistical Tools:

Statistical tools used to conduct the research are correlation and regression analysis.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**Null Hypothesis:**

H_{01} : Perceived organization support is not significantly related to work-family conflict.

		WFC Score	POS Score
WFC Score	Pearson Correlation	1	-.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	500	500
POS score	Pearson Correlation	-.554**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	500	500

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.13 displays the results of correlation between perceived organization support and work-family conflict. It is very much clear from above Table 4.13 that there is negative correlation between perceived organization support and work-family conflict of respondents of the study. Table 4.13 indicates that calculated value of coefficient of correlation is -0.554.

Table 4.13 represents that p-value is 0.000. Since the p-value is less than 5%, the null hypothesis is rejected and the correlation between POS and WFC is statistically significant.

Conclusion is that there exists a significant negative relation between perceived organization support and work-family conflict. Thus, increase in organization support will lead to reduction in work-family conflict of employees.

Research Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	37.172	.843		44.074	.000
	POS score	-.159	.011	-.554	-14.865	.000

a. Dependent Variable: WFC Score

Table 4.14 displays results of regression analysis examining the influence of perceived organization support on work-family conflict among respondents of the study. From the above table, it can be seen that P-value is 0.000. Since the P-value is less than 5%, the null hypothesis is rejected and therefore the impact of POS on WFC is statistically significant.

Following linear regression is obtained considering work-family conflict as dependent variable and perceived organization support as independent variable.

Linear line of regression for these variables is: $WFC = 37.172 + (-0.159) * (POS)$

Table 4.15 Regression model's coefficient of determination between perceived organization support and work-family conflict

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.554 ^a	.307	.306	2.823

a. Predictors: (Constant), POS score

It is evident from table 4.15 that regression model's coefficient of determination (R^2) between perceived organization support and work-family conflict is 0.307 and adjusted R^2 is 0.306. Since adjusted R square is 0.306 therefore it can be said that 30% of variation in work-family conflict is explained by the variation in perceived organization support.

POS and WFC

It was found that there is significant relationship between perceived organization support and work-family conflict. Finding of hypothesis is there is negative correlation between perceived organization support and work-family conflict. It also indicates that due to increase in organization support there is reduction in work-family conflict of employees. Therefore it can be said that an increase in organization support will lead to reduction in work-family conflict of employees.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Training for all employees including supervisors and co-workers to understand and implement the key skills required to manage the work-family conflict. Employees should be provided sufficient know-how on the importance of managing work-family conflict to live a healthier work and family life. This will also enable them to efficiently assist self and others in reducing the work-family conflict. Training to supervisors on application of appropriate leadership style will help supervisors to be more effective in helping employees efficiently manage work and family domains.

Thus it is concluded from the study that social support in form of perceived organization support, has negative relation with work-family conflict. Due to the available support and flexibility for the employees in the companies researched, there is less WFC and employees are able to maintain better working life. It also demonstrates that good company policies and support from organization, help employees in maintaining work life balance better.

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