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# The "I believe" and the "I invest" of Work-Family Balance: The indirect influences of personal values and work engagement via perceived organizational climate and workplace burnout

Lily Chernyak-Hai*, Aharon Tziner

*Netanya Academic College, Israel*

ABSTRACT

Based on Schwartz's (1992, 1994) Human Values Theory and the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1988, 1998, 2001), the present research sought to advance the understanding of Work-Family Balance antecedents by examining personal values and work engagement as predictors of Work-Family Conflict via their associations with perceived organizational climate and work burnout. The results of two studies supported the hypotheses, and indicated that perceived organizational climate mediated the relations between values of hedonism, self-direction, power, and achievement and Work-Family Conflict, and that work burnout mediated the relations between work engagement and Work-Family Conflict. Theoretical and practical implications regarding individual differences and experiences of Work-Family Balance are discussed.

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## El "creo" y el "invierto" del conflicto trabajo-familia: influencias indirectas de los valores personales y la implicación en el trabajo a través de la percepción del clima organizacional y del agotamiento emocional en el trabajo

RESUMEN

Siguiendo la Teoría de los Valores Humanos (Schwartz, 1992, 1994) y la de la Conservación de Recursos (Hobfoll, 1988, 1998, 2001), este trabajo pretende avanzar en el conocimiento de los antecedentes del equilibrio trabajo-familia mediante el análisis de los valores personales y la implicación en el trabajo como predictores del conflicto trabajo-familia a través de su asociación con la percepción del clima organizacional y el agotamiento emocional en el trabajo. Los resultados de dos estudios respaldan las hipótesis, indicando que la percepción del clima organizacional mediatiza la relación entre valores de hedonismo, autodirección, poder y logro y conflicto trabajo-familia y que el agotamiento emocional en el trabajo mediatiza la relación entre implicación laboral y conflicto trabajo-familia. Se comentan las implicaciones teóricas y prácticas relativas a las diferencias individuales y experiencias del equilibrio trabajo-familia.

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* Corresponding author: School of Behavioral Sciences, Netanya Academic College, Israel.
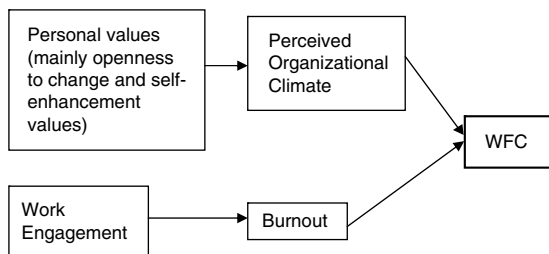*E-mail address:* lilycher@netanya.ac.il (L. Chernyak-Hai).

**Figure 1.** Research Model: The Indirect Influences of Personal Values and Work Engagement via Perceived Organizational Climate and Burnout.

Past research has shown that work may interfere with the family and that the family may interfere with work (e.g., Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfring, & Semmer, 2011; Frone, 2000; Judge, Ilies, & Scott, 2006). The present paper purports to make several contributions to advancing the understanding of Work-Family Balance (WFB) antecedents by clarifying the relationships between employees' values and work engagement, and Work-Family Conflict (WFC). First, we assessed the way personal values predict WFC, while examining whether values affect the favorableness of employees' perceptions of organizational climate and subsequent experiences of WFC. Second, we explored the contribution of employees' work engagement via its influences on work burnout (for the overall research model see Figure 1).

**Work-Family Conflict**

Work-Family Conflict (WFC) refers to an employee's experience that his or her work pressures or efforts to optimize job requirements interfere with the ability to meet family demands (Frone, 2000; Judge et al., 2006), also addressed as work interference with family (WIF) and family interference with work (FIW) (Amstad et al., 2011). Work-Family Conflict is the term most commonly used in the literature to describe this phenomenon, although the trend today is to focus the discourse on Work-Family *Balance* rather than *Conflict*.

Recent meta-analyses of WFC pointed to several workplace and personal variables as its antecedent sources such as task variety, job autonomy, family-friendly organizational climate/policies, role conflict and ambiguity, role overload, time demands, job involvement, work centrality, organizational support, family-(un)supportive supervision, coworker support, individual internal locus of control, negative affect and neuroticism, family centrality, family social support, and family climate (Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011). Moreover, gender differences were found, indicating that workplace factors such as shift work, job insecurity, and conflicts with coworkers or supervisor on the one hand and responsibility for housekeeping or caring for family members on the other hand were significant factors contributing to WFC among men. For women, physical demands, overtime work, commuting time to work, and having dependent children were main WFC engendering factors (Jansen, Kant, Kristensen, & Nijhuis, 2003).

Past research has recognized WFC as an important factor that affects not only employees' well-being but also their employers' (Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011; Lapierre et al., 2008), and has been demonstrated to have detrimental impact on diverse work-related outcomes such as burnout, fatigue, and need for recovery from work (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Conley, 1991; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998), productivity, work performance, risk of accidents, interpersonal conflicts at work, turnover rates, marital satisfaction, and physical and mental health conditions (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Barnett, Raudenbush, Brennan, Pleck, & Marshall, 1995; Frone, 2000; Jansen et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2006). On the

other hand, when WFC is reduced, employees exhibit greater job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, less turnover intentions (Butts, Caspar, & Yang, 2013), and report greater family satisfaction as well as overall life satisfaction (Lapierre et al., 2008). Specifically relevant to the present work is the role of individual dispositions as predictors of work-family conflict. Examples of such personal factors are internal locus of control, negative affect, and neuroticism (Allen et al., 2012).

Following this line of research, the present investigation sought to shed further light on the role of individual psychological orientations in WFC, borrowing the personal values perspective along with the notion of work engagement. In other words, we aimed to examine whether employees' values and work engagement may explain individual differences in the experiences of conflict and balance between workplace requirements and family pressures.

**Personal Values**

A widely acknowledged theory of individual variables which has inspired a considerable number of studies is Schwartz's (1992, 1994) theory of ten basic human values: "openness to change" values (hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction), "conservation" values (conformity, tradition, and security), "self-transcendence" values (universalism and benevolence), and "self-enhancement" values (achievement and power). The basic values explain individual decision-making, attitudes, and behavior, defined as beliefs charged with affect, and reflect desirable goals unspecified to certain contexts or actions, function as personal standards, and are ordered by importance relative to one another (Schwartz, 2012). According to Schwartz, the ten values are universal values, and yet individuals and groups may differ in the relative importance they attribute to them. Furthermore, given the different psychological meaning of the ten values, some of them conflict with one another (e.g., benevolence and power), whereas others are compatible (e.g., conformity and security) (Schwartz, 1992, 2006, 2012). Schwartz's values were found to have implications on various organizational factors such as citizenship behaviors directed toward individuals (OCB-I) and toward the group (OCB-O) (Arthaud-Day, Rode, & Turnley, 2012; Seppälä, Lipponen, Bardi, & Pirttilä-Backman, 2012), preferences for transformational and transactional leadership behaviors (Fein, Vasiliu, & Tziner, 2011), perceptions of relational-type contracts (Cohen, 2012), and workplace commitment (Cohen, 2011). Past research has indicated that values should be considered when examining experienced work-family conflict (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000; Smelser, 1998), as they may explain why certain individuals are more prone to experience WFC while others, in similar circumstances, are not. For example, materialistic values were found to be related to higher work-family conflict (Promislo, Deckop, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2010), and high WFC was found among employees characterized by "obsessive passion" towards work (Caudroit, Boiche, Stephan, Le Scanff, & Trouilloud, 2011).

In the present research, we referred to Schwartz's (1992, 1994) basic human values. We addressed these values as psychological pre-dispositions that may increase the potential to experience work-family conflict. Specifically, we predicted that given the psychological meaning embedded in the different values, personal values which are egocentric and indicative of willingness to achieve-openness to change and self-enhancement values (i.e., hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, power, and achievement) would be especially relevant to WFC, as such values may be expressed in willingness to excel and remain in control of both work and family demands. Specifically, following past research on positive relations between materialistic values and increased passion towards work and WFC (e.g., Caudroit et al., 2011; Promislo et al.,