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Exploring work-family conflict and reconciliation in a Romanian sample

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Abstract

The current study aims to explore various facets of Work-Family Conflict (WFC) in a Romanian sample and examine the reconciliation strategies challenging it. 100 participants completed a Romanian version of the IMFJR-Indicator for the Measurement of the Family-Job Reconciliation. An exploratory factorial analysis reveals reciprocal influences between work and family, and how related constraints may impact upon individual's personal growth and development.

1. Introduction

Research in the area of work-life balance suggests that many people experience difficulties in reconciling specific roles in work and family life. It is only recently that this issue have been regarded as a phenomenon of broader social and psychological significance due to the negative consequences of the increased inability of finding a 'balance' are becoming more and more obvious in modern societies. Work–family conflict (WFC) generally refers to a mismatch or incompatibility between the work and family role demands (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Hence, the work-family relationship has been conceptualized as a bi-directional construct where work roles impacts on family roles and back (Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991): work can reinforce family well-being and positive aspects of family life can instill into work place (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Therefore, a conception of work–life integration should depict more flexible boundaries where individuals have greater influence on the definition of their work and non-work lives. The choice of strategies to handle the work – family conflict is dependent on the perceived differences between the two domains, on the strength of the borders, which are determined by their permeability and flexibility (Campbell, 2000).

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2. Objectives and Hypotheses

The present study aims was to explore various facets of WFC in a Romanian sample and examine the reconciliation strategies challenging it. Therefore, the research is guided by the following objectives:

a) To highlight the reciprocal influences between work and family life, with their both positive and negative aspects;

b) To identify dedicated reconciliation strategies that are developed in order to solve the conflict between the familial and professional roles, and show how both work and family responsibilities may negatively impacted upon individuals personal development potential;

c) To also show that they also may have an impact upon individuals ability to fulfill their parental role.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

A total of 100 respondents employed by both public institutions and private organizations were randomly invited to participate in an exploratory survey conducted during May–July 2013. About 96% of the respondents were married or cohabiting, 75% reported to have one or more children and 4% to be a single parent (see descriptive statistics for the demographic of participants in Table 1).

Participants completed a Romanian version of the Indicator for Measurement of the Family-Job Reconciliation (Săucan et al, 2013), investigating 14 dimensions of the work-family conflict and reconciliation aspects through a total of 152 scaled items.

4. Results

Along with the work-family conflict scale, demographic questions about age, gender, education, marital status, number of dependents and nature of employment were asked. The demographic section also included questions regarding: workload, job motivation, and intention to turnover.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents (N=100)

	%		%
Gender		Employed by	
Male	41.00	Public institution	36.00
Female	59.00	Private organisation	64.00
Age		Professional experience	
18-30 years	24.00	1-10 years	49.00
31-40 years	49.00	11-20 years	37.00
41-65 years	27.00	21-30 years and over	14.00
Education		Institutional level	
Secondary	17.00	Operational staff	75.00
University	70.00	Mid-level management	14.00
Post-graduation	13.00	Top management	11

The collected data was analyzed through descriptive, inferential, and co relational statistics - SPSS 20 (Statistics for the Social Sciences). An exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to determine whether the WFC and reconciliation strategies items could be further reduced by using a principal component analysis (Varimax Rotation Method, Kaiser, 1959).

Since no apriori hypotheses regarding the number of factors likely to emerge were stated, all items of the IMFJR were used to extract the factor solution. Going up to the twenty-fifth rotation, the solution yielded six main factors with an aggregated eigenvalues of 92.951 accounting for 53.420 % of the total variance, thus providing support for the resulted factorial variance (see Table no. 2). Items were interpreted as part of a factor if their factor loading was