



Work–family role integration and personal well-being: The moderating effect of attitudes towards personal web usage



Cüneyt Gözü^{a,*}, Murugan Anandarajan^{a,1}, Claire A. Simmers^{b,2}

^a LeBow College of Business, Drexel University, 32nd and Chestnut Sts, Philadelphia, PA 19104, United States

^b Erivan K. Haub School of Business, Saint Joseph's University, 5600 City Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Keywords:

Attitudes towards personal web usage
Work–family role integration
Well-being

ABSTRACT

Managing the spillover and integrating the work and life domains has become a critical challenge for both individuals and organizations as the two domains become increasingly interlocked. An under-research area in our understanding of the integration of role domains is how individual employees have taken the initiative to “work through” the issues – that is to improvise solutions to role integration often apart from formally sanctioned organizational initiatives. We propose that many employees are using information technology, specifically the web, to facilitate role integration between the work and family domains. Using the role integration perspective, this study examines the role of attitudes towards work/family personal web usage (PWU) as a moderator between role integration and well-being outcomes. Our data support a direct negative relationship between role conflict and well-being as well as a direct positive relationship between role facilitation and personal well-being. We also find that attitudes towards work/family PWU strongly buffer the relationship between role conflict and personal well-being. Finally, our data provide partial support for the enhancing role of PWU attitudes with role facilitation and well-being.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Personal web usage (PWU) is a discretionary on-line web behavior during working time using any of the organization's resources for activities outside current customary job/work requirements (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2003). This behavior is rapidly becoming an important discretionary-role behavior in organizations; for instance, a survey study shows that 82% of computer-using employees engaged in PWU during working hours (Garrett & Danziger, 2008). According to Newswise (2013), employees spend between 60% and 80% of their time on the web for non-work related activities. They categorize their usage as entitled informal compensation for the sacrifices (staying late, working at home, coming in on weekends, etc.) made in their personal domains for the sake of their work domains (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2003; Lim, Teo, & Loo, 2002).

Since the boundary between work and family is increasingly blurred, the use of the web for personal reasons in the workplace can create a new portal in the work–family interface, as the web

is an enabling tool (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2003; Anandarajan, Simmers, & D'Ovidio, 2011). As work moves beyond the traditional eight-hour day, nine-to-five, PWU allows flexibility to accomplish personal tasks even if working time intrudes on non-work time. The relationship between information technologies and role integration is a phenomenon about which we know little. In this research, we propose that attitudes towards PWU facilitate role integration between the work and family domains (Chesley, Siibak, & Wajcman, 2013; Haeger & Lingman, 2014; Wajcman, Rose, Brown, & Bittman, 2010).

While much of the work on the interface between work and family investigates conflicts that arise due to role spillover, recent research is examining work family facilitation and how the roles are mutually reinforcing (Butler, Grzywacz, Bass, & Linney, 2005; Carlson, Hunter, Ferguson, & Whitten, 2014; Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, 2006; Voydanoff, 2011). The definition of work family facilitation is: “the extent to which participation in one life role is made easier through participation in another” (Butler et al., 2005, p. 155–156). Role facilitation provides employees increased self-confidence and job satisfaction (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004; Ilies, Wilson, & Wagner, 2009). Thus, for a more complete understanding of role balance, researchers need to include both role conflict and role facilitation (Frone, 2003). Role conflict and role facilitation are bi-directional and distinct, that is, work spills over to life and life spills over to work

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 518 542 0562; fax: +1 215 895 2891.

E-mail addresses: cg624@drexel.edu (C. Gözü), ma33@drexel.edu (M. Anandarajan), simmers@sju.edu (C.A. Simmers).

¹ Tel.: +1 215 895 6212; fax: +1 215 895 2891.

² Tel.: +1 610 660 1106; fax: +1 610 660 1229.

(Allard, Haas, & Hwang, 2011; Carlson et al., 2006; Demerouti, Peeters, & van der Heijden, 2012; Frone, 2003; Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), we take this bi-directional focus in this study.

Our primary research interest is how attitudes towards work/family PWU at work enable employees to better buffer the spillover of the family domain into the work domain and vice-a-versa. In other words, we want to investigate whether attitudes towards work/family PWU, as a self-initiated role integration mechanism, facilitate both work and personal roles. In the next section, we review the literature on PWU in the workplace, role integration, and well-being outcomes. Then, we present the research model and hypotheses. The next section describes the data analysis and results, and in the last section, we discuss the results and present limitations and directions for future research.

2. Literature review

2.1. Personal web usage in the workplace

The literature on PWU in the workplace grew substantially in the last two decades in two streams. In the first stream, PWU is often assessed as completely negative for both employer and employee (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2004; Askew, Buckner, Taing, Ilie et al., 2014; Caplan, 2002). Characterization of PWU as a negative workplace behavior is widespread, because it appears to oppose the interests of an organization (Anandarajan, Simmers, & Igbaria, 2000). Researchers define these behaviors either problematic Internet use – PIU- or a variation of production deviance – cyberloafing (Lim et al., 2002). The second and less common stream in PWU research is viewing PWU as a constructive behavior. In the work domain, many of the activities performed using the web lack a direct connection to the official responsibilities entrusted to employees. While organizations often overlook and seldom use to PWU to their advantage, in practice, employees recognize the positive benefits of PWU (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2003; Anandarajan et al., 2011). In fact, organizations may come to realize that 15 min of bill paying, game playing, and car buying online may be a fair trade for time spent by employees working outside of “business hours.”

By questioning the homogenous and negative connotations ascribed to PWU, Anandarajan and Simmers (2003) emphasized the need to distinguish between, and include, both the negative and the positive aspects of PWU. In a recent study, Anandarajan et al. (2011) used multidimensional scaling techniques and cluster analysis to explain the underlying structure of PWU. The scholars offered a new comprehensive definition of PWU and identified four clusters of PWU behaviors – work/family, hedonic, self-development, and citizenship. Since we are interested in better understanding the relationship of work–family role integration and personal well-being, we chose to focus on the work/family PWU cluster.

The work/family PWU cluster includes activities where employees tend to personal affairs at work and comprises behaviors such as searching online classified ads for real estate, searching for recreational activities, and making and checking personal travel. These activities have potential indirect benefits to the organization and potential direct benefits to the individual. The work-recovery literature suggests that work/family PWU may serve to reduce work stress as employees detach themselves from their work-related duties (Fritz, Ellis, Demsky, Lin, & Guros, 2013). Additionally, since many employees may be doing work during personal time, doing personal work during work may be seen as a fair trade (Anandarajan, Devine, & Simmers, 2005). Research has shown that an employee's ability to balance work/family

responsibilities will increase motivation and morale and decrease absenteeism (Frone, 2003; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Thus, work/family PWU activities, while directly benefiting the individual, may indirectly benefit the organization by promoting psychological and social employee well-being. To better guide our research, we discuss the theoretical underpinnings of PWU and role integration in detail.

2.2. Role integration

Role theory provides two perspectives – conflict and facilitation, offering a comprehensive understanding of work/family interface (Frone, 2003). The conflict perspective is based on two premises: (1) individuals have limited amounts of resources (e.g., time and energy), and (2) social organizations are greedy and demand all of an individual's allegiance. The outcome is that people do not have enough resources to fulfill all of their role obligations. Therefore, the conflict perspective proposes that work and family domains are incompatible due to their different norms and responsibilities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The differing norms and responsibilities of work and family can flow from one domain into the other, often with unconstructive consequences at both the individual and organizational level (O'Driscoll, Ligen, & Hildreth, 1992).

Family/work conflict (FWC) occurs when family interferes with work, and work/family conflict (WFC) is work interfering with family (Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer, 2007; Frone et al., 1997). In their meta-analysis, Kossek and Ozeki (1998) reported consistent support for the bi-directional nature of work–family conflict. Frone et al. (1997) hypothesized that, for each direction of conflict, i.e., WFC and FWC, antecedents exist in the originating domain of the conflict and the outcomes exist in the receiving domain. They reasoned that involvement in one role (e.g. work) frequently interferes with involvement in the other role (e.g. family), leading to undesirable outcomes in the family role. Some studies, consistent with Frone et al. (1997), found that WFC is negatively related to family satisfaction whereas FWC is negatively related to job satisfaction (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000; Ford et al., 2007; Frone et al., 1997). Other research has found that WFC is positively related to withdrawal from work responsibilities (Hammer, Bauer, & Grandey, 2003; MacEwen & Barling, 1994) and negatively related to organizational commitment (Haar, 2008; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrin, 1996), job performance (e.g. Frone et al., 1997), and job and life satisfaction (Haar, 2008; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). In their meta-analytic review, Kossek and Ozeki (1998) found that WFC is more strongly related to lower levels of job and life satisfaction than is FWC.

A parallel body of theory to the role conflict perspective suggests that participation in multiple roles provides a greater number of opportunities and resources to the individual to promote growth and better functioning in other life domains (Greenhaus & Ten Brummelhuis, 2013; Marks, 1977). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed a theory of work–family enrichment. According to the authors, the quality of life in other roles is enhanced when resources acquired through role participation can be transferred to other life domains. Thus, instead of depleting an individual's psychological and physiological resources, involvement in multiple roles provides a number of benefits that may outweigh the costs, leading to fulfillment rather than strain (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003; Kossek & Michel, 2010). Frone (2003) defines work–family facilitation as “the extent to which participation at work (home) is made easier by virtue of the experiences, skills, and opportunities gained or developed at home (work)” (p. 145). Although there is no consensus on the ways facilitation occurs, researchers have theorized facilitation as arising from several potential sources. For instance, facilitation might arise when

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6837972>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6837972>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)